

CapitolRiver Council Meeting minutes

Nov. 17 2020, Board of Directors Meeting, via Zoom videoconference

- I. The meeting was called to order at 5:15 p.m. by CRC Board Chair Shevek McKee. Attendees introduced themselves.
- II. Motion by John Ganey, seconded by Crystal Meriwether to adopt the agenda. Motion passed
- III. Motion by John Ganey, seconded by Crystal Meriwether to approve Oct. 20, 2020 board meeting minutes. Motion passed.

Appointed Members

- IV. Jon Fure explained that the CRC bylaws allow organizations to appoint a person to the CRC board for a one-year term. There are term limits of three consecutive years for these appointed terms, except that the term limits were removed for several organizations because of their importance to CRC's community engagement work. A board member asked if the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (CAAPB) requires a Downtown resident to be appointed to that board. Paul Mandell, CAAPB Executive Director, said there is currently a state legislator on the board who lives in Downtown Saint Paul, and the Saint Paul Mayor also appoints someone who lives in a neighborhood next to the Capitol, and currently there is another CAAPB member who lives in Downtown Saint Paul. All board members were encouraged to look for opportunities to apply for board and commissions that align with their interests, skills and knowledge (in addition to the City of Saint Paul, the Capitol Region Watershed District, Metropolitan Council, Ramsey County and State of Minnesota all seek community leaders to serve on advisory boards).

Motion by John Ganey, seconded by Joe Baierl, to accept the organizational appointments (which will expire after the 2021 CRC Annual Meeting): Kathleen Conger – Central Library, Nick Cusick – Visit Saint Paul, Tom Erickson – Saint Paul Building Owners and Managers Association, Paul Mandell – Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board, and John Smith – Saint Paul Area Chamber. Motion passed.

- V. Olga Nichols is a Downtown resident, a freelance Artist and Activist spending her time teaching workshops, creating and exhibiting her work in her studio/ gallery space in downtown. She is interested in serving as a CRC board member and may be appointed to fill a vacancy.

Motion by Joe Baierl, seconded by Will Travis, to appoint Olga Nichols to serve the remaining year of a vacant 2-year term. Motion passed.

Downtown Resident Seeks Recommendation to Serve on Transit Committee

- VI. Downtown resident Jay Severance is interested in serving as a member of the Community Advisory Committee for the Riverview Corridor Transit Project, and has asked CRC to recommend him to represent CRC on the committee. He is a Downtown resident, retired planning and operations executive, and is co-founder of Citizens Advocates for Regional Transit, and a board member of All Aboard Minnesota. The committee plans to meet quarterly, and Mr. Severance agreed to meet at least quarterly with the CRC board to provide updates and solicit feedback, which he will convey to the Riverview committee.

Motion by Crystal Meriwether, seconded by Will Travis, to recommend Jay Severance to serve on the Riverview Community Advisory Committee. Motion passed.

Election of Officers

- VII. Each year, the board elects officers to serve in the following roles: Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Internal Affairs Officer, and External Affairs Officer.

Jon Fure asked for nominations for board chair.

Chris Beckstrom nominated Shevek McKee to serve as the board chair. There were no other nominations. All voted in favor the nomination.

Jon Fure asked for nominations for vice chair.

Rich Johnson nominated himself to serve as vice chair.

Chris Beckstrom nominated Jess Grams to serve as vice chair. There were no other nominations.

Board members were asked to vote via a Google form. The board voted to elect Rich Johnson as vice chair.

Shevek McKee nominated Will Travis to serve as Treasurer. There were no other nominations. All voted in favor of the nomination.

Lee Knutson nominated himself for Internal Affairs Officer. There were no other nominations. All voted in favor of the nomination.

Shevek McKee nominated Crystal Meriwether to serve as Secretary. There were no other nominations. All voted in favor of the nomination.

Joe Baierl nominated himself to serve as External Affairs Officer. There were no other nominations. All voted in favor of the nomination.

Community Engagement / Committee Updates

- VIII. Downtown Business Engagement – Chair Shevek McKee explained that he is interested in this topic because he created a list of contacts for Downtown businesses for the purpose of communicating with people about our work. He is interested in what other CRC board members think we should try to accomplish through communication and engagement with businesses. Jon Fure asked John Smith to talk about his work with the Saint Paul Area Chamber, and about how CRC can work collaboratively in engaging businesses instead of duplicating efforts. John Smith summarized some of the feedback he has been hearing from people who own restaurants and other local businesses, which are struggling due to the pandemic. A board member asked how the issues and concerns that we hear about through community engagement become actionable, and how CRC can set priorities for advocacy. For example, assistance is being directed toward business owners, many of whom already have more of a safety net than other people who less wealthy, so how should we decide how to influence decisions about who receives public assistance. Lissa Jones-Lofgren suggested talking with Cheryl Peterson, who works for the Listening House. She would be a good person to talk with about her experience serving people who are experiencing homelessness. A board member said people from Radius Health and Outside In also serve people who are experiencing homelessness, and they would be good sources of information about what is being done and changes that CRC could consider advocating.
- IX. Wayfinding Project Update – Jon Fure said CRC received a Cultural STAR grant through a partnership with the Downtown Alliance to develop recommendations for Downtown wayfinding, which includes

signage on streets, buildings and skyways, and related concepts. Two groups of students are currently working on this project through the [Resilient Communities Project](#). Additional information will be provided to board members via email.

New Business

- X. Draft Privacy Policy – Aliya Mohamed, CRC Marketing and Technology Specialist, presented a draft privacy policy and answered questions about it. Board members asked questions about other comparable policies for nonprofit organizations, and about privacy-related laws and regulations. Board members were asked to provide additional feedback or questions to Aliya, and she would update the draft based on feedback from board members.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.