

CapitolRiver Council Meeting Minutes

October 19, 2021, Board of Directors Meeting, 5:15 p.m., via Zoom videoconference.

Call to Order, Introductions, and Review Meeting Minutes

Chair Jess Grams was unavailable, so the meeting was called to order by Executive Director Jon Fure.

Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and describe an incorrect assumption that people sometimes make about you, or something that people are sometimes surprised to learn about you.

- I. Previous meeting minutes: The September 21 board meeting minutes were adopted.

Board Membership Changes

- II. The Saint Paul Area Chamber has appointed Alyssa Binsfeld to serve as its representative on the CRC board to replace John Smith, who no longer works for the Chamber.
- III. The CRC Officers passed a motion to appoint Meredith Heneghan, Communications Specialist for The M, to fill the vacancy due to the resignation of Mia Laufer. The board voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Heneghan's term will expire after the June 2022 Annual Meeting.

Discussion Item

- IV. Developing a CRC strategic plan for inclusion – Jon Fure introduced Lissa Jones-Lofgren, Leadership and Governance Consultant, to lead the discussion. This discussion will help CRC create a document that will be used in board member on-boarding and training, and will also provide guidance on how CRC can work on continuous improvement in creating an inclusive, respectful organizational culture. Key messages from the presentation include:
 - The work of district councils is work is about improving the physical, social and economic structures of the neighborhood. The vision is that a group of residents and business owners get together and create a plan that identifies the priorities that people have for the neighborhood.
 - The City of Saint Paul's current Comprehensive Plan is updated every 10 years, and the current plan is for 2020 through 2040. The focus areas of the plan are: Equitable Cities, Aging in Community, Community / Public Health, Economic Development, Resiliency, and Urban Design. The City's website has fact sheets on each of these areas. Based on those focus areas, the charge for CRC and other district councils is to engage the community and inform decision-making processes that reduce racial disparities; facilitate aging in community; promote public health; improve the economic well-being and quality of life; address impacts of climate change; and promote urban design that fosters activity, connection, beauty, safety and economic value.
 - District councils are involved in ...
 - Reviewing community development proposals
 - Advocating for park and recreation center improvements
 - Coordinating community gardens and neighborhood beautification projects
 - Promoting environmental action through volunteering and advocacy
 - Organizing block clubs and working with the police department and other city agencies to improve public safety

- Conclusion / Action item: CRC board members and staff should look at everything we do (committee meetings, social media strategy, email newsletters ...) through the lens of everyone at the table -- who is there and who is not there -- and who will be impacted by our decisions. Board members, committee members and staff should be continually asking the above questions related to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility as a part of our organizational culture to work toward becoming more inclusive. Recommended next steps are to work under the leadership of the Development Review Committee to create an iterative process for embedding inclusion in CRC's culture, and to produce a plan for this work for 2022. (Ideally, it should be a 1-2 page plan that can be implemented in day-to-day operations.) The main question for us should be how to create a process that will continue. How do we imbed this idea of inclusion into our work? How can we co-create something together that helps us think about inclusion in all of the decisions that we are making? A board member also suggested that the board should adopt a statement related to equity and inclusion.
- CRC Development Review Committee Co-Chair John Ganey expressed support for the next steps and added that the committee needs another co-chair, so please contact him or Jon Fure if you or anyone you know is potentially interested.

Pedro Park Work Group Update

- V. Work Group Chair Julie Printz provided updates on what the group has been hearing and next steps, which will include presenting a final report at a future board meeting. The group had an engagement event in the park and talked with several residents, and many people felt that CRC should do more of that in-person community engagement. More information about the group's work is on the CRC website: <https://www.capitolrivercouncil.org/pedroworkgroup>

CRC Leadership and Governance

- VI. Update on Role of Secretary: CRC Secretary Judy Miller said she is planning to communicate with each committee chair and help prepare a brief summary of committee activity to improve communication and coordination. She will help plan informal activities so that board members can learn more about each other. She will be inviting board members to pop-up events, while following COVID safety precautions.
- VII. Motion: The CRC Board of Directors will establish a work group to draft a process for approving committees, workgroups and projects. The group will present the draft proposal to the board in December or January. The process will include, but is not limited to, evidence that the project is 1) consistent with our purpose and values, including equity and accessibility; 2) sufficient info to assure the board understands the scope and resources that are needed; 3) focused outcomes that include timelines; and 4) a description of how the focused outcomes will contribute to District 17. The motion passed. Secretary Miller suggested that the group should be able to complete its work in 2-3 meetings and asked for volunteers to help with this.

Board Member Updates and Future Agenda Items

Board members were asked to suggest ideas for future meeting agendas.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.