

CapitolRiver Council Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2020 Board of Directors Meeting

Board Member Attendees: Tiffany Brace, Nick Cusick, Bill Huepenbecker, Emily Larson, Linda McBrayer, Shevek McKee, Crystal Meriwether, Jonathan Reisetter, Will Travis, Erin Zolotukhin-Ridgway

Other attendees: Jon Fure, Aliya Mohamed, and one guest.

Chair Shevek McKee called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m., asked everyone to introduce themselves and answer the question, what is something that you wish someone had explained when you joined CRC, or maybe that you still wish someone would explain? Responses included:

- Every board I have been on has required a financial commitment, and I have suggested that we each give \$100, but if that is not feasible, I think we should all make a donation of any amount, so that we can say that 100 percent of the board members make a donation to support the organization's work.
- A better financial overview and more information about the work we do compared to what other organizations do.
- Fiduciary responsibility, not just financial, but also to be honest and faithful to the board. We need to take those things seriously.
- A clear understanding of how we interface with other organizations. I have learned more about CRC partly through my involvement with the Downtown Alliance. Maybe a visual way to highlight the various organizations / roles would be helpful.
- A better understanding of our finances, and how we can add more resources to have more of an impact.
- How different organizations work together, and how we work with City government.
- The importance of giving our time, such as attending board meetings and some committee meetings is also really valuable.
- A succinct history of district councils, where they fit in when they were created compared to know would be helpful.
- One thing I learned about is that CRC was involved in advocating for the playground at 4th and Sibley streets.

Approve meeting minutes

Motion by Linda McBrayer, seconded by Crystal Meriwether, to approve the June 16, 2020 meeting minutes. Motion passed.

New Member Orientation

Chair Shevek McKee said the question that we answered during the introductions was intended to lead in to this discussion, as we seek to recruit new board members for the Annual Meeting and board member election. His answer to that question is, what do we hope to accomplish? The City Council seems to expect district councils to pass resolutions, so maybe instead of asking people to bring their questions or ideas to a committee, we should ask people to bring a draft resolution. Maybe part of the orientation process can be to learn the basics of writing a resolution. He suggested the following potential topics for new member orientation, and asked for feedback and other suggestions:

- New Member Asset Survey
- City Council Agendas 101
- Resolution Drafting 101
- Meeting Facilitation 101
- Fiduciary Responsibility 101
- ENS Data Reports for the City Dept. of Safety and Inspections (sorted by district)
- Glossary: Robert's Rules, District 17, Ward 2, DSI, PED, City Council, BOMA, CAAPB, Visit Saint Paul, Downtown Alliance

- CRC Committees: Skyway Governance Advisory, Development Review, Public Realm, ACE
- Project Management Form
- Bylaws (Terms and Limits, Officer Positions / Duties, etc.)

A board member said it was a good list, and wouldn't just be relevant for new members. Even board members who have been engaged could benefit from this. Also, it's helpful for people who live and / or work Downtown and who might want to engage in our work, even if they don't necessarily want to be a board member. Other suggested additions were Fiduciary Responsibilities 101 and Grant Writing 101. This discussion will continue at the August board meeting.

CRC Officer Roles

The group talked about the importance of succession planning, especially since there are term limits of 2 years for any officer position. Ideally there would be a vice chair who is willing to take on the duties of the chair, and also people who are interested in the other officer roles (secretary, treasurer, internal relations, and external relations). Board members also serve 2-year terms, so there is always likely to be some turnover each year. Anyone who is interested in serving as an officer should contact Shevek McKee or Jon Fure.

Annual Meeting

Jon Fure said the Annual Meeting had been scheduled for June, and the board had postponed it, thinking that maybe it would be possible to have an in-person meeting in September or October, but it's looking like we will need to figure out how to make it a virtual meeting and develop procedures for voting online and / or by mail. A board member suggested that we should have an in-person, safe, accessible option for people who might not have access to a good internet connection. Concerns were expressed about COVID-19. Jon Fure said he would explore some possible options, and the CRC officers will finalize the details.

Motion by Crystal Meriwether, seconded by Will Travis, to schedule the CRC Annual Meeting and board member election in September. Motion passed.

Committees

The group discussed committees and task forces. Committees are intended for more standard, ongoing work, whereas a task force is more focused on a particular project with an end date that is determined by the group (once the work is substantially complete).

Shevek shared the following question and notes for discussion:

How could a Task Force/Work Group alternative function?

1. Proposed and Initiated at board meeting
 - a. with a volunteer Chair/Sponsor
2. Monthly meeting time set before following board meeting
3. Invite stakeholders to participate
4. Define scope and goal of project
 - a. Time frame on a Work Group could be anywhere from a few weeks to a year depending on scope of project and motivation of group
 - b. Need to make a template/example/form
5. Research/Survey
 - a. Keep track of sources/contacts/questions

6. Analyze findings and draw conclusions
7. Propose recommendations for board/city
 - a. Need to make a template/example
8. Draft project summary for CRC records/website
 - a. Need to make a template/example/form
 - b. Staff will be available in an advisory role, but not take on the reporting duties

Several people said they liked the idea of being involved in a work group with a defined scope, and offered to follow up with more specific recommendations.

Financial Check-In

Jon Fure provided the monthly financial reports and an update on the 2020 budget and fundraising strategies. Questions were asked about accomplishments that could be highlighted, and about how to articulate what the donated money would pay for. Crystal Meriwether said an example of a recent accomplishment is there was a blinking red light on the top of a tower on the Great Northern building, which shined into the The Airye residential building, which was very annoying. She had contacted the airport and was told that the light is unnecessary, but she was having difficulty finding the right people to make the light stop blinking. Through CRC, she arranged to meet with Council Member Noecker, who was instrumental in fixing the problem. Jon Fure will be preparing an Annual Report that includes recent accomplishments.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.