

Draft Minutes from the East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, March 4, 2021, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Via Zoom Conference

[https://zoom.us/rec/share/4RTm45iOawTv8VGILRaXu-XrutW_A6rGK-vGespIHXjyN5CTKPotTHWcvSpS2_cn.U2RAnDE_u48-vslz; Passcode: zbT=5Ye^](https://zoom.us/join/https://zoom.us/rec/share/4RTm45iOawTv8VGILRaXu-XrutW_A6rGK-vGespIHXjyN5CTKPotTHWcvSpS2_cn.U2RAnDE_u48-vslz; Passcode: zbT=5Ye^)

Present: Carina Aleckson, Amy Carlson, Cyndy Harrison, Brent Hanson, Tom Jollie, Julia Lauwagie, Brian Maupin, Deborah Moses, Rinal Ray, Reid Struck, Carletta Sweet
Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge
Guests: Amanda Wigen, Friends of the Falls
Margaret Richardson, Friends of the Falls
Absent: Jacquie Berglund, Charlie Boeckenheuer, John Campobasso, Vanessa Haight, Richard Kiemen, Michael Noble

I. Call to Order

President Carina Aleckson called the meeting to order at 11:30 a.m., and advised she works as Project Manager at Catholic Charities Administrative Center at 1200 2nd Avenue South, their one site in East Town, which they'll be moving as well as the Exodus Residence housing to part of the old Augustana Health Care Center (<https://thecatholicspirit.com/news/local-news/catholic-charities-to-expand-housing-for-homeless-in-minneapolis/>) in the summer/fall of 2022. Then she asked everyone to introduce themselves in turn when she called upon them.

Carina noted in April some folks will be terming off the Board including herself and to honor John Campobasso's years of service they're collecting words to describe him to put into a word cloud she'll turn into an art piece for his office. Since John's not here today, the Board was asked to use the in-meeting chat feature to add "single" words preferably if they haven't already emailed them to her.

II. Consideration of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted (JW/RS).

III. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included: minutes from the February 4, 2021 Board meeting; Treasurer's report for February which included the F2021 Budget vs. Actual as of February 28, 2021, and Wells Fargo bank statement for February; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and NūLoop Partners' report for January 31-February 27, 2021; Executive Coordinator's report for the period 2/1/2021 to 2/28/2021; and MN Charitable Organization Annual Report for 2020, and IRS Form 990 for 2020 which were temporarily uploaded to the website for security reasons and are available for those who requests them (AC/BH).

IV. Presentations

A. Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam Update

Dan began by noting the importance of this huge community asset to the East Town district because of its proximity to the suite of experiences at the Stone Arch Bridge (https://www.minneapolisparcs.org/parks_destinations/historical_sites/stone_arch_bridge/ and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stone_Arch_Bridge_\(Minneapolis\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stone_Arch_Bridge_(Minneapolis))) which has become more photographed than the Spoonbridge and Cherry sculpture, the \$30 million Water Works redevelopment project under construction with the accompanying new Sioux Chef restaurant (<https://mplsparksfoundation.org/Initiative/water-works/>), and how Friends of the Falls (formerly Friends of the Lock & Dam) has been advocating for it to be repurposed into a community gathering place since it was decommissioned in 2015.

In 2019, in collaboration with the City [Mayor Frey and Chair of Intergovernmental Relations Council Member Andrew Johnson] and other downtown stakeholders, the ETBP signed a letter of support requesting the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission terminate Crown Hydro's lease amendment (<http://senatedfl.mn/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/august-21-2019-ltr-to-FERC-re-crown-hydro-final.pdf>), one of the few times the ETBP has taken such action. In continuation of its support for this asset, Friends was asked back to share its vision for this Central Riverfront asset.

Amanda Wigen, Communications Director for Friends of the Falls (<https://thefalls.org/friends-of-the-falls/#staff> and <https://www.linkedin.com/in/amanda-wigen/>), while sharing a PowerPoint presentation titled *The Falls Initiative*, explained the Upper Lock was closed to commercial navigation in 2015 (<https://www.mprnews.org/story/2015/06/08/upper-st-anthony-lock>), so

it's been a 5 year period of time the site has been largely vacant and they've been very active with the ETBP and other stakeholders to talk about what the future of the site will be.

Previously they talked specifically about a visitor center, but last year they put a hold on that conversation because the community engagement was missing key voices, particularly that of the native community, so they made a deliberate effort to stop going down that track until they had more comprehensive participation and partnered with the Native American Community Development Institute (<https://www.nacdi.org/>) to help change their approach to their engagement strategy. Working with NACDI, they launched the Native Advisory Council (<https://thefalls.org/2020/07/27/friends-of-the-falls-and-nacdi-launch-community-engagement-for-the-falls-initiative-convene-native-advisory-council/>), to connect specifically with the four Dakota tribes as well as exile communities to create guiding principles for the project. Shifting the engagement strategy last year was a key milestone for their organization.

Another piece of their work is advocacy to ensure a project like this takes place, so another key milestone that happened at the end of last year was passage of the Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) on December 27, 2020 (<https://infrastructurereportcard.org/asce-legislative-victory-passage-of-wrda-2020/>). This legislation is significant because the Lock is federally owned and everything that happens there must be directed by Congress, and a key piece of WRDA authorizes the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to convey the land surrounding the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam no longer needed for operation or maintenance of the gate itself to the City of Minneapolis or its designee for public use.

Concurrent with WRDA, Congress asked USACE to conduct a disposition study for the Lock which was released just before WRDA passed. USACE then paused the study, made edits to reflect the recently passed legislation, and rereleased it (<https://www.mvp.usace.army.mil/Home/PN/Article/2446042/public-notice-upper-st-anthony-falls-lock-and-dam-disposition-study-draft-report/>). Friends was surprised the disposition study recommended full disposal of the Lock structure and surrounding property and finding a new owner (<https://myvillager.com/2021/01/06/u-s-army-corps-seeks-new-owner-for-upper-st-anthony-falls-lock/> and <https://fmr.org/river-corridor-and-land-use-updates/st-anthony-falls-disposition-plan-could-threaten-twin-cities/>).

Friends' position is that the Lock should not be managed by a private entity, it must be safely operated into perpetuity, and the entity must be equipped to prevent and react to issues with water supply, flood risk, and invasive species. Wigen then shared some startling key points she heard at USACE's March 3rd public meeting: the Lock needs significant repairs; USACE intends to transfer it "as is"; there's no established vetting process for new owners; USACE "hopes" a responsible owner will come forward.

USACE is accepting public comment through March 18th. In Friends' response, they will urge USACE to continue owning and maintaining the Lock, and to comply with existing legislation to transfer the land surrounding the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam no longer needed for operation or maintenance of the gate itself to the City of Minneapolis or its designee for public use.

Friends is asking for individuals to add their signature to their sign-on letter in partnership with Friends of the Mississippi River at <https://thefalls.org/disposition-study/>, submit its own letter, or sign the existing letter with the Minneapolis Downtown Council, Minneapolis Regional Chamber, Meet Minneapolis, BOMA (Building Owners & Managers Association).

Dan shared the draft letter addressed to Acting United States Secretary of the Army John Whitley he received from Ben Shardlow for consideration.

Then after Wigen responded to questions from the Board, a motion to sign onto the existing letter received from Ben Shardlow was unanimously approved (CH/CS). Margaret Richardson from Friends of the Falls will follow up with Carina to receive her electronic signature.

- B. Public Safety and High-Profile Trial Preparations.** Dan commented the Minneapolis Downtown Council is deeply invested in coordinating all information about this high-profile trial and placed into chat a link to their multisource information page (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/trial/>). They're trying to provide a sense of connection to all stakeholders as to what will happen over the next several weeks. The physical nature of downtown, particularly around public buildings and the courthouse especially, is surrounded by security. There have been multiple press conferences, dialogue at City Hall, and he thinks everybody is doing their best to keep everyone safe, and to protect and understand the importance of free speech. This is an important resource to keep us informed and to create a community voice space.

Board members then described what security measures their organization is taking to protect those they're serving and those who serve.

V. Action Items

See Board Development below.

VI. Updates

- A. **Executive Director Monthly Overview.** Dan announced FINNEGANS will be re-opening their taproom for a fun and socially distanced St. Patrick's Day celebration (<https://finnegans.org/st-patricks-season/>) and all are welcome.
- B. **Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** Reference Carletta Sweet's report for March on the Board Members Only page.
- C. **Elliot Park Neighborhood, Inc.** No report was submitted in Vanessa Haight's absence.
- D. **Minneapolis Downtown Council-Downtown Improvement District.** Read the Public Safety and High-Profile Trial Preparations above.

VII. Committee Reports

- A. **Executive.** Carina advised they haven't met since she shared the 5-Year Strategic Plan update.
- B. **Board Development.** In John Campobasso's absence, Dan reported on the changes that have occurred in the past year, including those who are terming off in April 2021 (Carina Aleckson, John Campobasso), have resigned (Marita Albinson, Beth Shogren), being dropped due to inactivity (Kelly Rice), and passed away (Kelly Stenzel), all of which resulted in six open seats.

Then he announced the slate of six candidates (listed alphabetically) to fill those seats at the annual meeting in April:

1. Lynn Burn, Realtor at Cynthia Froid Group (<https://www.cynthiafroid.com/lynn-burn>)
2. Cassie Garner, Founder of Gamut Gallery (<http://www.gamutgallerympls.com/2020/08/31/5442/>)
3. Gina Licari, Senior Manager, Public Engagement & Marketing at Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/ginalicari/>)
4. Eric Merriman, Director of Real Estate at Thrivent Financial (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/eric-merriman-79388027/>)
5. Aimee Robertson, Executive Director of Advancement at North Central University (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/aimee-perrin-robertson-33000071/>)
6. Kirsten Walstien, Manager of Finance and Business Development at Kraus-Anderson Financial Services Group (<https://www.krausanderson.com/people/kirsten-walstien/?back=214>)

Thereafter, the motion to uninvite Kelly Rice of Cassia (formerly Augustana Care, <https://www.cassialife.org/posts/new-name-announced-for-augustana-care-and-elim-care-as-they-join-together/>) was approved (TJ/BM).

And the motion to approve the slate of candidates for the 2021 annual meeting was approved (AC/JL).

- C. **Food & Hospitality.** Cyndy Harrison gave an overview on what has transpired over the last 6 months between a small group of restaurants and McKinsey & Company who volunteered to help figure out ways to support the restaurant community.

One thing they did was create a survey to determine pre- and post-pandemic dining habits and incentives / programs / different concepts restaurants implemented to drive new business, to which they received 650-700 responses (see *Twin Cities Restaurant and Entertainment Reinvention* document dated March 3, 2021 by McKinsey & Company forwarded to the Board). According to Cyndy, the big takeaway is the data reflected what they already knew and thought was happening, i.e., a lot of people ate out before the pandemic and now they don't, but a lot are taking advantage of takeaway. Another big takeaway is

that food, type of service, concerns over COVID safety, and price will be ongoing when things go back to normalcy.

Now that the survey is over, the restaurants and McKinsey aren't sure what the next steps will be, but Cyndy suggested they meet with Sherman Associates to figure out the marketing.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:32 p.m. (TJ/CA).