

Draft Minutes from the East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting

Thursday, June 3, 2021, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Via Zoom Conference

([https://zoom.us/rec/play/UlbrWYU-ZL3HCpeZTWbKmuhm3nVhBcnquGGfZXb7iMrQdlEblYApnucnghek--x9OikNwj2fypshZRI.SzDxKjcK4qVRw8I3?continueMode=true&xzm_rtaid=nI2pWv5VS0uSuUIYXE6rE1w.1625+16293537.d4c6f3861db77dec270bc440636a6ab&xzm_rhtaId=883;Passcode:t3fd2aQ?](https://zoom.us/join/https://zoom.us/rec/play/UlbrWYU-ZL3HCpeZTWbKmuhm3nVhBcnquGGfZXb7iMrQdlEblYApnucnghek--x9OikNwj2fypshZRI.SzDxKjcK4qVRw8I3?continueMode=true&xzm_rtaid=nI2pWv5VS0uSuUIYXE6rE1w.1625+16293537.d4c6f3861db77dec270bc440636a6ab&xzm_rhtaId=883;Passcode:t3fd2aQ?))

Present: Jacquie Berglund, Lynn Burn, Charlie Boeckenheuer, Amy Carlson, Cassie Garner, Vanessa Haight, Brent Hanson, Cyndy Harrison, Tom Jollie, Julia Lauwagie, Brian Maupin, Eric Merriman, Rinal Ray, Aimee Robertson, Reid Struck, Carletta Sweet, Kirsten Walstein
Staff: Dan Collison, Christie Rock Hantge
Absent: Gina Licari, Deborah Moses, Michael Noble, Richard Kiemen

I. Call to Order

President Julia Lauwagie called the meeting to order at 11:34 a.m. and thanked everyone who joined the meeting.

II. Consideration of Agenda

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

III. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included minutes from the May 6, 2021 Board meeting; Treasurer's report for May which included the F2021 Budget vs. Actual as of May 31, 2021 and Wells Fargo bank statement for May; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and NūLoop Partners' report for May 2-29, 2021; and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 5/1/2021 to 5/31/2021 (BH/JB).

IV. Presentations

Executive Director Dan Collison prefaced the following presentations by explaining because the ETBP was moving to hybrid meetings, he reached out to Cyndy Harrison so that he could highlight Sawatdee Minneapolis (<https://www.sawatdee.com/minneapolis>) at today's meeting; he was broadcasting from there and as proof displayed a savory dish of Pad Thai. The June 17th business forum will also be hybrid and held at the Normandy Inn and Suites (<https://easttownmpls.org/event/etbp-june-17-hybrid-business-forum-in-person-at-the-normandy-inn-and-online-via-zoom/>). He briefly explained the technology he's learning to conduct hybrid meetings.

Dan then gave an overview on how the worlds of the ETBP, Minneapolis Downtown Council, and NūLoop Partners came together for him, and how his work benefits these organizations as reflected in his monthly Executive Director Staff Objectives and Work Report. As part of his portfolio, he first came downtown 12 years ago to be Senior Pastor of First Covenant Church and as of last Wednesday there's a new Senior Pastor, Reverend Jia Starr Brown (<https://www.1stcov.org/jia-profile>). He'll continue his work there as Associate Pastor. During his tenure, the FCC building went from being empty and almost bankrupt to hosting 9 nonprofits including a shelter, an early childhood center, an arts collective, and they built adjacent to FCC the East Town Apartments (<https://www.easttownmsp.com/> and <https://trellismn.org/news/east-town-apartments/>), a \$42 million affordable housing project by Trellis that opened in May of 2020.

During those 12 years in downtown, he became a Board member, then President and finally Executive Director of the ETBP which developed a strategic partnership with the MDC, and because of the success of that partnership, NūLoop Partners invited him to join them as its ED. As Director of Downtown Partnerships for the MDC, Dan leads the Chameleon Consortium (<https://www.chameleonconsortium.com>), a private-public group established to incubate and accelerate BIPOC retail businesses in downtown and he's also scoping out to do the same for the East Town area. As Executive Director of NūLoop Partners he's facilitating the Root District enterprise, a private-public group of cross-disciplinary leaders who are working towards activating and implementing redevelopment by the Minneapolis Farmers Market and forthcoming Southwest LRT Royalston Avenue Station (<https://www.nulooppartners.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Root-District-2020-Summary.pdf>). Dan then reported on:

A. The 5-Year Strategic Plan and Aspirations. Because the end of the term period for the 2018-2022 Strategic Plan was approaching, the Executive Committee met over the early months of this year to review it and determine what changes/updates were needed for each area of strategic focus, i.e.: *Connection and Collaboration; Advocacy and Resourcing; Leadership and Voice; Sound and Sustainable Organization Structure;* and the new category of *Emerging Opportunities*. This update

led to the five overarching themes of the 2021-2022 aspirations shared at the annual meeting.

Dan noted he and Executive Coordinator Christie Rock are in the unenviable position of having to do more with less; the ETBP took a big hit this last year in income and is at a point of having to rebuild. There's a lot of work ahead and it will take a while to heal so the overarching themes and aspirations are the foundation on which to rebuild. The ETBP runs a tight organization with virtually no overhead, so they especially need our partnership and membership dollars this year. Towards that effort, Julia reiterated sharing with the Board a list of previous members of the ETBP so they can reach out to anyone they know for their support.

- B. 2021-2022 Business Forum Program.** As these are the ETBP's bread and butter (<https://easttownmpls.org/preview-of-the-etbp-2021-2022-business-forum-season/>), the Board should be aware that considerable time and effort has gone into formulating the program for the upcoming season, and they are encouraged to invite their colleagues and employees to attend.
- C. Changing the ETBP Tagline and Community Engagement.** He thanked Cassie Garner for leaning in and bringing her skills to changing the ETBP tag line — *Serving the Downtown East and Elliot Park (DEEP) business community since 1979* — to something more contemporary to reflect how East Town has evolved and to conducting a survey to give voice to the thousands of residents who have moved here. This is an emerging conversation that will be taken into the summer.

V. Updates

- A. Executive Director's Monthly Overview.** Dan stated he tracks the activities of all our downtown partners, including Meet Minneapolis, the City's tourism partner contracted to promote all the remarkable features, assets, and businesses across Minneapolis (<https://www.minneapolis.org/about-us/>). He shared some data from their monthly State of Minneapolis Tourism & Hospitality Industry report. In terms of hotel occupancy forecast, Minneapolis had been harder hit than other regional competitors; however, the stats for vaccinations are high and the mask mandate was lifted a few days ago (<https://www.minneapolismn.gov/news/2021/june/mask-mandate-lifted/>), which is affecting people's optimism for being together.

Then Dan received the following responses to his inquiry to the large employers about what their plans are for bringing their employees back:

- Brent Hanson advised at Wells Fargo it's been ongoing conversations and over the last 5 to 6 months they've kicked it down the road saying they're not coming back in April-May. Now that things have gotten saner with vaccinations, what they're aiming for is hopefully shortly after Labor Day. That doesn't mean they'll be flipping a switch and everybody'll come back on Day 1; people will be coming back in phases.
- Eric Merriman said Thrivent has all the same caveats. They have their new building across from The Armory and leased space in the AT&T Tower, so in July they expect dozens to hundreds to return, in September perhaps up to 50%, and beyond that it's not clear yet.
- Charlie Boeckenheuer advised what the Minnesota Vikings are gunning for, shared with us throughout since they opened for the 2021 season back in January, is to be full bore for preseason games the second and third weeks of August, as well as honing in on a stadium welcome back, reopen training camp type practice the first week August. They're working through all the details and looking forward to bringing 11 events to downtown this year. For more information, visit <https://www.startribune.com/vikings-training-camp-scrimmage-us-bank-stadium-premium-practices-tickets/600069157/?refresh=true>.

Shifting to how smaller retail businesses are recovering in East Town, Dan noted the Elliot Park Arts Quarter was a topic of discussion in a meeting he held yesterday and it will be featured at the April 2022 annual meeting. Then,

- Cassie Garner of Gamut Gallery gave a brief overview of the EPAQ (<https://www.facebook.com/ElliotParkArtsQuarter/>), a project she, EPNI Executive Director Vanessa Haight, and some neighboring businesses developed to celebrate and bring focus on the dynamic businesses along South 10th Street where her business is located. Momentum grew through a series of guided art walks and other events, and they were awarded funding by the Great Streets Business District Support Program to continue.

EPAQ has lost two founding businesses: Punchy Magnolia (<http://www.punchymagnolia.com/>) left 2 years ago, and Kristi

Abbott Gallery and Studio (<https://www.kristiabbott.com/home>) moved away 2 months ago for an artist residency in Texas, so the EPAQ is kind of fading away which is unfortunate because they had dubbed themselves a one stop shop for varied services. Traffic has dwindled and there are business fronts available right next door (719 and 721 South 10th Street), so if anybody knows any makers or creatives, they are looking for them to be their neighbors. Their landlord is supportive of and understand what they're trying to create in this neighborhood. The struggle is real for small businesses and they're doing the best they can and hope summer will start to change things.

- B. Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** Christie advised National Night Out, the annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie (<https://natw.org/>), is coming up on Tuesday, August 3rd. The DMNA has an active group of volunteers coordinating an event that will take place in The Commons (<https://www.thedmna.org/event/dmna-national-night-out-at-the-commons/>). Their last NNO event was held pre-COVID in 2019 and it was successful, so they're bringing it back this year to bring out residents and the business community to get people reactivated and reacquainted with downtown. If Board members could help promote the event by inviting their employees downtown, it will be a great opportunity for them to see that downtown is open for business in the evenings. In the next week she'll be sending out information to ETBP's membership with a few sponsorships opportunities that remain.
- C. Membership.** Christie gave an overview of the 2020-2021 membership (<https://easttownmpls.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/ETBP-2020-2021-Membership-Report-June-Renewals.pdf>). Currently, there are 42 members who brought in \$43,700 in dues. In 2019 there were 62 members, and in 2018 there were 63 members, so we're down by 20 members which has had a negative impact on the budget and, consequently, she'll be looking to all of us to pay our memberships early. As of May 31st, we have a balance in our account of \$8,361, and monthly expenses are approximately \$4,200. Since the membership campaign typically kicks off in July, she plans to send invoices out to the Board in June and urged everyone to please pay theirs as soon as they can to keep the work they're doing going and moving forward.

Christie further explained the revenue high was probably in 2018 when they brought in between \$72,000-\$73,000 in memberships, sponsorships, and a few grants, but this year we didn't have sponsorships because we didn't have in-person events, and we didn't do any grant projects that would have brought in supplemental dollars to help cover her and Dan's wages. She's more optimistic for 2021-2022 but they just don't have a lot of cushion in the bank right now.

- D. Elliot Park Neighborhood Association.** Vanessa reported on the following:

- She is seeking feedback on their draft 2021 Community Vision document prepared to guide future development in Elliot Park. This project began in 2019 by hosting many conversations targeting community residents they typically don't hear from to help frame the vision; it's borne out of the 2002 Elliot Park Master Plan (<https://minneapolis2040.com/small-area-plans/elliott-park-neighborhood-master-plan/>) which needs to be revisited because of all the growth and development that has occurred. Lacking the capacity and resources to do another Master Plan, the Community Vision will be a live document that can be changed/updated as the community changes. Feedback from the ETBP can be submitted at https://www.elliottpark.org/vision_feedback.
- The Elliot Skate Plaza (<http://www.cityofskate.org/elliott-minneapolis-skatepark>) is expected to open July 1st and everyone's excited about it. Paul Forsline, President at City of Skate (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/paul-forsline-41b07912b>), presented to the Board in June 2020.

- E. Minneapolis Downtown Council | Downtown Improvement District.** As follow up to Leah Wong's presentation last month regarding the reanimation of downtown Minneapolis, Dan explained they've been working hard on the reanimation dashboard (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/reanimation/>) and with large corporate partners on an expensive marketing campaign, so there's a larger support framework that should bring benefit to the neighborhoods, venues, public spaces, and he's doing his best to tie everyone into this larger effort. Dan then reported on some of the activities that are happening:
- Today, the weekly Thursday Nicollet Farmers Market resumes (<https://farmersmarketofmpls.org/nicollet-mall-farmers-market/>) as well as the Nicollet Makers Market (<https://www.nicolletmakersmarket.com/>).

- Next Thursday, June 10th at 10:30 a.m. will be mpls downtown reanimation | a collective action at Canopy by Hilton Minneapolis Mill District (<https://www.mplsdowntown.com/registration210610/>).
- Chameleon Shoppes has recently opened two stores:
 - ❖ Coconut Whisk Café and Bubble Tea Shop on the street-level space inside the Young-Quinlan Building (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgwy6l1weyE> and <https://coconutwhisk.com/pages/coconut-whisk-cafe-retail-shop>); and
 - ❖ Sistah Coop on the skyway level in the IDS Center (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqEw3Q1M3fs>)
- Public safety issues are continually being addressed to help those who haven't been downtown this past year understand how safe and vibrant it is as depicted in his 35-minute documentary called *Hospitality Embodied* on the DID YouTube Channel (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_PNX9SNdFc), and there's an incredible safety net with national award winning social service organizations for the most vulnerable.

Dan then summarized what he'll be doing while the Board is off until September. Since the Executive Committee is ad hoc, they may meet over the summer to touch base; he and Cassie will continue working on the ETBP tagline and community engagement; the Business Forum Development Committee will be off and resume in the fall; he'll reach out to some of us regarding the Advocacy and Resourcing area of focus in the 5-Year Strategic Framework; he's working with the Food & Hospitality task force and will probably be reaching out to the employers to do some marketing piece related to when employees are coming back.

Aimee Robertson noted figuring out what businesses are opening back up was a topic of discussion in Leah Wong's ad hoc group where they've been brainstorming for the reanimation campaign; it was kind of a wish list item to have an app listing what restaurants and small businesses are open that those of us who work downtown could check because Google isn't reliable. They liked the idea but it's the ownership and execution of such an idea.

VI. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:30 p.m. (CS/JB).