

CapitolRiver Council Annual Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 15, 2021 at 05:15 p.m. (via Zoom videoconference)

- I. Chair Shevek McKee called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves.
- II. Candidate introductions: The following five people are seeking election to a 2-year term on the CRC board, and there are five vacant seats -- Judy Miller, Will Travis, Kathleen O'Neal, Alan Ostergaard, and Kathy Blair – and each introduced themselves and explained why they would like to serve as board members. CRC Executive Director Jon Fure asked if there were any other nominations. No other candidates were nominated.
- III. Voting: Motion by Crystal Meriwether, seconded by Joe Baierl, to elect the five candidates. Motion passed, and the candidates were elected. Their terms will expire after the CRC annual meeting in 2023.

Discussion about effective, equitable community engagement: Jon Fure said CRC is one of 17 district councils, which are neighborhood organizations that are charged with engaging people in discussions about city planning and investments in our neighborhood, through a lens of equity. The City pays CRC, through a contract for services, which is similar to a grant agreement. “Community engagement” is interactive communication where we reach out to people in our community to learn about what people like about living and / or working in this neighborhood, and what they would like to change. CRC has been using the following definition of “Equity” -- just and fair inclusion into a society in which all can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential. Based on that definition, the quality of our work increases when we continually ask who is excluded, or who is being treated unfairly because of government policies or services. Then we need to try to understand why that is happening, and learn about what can be done to address the injustice or unfairness.

The following guests have been invited to talk about their own experiences and challenges with administering community engagement through an equity lens: Monica Bravo, Executive Director for West Side Community Organization; Jens Werner, Executive Director for Summit University Planning Council; and Tara Beard, who manages the Livable Communities Act programs and regional housing policy for the Met Council and is board member for her neighborhood organization in Minneapolis. The group discussed examples of community engagement related to environmental justice, developing and implementing an equitable development scorecard (https://www.wSCO.org/equitable_development), strategic planning, and money that is available through the Met Council for economic development, including money for affordable housing and redevelopment projects, and money for “pre-development.” A question was asked about what the Met Council has accomplished, and Ms. Beard provided the following info: Newly funded projects by 2020 Livable Communities Act (LCA) grants are expected to help deliver many benefits to the region, including the following:

- Create or retain nearly 900 jobs;
- Create or preserve over 2,400 affordable housing units;
- Create over 800 market rate housing units;
- Increase the regional tax base by nearly \$4.6 million annually.

The meeting adjourned 6:55 p.m.