

CapitolRiver Council Meeting Minutes

June 16, 2020, 5:15-6:45 p.m. Board of Directors Meeting

Board Member Attendees: Shevek McKee, Chris Beckstrom, Emily Larson, Crystal Meriwether, John Ganey, Erin Zolotukhin-Ridgway, Bill Huepenbecker, Jonathan Reissetter, Channon Lemon, Catherine Sweet, Tiffany Brace, Jess Grams, Paul Mandell, Sandra Erickson.

- I. Chair Shevek McKee called the meeting to order, and attendees introduced themselves.
- II. Motion by Crystal Meriwether, seconded by Shevek McKee, to adopt the agenda. Motion passed.
- III. Motion by John Ganey, seconded by Paul Mandell, to approve the May 19, 2020 board meeting minutes.
- IV. Advancing Racial Equity – Reflecting on racial equity in the age of COVID-19 and in the aftermath of the killing of Mr. Floyd.

Shevek McKee said he had a good conversation with Lissa Jones-Lofgren (who was unable to attend this meeting) about this, and asked if anyone had any thoughts. A board member said it has been great to see all of the resources, podcasts, training, etc., that are being publicized. A board member said it was heartening to see all of the young people coming out to advocate for change. A board member agreed, but said those of us who are older should NOT think that the large numbers of young advocates lets us off the hook.

The group discussed recruiting, and whether we can recruit some of those passionate people to spur us on. A board member said the challenge with recruiting passionate people is that they are going through a lot right now. They have been fighting for justice for a long time. Some nonprofits also create barriers to getting involved. People who express their passion for racial equity or other issues get pushed out for being “too radical.” We need to start by looking at our organization and assessing why we aren’t a more diverse group.

A board member said it’s important to set goals and continue working toward them, and by providing periodic updates, people can tell what we are working toward, and might be interested in learning more.

Channon Lemon said there is value in CRC’s community engagement from an economic development standpoint. For example, we could advocate for more meaningful participation in planning, such as planning large projects like the Riversedge Ramsey County development. There has also been a lot of discussion about skyways and perception of safety. She asked, have we really brought people to the table who we think are part of the problem to see if we can weave all of our voices into everyday decision-making? Disparities are broad and vast. We don’t need to have the most important impact, just need to have an impact that makes sense in a meaningful way.

Information and Discussion Items

- V. Public safety issues downtown, especially in Mears Park

Shevek McKee said there are groups trying to organize cleanup efforts, and he encouraged CRC to be involved as they feel comfortable. A board member said the public dialogue (on Facebook, for example) has been a blatant, racist assault by angry White people who don’t want people of color in the park. The group discussed the apparent large number of people hanging around, and sometimes there are people angrily screaming at each other, so it can be an intimidating environment. The group discussed hotels that are housing people who are unable to stay with a friend or relative, or in a homeless shelter.

Shevek McKee said he has had good conversations with staff at the Listening House, People Incorporated and Radius Health. All three organizations have had people in the park talking with people.

- VI. Sakura request for gambling license. The board members discussed this request to sell pull tabs and didn't have concerns. A board member said the City requires money that is raised to stay in the city, so this will benefit charitable organizations in Saint Paul. In order to receive proceeds, the organization normally sends volunteers to sell the pull tabs, and CRC could consider doing this as a fundraiser.
- VII. Financial Report: Jon Fure presented the monthly financial statements and the IRS 990 form for 2019.
- Motion by Crystal Meriwether, seconded by John Ganey, to approve the content of the IRS 990 for 2019. Motion passed.

New Business

- VIII. Annual Meeting Update: Board members' terms normally expire after the Annual Meeting, which has been postponed due to the pandemic. Jon Fure suggested that the board could vote to extend the terms for those board members who wish to remain on the board, and that way they could continue serving until the Annual Meeting and election can safely be conducted in person. Motion by Jonathan Reisetter, seconded by Crystal Meriwether, to extend the terms for the following elected board members until the election can take place: Tiffany Brace, John Ganey, Jess Grams, Bill Huepenbecker, Amy Lee, and Catherine Sweet. Motion passed.
- IX. Right Track Internship, Jon Fure: CRC is participating in this program for the second consecutive year. The 2020 budget has \$1,500 allocated, and the intern's name is Aliyah Mohamed. Motion by John Ganey, seconded by Chris Beckstrom, to authorize the hiring of Aliya Mohamed for wages not to exceed \$1,500. Motion passed.

Other Updates / Future Agenda Items

- Saint Paul Library Services updates: Erin Zolotukhin-Ridgway, provided information about contactless pickup and other services available at the libraries. She also said they are working on developing strategies for keeping libraries safe environments, especially since it's normal to go in and pick up several books and periodicals, and put them back, so there are lots of things and surfaces that need to be cleaned constantly.
- Paul Mandell suggested going to the Minnesota History Theatre website, which is one of seven theaters in the metro that is showing a one night 2-show performance on the north wall of the building, which will feature African American artists in response to the killing of George Floyd. It will be on June 22nd, at 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. An event is being planned for August about women's suffrage, too.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.

CRC MISSION

CapitolRiver Council, an official advisory group to the City Council, represents and works in partnership with all District 17 stakeholders to act on urban planning and community building efforts as part of a shared vision to support sustainable, safe, healthy, and vibrant neighborhoods.

CapitolRiver Council Rules of Procedure

Welcome to our meeting! When we make decisions as a group, we want all board members to have the opportunity to participate in the discussion. The following rules enable us to move through our agenda efficiently, while giving people with different opinions the opportunity to participate in the discussion. When we invite guests to participate, we ask that you also agree to the following:

- Turn off or silence cell phones.
- Wait to be recognized by the board chair before speaking.
- Only one person speaks at a time.
- Keep comments brief – please stay within the allotted time on the agenda for committee updates and other agenda items, and keep other questions and comments to 1 minute.
- Keep comments to the agenda item that is being discussed.
- When you have given your opinion or asked a question, allow others time to give their opinion or ask a question before speaking again.
- Avoid making personal attacks or using disrespectful or offensive language.
- Unless otherwise specified in CRC Bylaws or policy, board action requires:
 - A motion by a board member, seconded by another board member (except that a motion by a committee does not need to be seconded).
 - Discussion by board members.
 - Discussion by the public at the discretion of the chair.
 - A majority of board members must vote in favor of the motion.
 - If a board member proposes one or more changes to a motion, the board must first vote on the proposed change(s) and then vote on the motion.
 - If a board member makes a motion to end the debate on an agenda item and call the previous question, and if it is seconded by another board member, the board must vote on that motion without debate, and if a majority of board members vote in favor of the motion to call the previous question, the board must vote on the motion that was being debated.