

Draft Minutes from the East Town Business Partnership Board of Directors Meeting
Tuesday, April 12, 2022, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Hybrid at North Central University, Clark Danielson College Life Center, and via Zoom

I. Call to Order and Welcome by Host

President Julia Lauwagie from MN Adult & Teen Challenge, who was broadcasting from NCU, called the meeting to order at 11:32 a.m.

Host Scott Hagen, President of North Central University (<https://www.northcentral.edu/about/president/> and <https://www.facebook.com/note2leaders/>), said it was great to have us on campus and it's wonderful to have a relationship and just to see everyone living and breathing. NCU appreciates Aimee Robertson's role with the community. They could talk the rest of their life about the last 24 months but their campus has always been a safe, wonderful open place. They've had a George Floyd memorial (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vWptUCTgSZg>), and a Deshaun Hill memorial (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CdLO1vpUZ4A>), so they love having the City, Mayor, and everybody back whenever they can help; it's been a stabilizing influence in Elliot Park. Then because had to take a flight for a meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina that evening, he left bidding God bless everybody.

Other Board Attendees at NCU

Dan Collison, ETBP Executive Director
Cassie Garner, Gamut Gallery
Tom Jollie, Padilla
Brian Maupin, Allied Parking
Eric Merriman, Thrivent Financial
Aimee Robertson, NCU

Other Board and Guest Attendees via Zoom

Elizabeth Bieging, Hennepin County Behavioral Health
Charlie Boeckenheuer, Minnesota Vikings
Lynn Burn, Compass
Amy Carlson, Hennepin Healthcare Foundation
Christie Rock Hantge, ETBP Executive Coordinator
Cyndy Harrison, Sawatdee Thai Restaurants
Richard Kiemen, Sherman Associates
Rinal Ray, People Serving People
James Seals, Hennepin County
Reid Struck, Sherman-Williams
Carletta Sweet, Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association
Al Swintek, CenterPoint Energy
Wendy Underwood, Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis
Kirsten Walstein, Krause-Anderson

Directors Absent

Jacque Berglund, FINNEGANS Brew Co
Brent Hanson, Wells Fargo
James Farstad, Minnesota Sports Facilities Authority
Michael Noble, The Normandy Inn & Suites

II. Consideration of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted (EM/BM).

III. Consideration of Consent Agenda

The consent agenda was approved as submitted which included minutes from the March 3, 2022 Board meeting; Treasurer's report for March which included the F2021 Budget vs. Actual as of March 31, 2022, Wells Fargo bank statement for March, 2021 MN Charitable Organization Annual Report, 2021 IRS Form 990; Director of Downtown Partnerships for Minneapolis Downtown Council/Downtown Improvement District, and Executive Director for East Town Business Partnership and NūLoop

Partners' report for February 27-April 2, 2022; and Executive Coordinator's report for the period 3/1/2022 to 3/31/2022 (CS/RK).

IV. Presentations

A. Committed to a Clean and Resilient Energy Future. Dan informed us that Al Swintek, Manager of Local Government Relations at CenterPoint Energy (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/al-swintek-763aab12> and <https://www.zoominfo.com/p/Al-Swintek/51914393>), has been a colleague and friend of East Town for a long time and serves on the NuLoop Partners Steering Committee where he gave an incredible presentation on CP's innovation in emerging green technology, so he asked him to give the same presentation to the ETBP Board.

Swintek then gave a brief history of his background with CNP where he'll have been for 42 years this August. He started when he was in college and worked in various positions leading up to his current position in local government relations which brings him in contact with organizations like the ETBP, Downtown Council, Minneapolis Regional Chamber, and many other business-related community outreach activities.

Next, he gave an overview of CNP; it's the local gas distribution company in Minnesota headquartered in Houston, Texas and is committed to a clean and resilient energy future. They were founded in 1870 (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/corporate/about-us/company-overview/company-history>), serve 6 states, and are similar to Xcel Energy down in Houston in that they serve both gas and electric, however, in Minnesota they serve 100% natural gas. Most of their 1,200 employees work for three large unions and they have 14,000 miles of pipeline infrastructure throughout Minnesota. They have four facilities in Minneapolis, the first being in the ETBP area at 1240 West River Parkway across from the new Eleven (<https://elevenontheriver.com/>). CNP receives gas from wells it doesn't own sent through pipes it doesn't own and takes custody once it reaches Minnesota from Northern Natural Gas Company and then distributes it through the 900 miles of pipe in Minneapolis as the final leg of the supply chain. They don't markup natural gas, so if they buy it for \$5, they sell it for \$5, but have a distribution charge which stays the same and is regulated by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (<https://mn.gov/puc/>).

Swintek then described the ways they're committed to a clean and resilient energy future. Because they serve natural gas, a fossil fuel, and know people are concerned about greenhouse gas emissions, climate change, and global warming as they themselves are, they're doing what they can to ensure the products they sell and the people who are using their products are being as efficient and clean as possible. Because services are evolving to meet customer and community needs and expectations, there are two parts to achieving their clean energy goals by 2035 (<https://sustainability.centerpointenergy.com/net-zero/>), Net Zero emissions from company operations which they can control, and reduce carbon emissions from customer end use by 20-30% which they cannot control as easily.

Looking at where they started on the Mississippi riverfront with an old photo looking northwest, it shows the area was a former industrial complex with smoke stakes across the river that are still there, the Stone Arch Bridge, mill ruins, and rail tracks. Swintek explained they took coal, heated and cooked it and the gas that came off was used to light the streetlights by CP's predecessor, the Minneapolis Gas Light Company. They've come a long way since cooking coal and lighting streetlights, so when it comes to controlling climate, trying to reduce carbon emissions and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, today it requires legislation, innovation, conservation, and doing a lot of things differently, e.g.:

1. **Legislation.** In 2021 there were two major pieces of legislation that were passed, ECO Act (<https://fresh-energy.org/eco-act-becomes-law-modernizing-minnesotas-energy-efficiency-policy>), and Natural Gas Innovation Act (<https://environmental-initiative.org/news-ideas/natural-gas-innovation-act-advancing-minnesotas-clean-energy-future/>).
2. **Innovation.** CPN is diligently working toward reducing carbon emissions across its operations and energy supply chain while prioritizing safety (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/business/services/clean-energy-innovation?sa=MN>) with carbon capture technology (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/business/services/clean-energy-innovation/carbon-capture-recycling?sa=mn>); renewable natural gas (RNG) from organic sources and from power-to-gas (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/business/services/clean-energy-innovation/renewable-natural-gas?sa=mn>); piloting the potential of renewable hydrogen at their East Town facility on West River Road (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/business/services/clean-energy-innovation/renewable-hydrogen?sa=tx>) that was installed this winter and should be fully

operational by the end of Q2.

- 3. Conservation.** To ensure system is as tight as possible to avoid methane emissions, they're investing billions of dollars to replace cast iron pipes, old fittings, obsolete valves with better technology which is part of road construction and utility installation one sees happening (<https://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/Documents/Methane%20Reduction%20MN.pdf>).

CNP's conservation and energy efficiency programs are mandated by the Minnesota Conservation Improvement Program (<https://www.auditor.leg.state.mn.us/ped/pedrep/0504ch1.pdf>).

To learn more about CPN's clean energy resources, visit <https://sustainability.centerpointenergy.com/net-zero/helping-customers-achieve-net-zero/energy-efficiency/>, or contact Swintek at albert.swintek@centerpointenergy.com or 612-910-1239.

- B. Hennepin County/MDC-DID Social Worker Program.** Dan advised because of the concerns for safety and livability in downtown Minneapolis by businesses and residents, he wanted to ensure the Board was aware of this innovative partnership (https://www.mplsdid.com/news_article/show/1144162).

Elizabeth Biegging, Supervisor of the Social Work Unit at Hennepin County (<https://www.zoominfo.com/p/Elizabeth-Biegging/2604335075>), explained they've had a partnership with the DID for just over a year, and it's been great to work with them and businesses to help get resources to people in need. She is staff at the Behavioral Health Center at 1800 Chicago Avenue (<https://www.hennepin.us/residents/health-medical/behavioral-health-center>), and supervises James Seals, the Outreach Social Worker at Hennepin County (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/james-seals-439b07208/>, and https://www.mplsdid.com/news_article/show/1168731). Seals' role was created to help connect people downtown 18 and over with mental health, substance use, and/or housing issues with resources, so he's out on the streets outreaching and engaging with people on a daily basis. A lot of the work is relational, i.e., meeting people where they are, learning about them, helping meet their basic needs, and working with them to connect with services for additional support to meet their individual goals. Thus far in 2022 (January to March), he's made about 350 contacts with 138 distinct individuals. His work is in the moment; he connects with people, provides referrals and support on the spot, and helps connects people back to existing providers. He also has a van, provided by the DID, to transport individuals to the Behavioral Health Center where upon arrival they are staffed with case managers who will work with them to get connected to services. They are looking at Seals' role and the walk-in center to reduce unnecessary emergency department or inpatient hospitalization visits, criminal justice involvement, and increase access to community health support. If we ever see anyone in need, we can send them to the walk-in center, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., or Seals can be dispatched through the Safety Communications Center (<https://www.mplsdid.com/page/show/7164035-safety-communications-center>) at 612-332-1111.

Seals advised his days are different but most of the time he's downtown assisting residents, visitors, or people experiencing mental health, substance use, and/or housing challenges. He's boots on the ground giving any assistance to those he runs into on a daily basis. Since this winter he's focused on referrals to the Homeless to Housing program (<https://www.hennepin.us/residents/human-services/homeless-to-housing>), GRH or Housing Support (<https://www.hennepin.us/business/work-with-henn-co/housing-providers>), as well as meeting people where they are in bus shelters on Nicollet and downtown skyways and transporting them to the walk-in center. It's an ongoing job, different every day, but very rewarding and he couldn't think of a better job to be a part of. It's springtime which brings on new challenges and more people which they're here to help people and provide services and resources.

For we have additional questions or would like more information, Biegging can be reached at elizabeth.biegging@hennepin.us or 612-220-2878.

V. Action Item: None

VI. Updates

A. Executive Director's Professional Update

Dan, who has been with the ETBP for the last 13-1/5 years, the last 7-1/2 of which he served as its Executive Director, announced he has accepted a role nearby at Sherman Associates as its new Director of Business Development and Public Affairs. He's known Board member Richard Kiemen as well as Chris and George Sherman (<https://www.sherman->

[associates.com/about/](https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2019/01/14/apartments-across-from-u-s-bank-stadium-break.html)) for many years and they have been in many conversations about his love for downtown and development which he was introduced to through his involvement in the affordable East Town Apartment project (<https://www.bizjournals.com/twincities/news/2019/01/14/apartments-across-from-u-s-bank-stadium-break.html>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OpR9Dbbjvg> and <https://easttown.trellismn.org/>). He feels fortunate to join their team and advance their work in downtown and across Minnesota. He'll continue to be a passionate follower and supporter of East Town as his association work was launched here. We have one of the more complete Executive Director succession plan than any association has ever had as a result of its drafting by former ETBP President Carina Aleckson (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/craleck>), and he'll be pleased to do whatever he can to bridge the transition to the new ED. He's been in conversations with Steve Cramer and the partnership model built over the years between ETBP, MDC, and NūLoop Partners, is something they're inviting all to keep intact. The ED Transition Task Force will be meeting this Friday at 8 a.m. to discern who the next ED will be, meanwhile he's proposing having a super part-time contract for the next couple months to keep meetings going and ensure Board direction, and hopefully by July we'll have a new ED and are still connected.

Julia explained Collison already has at least one candidate that can bring content to us but if any of us have ideas, we obviously want to find the best person we can (reference ED for ETBP and NūLoop Partners Job Posting April 2022) and it would be great if they could hang on for a period of time and doesn't become a transition person.

- B. Downtown Minneapolis Neighborhood Association.** See Carletta's report on the Board Members Only page to learn about the projects the Land Use Committee has been reviewing since the last ETBP Board meeting
- C. Elliot Park Neighborhood Association.** TBD who from EPNI Board will be collaborating with us.
- D. Minneapolis Downtown Council.** See under Executive Director's Professional Update above.

VII. Committee and Task Force Reports

- A. Membership Engagement.** Dan explained he and Christie developed a roster and membership renewal package that he'll bring to the next Board meeting at which each of us will be asked to call five names we know or be assigned to five names we don't know to bring us all into the engagement process.

Then he thanked Charlie for sponsoring the annual meeting on April 21st; they provided a \$2,000 sponsorship and free lunch which helps with the budget. It's going to be great so please come to the stadium!

- B. Executive.** No report given.
- C. Board Development.** No report given.
- D. Business Forum Development.** No report given.

VIII. Old / New / Other Business

No report given.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:33 p.m. (EM/TJ).