



**Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission
Tuesday, September 23, 2014 Meeting Minutes**

Minneapolis Television Network (MTN) Studios
125 Main Street SE, Minneapolis, MN

NCEC member attendees: Matthew Dobratz Debra Behrens, Doron Clark, Eric Gustafson, Denis Houle, Ishmael Israel, Maleta Kimmons, Kenya McKnight, Jeffrey Strand, Carol Pass, David Zaffrann and Tessa Wetjen.

NCEC members excused: Andy Hortillosa, Brittany Lewis and Kirk Roggensack.

NCEC members absent: Francisco Segovia.

Commission staff: David Rubedor, Howard Blin, Robert Thompson and Cheyenne Brodeen

Guests: DeAndre Weaver, Derrick Sibley, Lotoya Brown, Larry Harris, Milton Manning, Lawrence Lee and Tommy Revere

1. Public Comment: No members of the public were present to give public comment.

2. Introduction (Action):

The meeting was called to order at 5:18pm with Israel in the Chair.

Agenda: Clark moves to approve the agenda, Zaffrann Seconds the motion. Agenda Approved.

3. Executive Committee Reports (Informational and Action):

Chair's Report: Chair Israel thanked NCEC Commissioners for attending the Joint Community Engagement Forums in July and August. The notes and report are being compiled and the results will be sent out to forum attendees and the NCEC when it is completed.

Secretary Report:

A. Minutes:

Motion: Strand moves to approve the minutes, Wetjen Seconds the motion. Dobratz abstains. Motion carried.

B. Attendance Report: Commissioner Strand reported on attendance. Commissioners Lewis and Roggensack are excused. Commissioner McKnight is in route Quorum was present.

4. NRP Policy Board Report (Informational)

Summary: Chair Strand reported on the actions of the board. The minutes from the September 16th meeting can be found online:

http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@ncr/documents/webcontent/wc_ms1p-132001.pdf.

5. Committee Task Force Reports:

- A. Committee of the Whole:** Strand shared that the September 10th Committee of the Whole (CoW) meeting was attended by Commissioners Zaffrann, Strand, Behrens, Gustafson and Clark and they discussed the Community Innovation Fund and the Equity Steering Committee. Following up on the discussion at the August NCEC meeting the CoW is recommending that the Equity Steering Committee be disbanded and the work continue through the CoW meeting.

Strand also shared that NCR staff is recommending that the Community Innovation Fund Guidelines be put on hold until January 2015 for final approval from City Council. The CoW is recommending that a Community Innovation Fund Committee be established to carry out the work necessary to move the funding program forward. The structure would be similar to the One Minneapolis Fund Committee.

Motion: Strand moves to thank the committee for its work and discharge the Equity Steering Committee and refer work to the Committee of the Whole meeting for the remainder of 2014. Commissioners Gustafson, Lewis and McKnight will be appointed to work with the Neighborhood and Community Relations department staff to coordinate the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement work for the Committee of the Whole sessions. Clark Seconds. Wetjen abstains. Motion carried.

Discussion:

- Wetjen stated that using committees to get work done is very helpful and creates responsibility of the committee to get the work done. She also wanted to make sure that Commissioners Lewis and McKnight were comfortable with this committee being discharged.
- McKnight stated that she and Commissioner Lewis were O.K. disbanding the committee.
- Strand stated the work for the Blueprint for Equity is broad and would like support to discharge the committee so that all commissioners have responsibility in the work.
- McKnight stated that she would like to see work around the Joint Community Engagement meetings finalized and the loose ends tied up.
- Rubedor stated that work of the Focus Groups will wrap up with recommendations at the end of the year, but the work of the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement will continue.

Motion: Zaffrann moves that a standing committee be formed to review applications for the Community Innovation Fund, conduct site visits, develop a scoring system and make recommendations to the full Commission. This committee should have a minimum of four members and a maximum of six members. Strand Seconds the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioners Zaffrann, Houle, Gustafson, McKnight, Behrens, Strand and Pass are interested members to the committee. Zaffrann will be the convener of the first

meeting.

Discussion:

- Israel commented that there have been attendance issues with the sub-committees and wants the group to consider that when creating new committees.
- Strand is in support of forming a Community Innovation Fund (CIF) committee. He wants neighborhoods to know that the NCEC will work to meet their expectations.
- Clark stated that he thinks the CIF committee should be modeled after the One Minneapolis Fund Committee in which Commissioner Wetjen showed great leadership.
- Behrens stated that the idea from the CoW meeting was to float the idea of creating a new committee to see if commissioner members were interested in participating.
- McKnight stated that she was surprised and offended that commission just disbanded the Equity Committee and now wants to create a CIF Committee. She also stated that the Commission needs to think how doing something like this looks in terms of equity.
- Clark stated that the Equity Committee was disbanded in reaction to the comments and questions that Commissioner McKnight had raised that the August NCEC meeting.
- Israel understands Commissioner McKnight point, but he also likes to see the energy behind the CIF Committee.
- Wetjen stated that that was exactly why she didn't want the Equity Committee disbanded.
- Zaffrann stated that he also agrees with Commissioner McKnight's point and feels that a commission of this size will work best under a committee structure to get work done.
- McKnight stated that she only wanted clarification on how the Equity Committee is to operate rather than having it disbanded.

B. One Minneapolis Fund Committee: Wetjen stated that were working on the 3rd iteration of the Request for Proposals guidelines. Also, the committee has decided to bring on an evaluator who will be assisting in evaluating the One Minneapolis Fund program.

C. City Department Engagement Task Force: Clark stated that the work of the Task Force will be put on hold until 2015 so that the Blueprint for Equitable Engagement report can inform the work of the Task Force. Clark and Howard Blin will continue to work on the listening sessions with Public Works and will invite the full NCEC to participate in them when they are scheduled.

6. NCR Report:

6A. Update on Neighborhood Housing Program Changes: Robert Thompson, Neighborhood Manager reported that over most of the last 20 years, neighborhood organizations have relied largely on three nonprofit housing vendors to manage their NRP housing programs: Center for Energy and the Environment (CEE), Greater Metropolitan Housing Corporation (GMHC), and Neighborhood Housing Services (NHS). Neighborhood housing programs managed by these vendors typically include home fix-up revolving and deferred loan programs, homebuyer assistance programs, and emergency loan programs. The vendors may also provide other services, including homeownership counseling, home energy audits and assisting homeowners with contractors. As of June, 2014, CEE administered the NRP home loan and grant programs for 42 neighborhoods. Over the last 20 years, more than 2,500 households had taken advantage of NRP programs through CEE alone.

On March 12, 2014, Citizens for Energy and Environment (CEE) informed the City that, due to increasing costs of administering programs, they were considering changes to the fee schedule for neighborhood NRP housing programs. In meetings with CEE in early April, City staff discussed options to relieve some of the administrative burden, including simpler processes for tracking and reporting program income and generating and distributing reports to neighborhood organizations. NCR staff worked with CEE to begin implementation of some of these changes.

On June 19, 2014, CEE sent a letter to neighborhood organizations notifying them of fee changes, and asked neighborhood organizations to notify CEE by August 31, 2014 of their intent to accept the new fees or cancel their contract. In response, NCR staff organized a meeting on July 29, 2014 to provide neighborhood organizations an opportunity to talk with CEE staff about the new fee structure, and how it would be implemented. The meeting was attended by approximately 20 neighborhood representatives, and NCR provided notes to participants after the meeting.

In response to a request from participants at the July 29, 2014 meeting, NCR invited GMHC to meet with interested neighborhood organizations on August 21, 2014. At this meeting, GMHC provided an overview of its fee structure and services. This meeting was attended by 15 neighborhood representatives, and NCR staff provided notes to participants after the meeting.

As of September 2, 2014, ten neighborhood organizations had opted to stay with CEE, 20 had decided to cancel contracts with CEE, and 12 had requested an extension to the deadline provided by CEE to respond (see attached document for breakdown). Many of the neighborhood organizations that have chosen to cancel contracts with CEE have indicated that they will likely move their programs to GMHC. Other neighborhoods have indicated they will take this opportunity to assess their housing programs and develop new strategies to better address neighborhood housing needs.

A major consideration with this transition is the capacity of the City's Development Finance Division staff and GMHC. Because of limited staff time available at the Development Finance Division, and the need for GMHC to increase capacity over time to meet the increased need, we are anticipating a gradual transition over the next year, prioritizing neighborhoods with more immediate needs (such as emergency loan programs and current level of demand for home loan programs).

Motion: Wetjen moves to move item 7A to item 6B and item 6B to 6C, Strand seconds the motion. Motion carried.

6B. Strategic Planning: Wetjen stated that she believes it is important for the Commission to create a strategic plan to work from. She would like to discuss strategic planning in more detail at the October Meeting.

Motion: Wetjen moves to direct the Executive Committee and up to four commissioners to develop and complete a process of short term planning for the commission's strategic plan to discuss at the October meeting to be ratified in November, Dobratz Seconds the motion. Motion carried.

Commissioners Wetjen, Houle, Zaffrann and Dobratz will work with the Executive Committee on the strategic planning.

6C. 2015 NCR Budget: Director Rubedor stated that he had hoped to have more time to spend discussing the 2015 Budget with the commission. He plans to go over the budget in detail at the October NCEC meeting. He briefly noted that NCR's 2015 Budget remains the same as last year with an 8.9% increase, Neighborhood funding is solid and the NCR department will give their budget presentation to the City Council on October 10th.

Comments:

- Pass stated that \$65,000 is not enough to keep neighborhoods going and they cannot do anything besides stay alive and some neighborhoods are even making projections when they will be going out of business.
- Clark noted that increase in the One Minneapolis Fund is fantastic, however, the One Minneapolis Fund had always been funded by the general fund in the past, not from the TIF funds because it hadn't fit the definition, so it would be great to see the rationale of that.
- Strand also commented that he was concerned about the use of the TIF Funds for the One Minneapolis Fund. It is a small but significant policy change. This document was in the NRP legal sandbox and he just wants to make sure that this change is in compliance with the law.
- A handful of commissioners also stated concern with some of the proposed funding for the TIF dollars and that they hope to have a discussion and get more clarification from the department on what that will mean to neighborhoods.

Adjourn:

Motion Israel second Strand to adjourn. Motion carried. The September 23, 2014 meeting was adjourned by Chair Israel at 7:30p.m.