



Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission
Tuesday, April 22, 2014 Meeting Minutes
Columbia Park Manor

NCEC member attendees: Denis Houle, Matthew Dobratz, Jeffrey Strand, Ishmael Israel, Kirk Roggensack, Matt Barthelemy, Doron Clark, Andy Hortillosa, Brittany Lewis, Francisco Segovia, Carol Pass and Sacido Shaie.

NCEC members excused: Tessa Wetjen, Kenya McKnight and Andy Hortillosa.

NCEC members absent: Henry Jimenez.

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

Guests: Elise Ebhardt and Adja Gildersleve from Minneapolis IT.

Agenda Item	Content
1. Public Comment	Peter Rickmyer was present and gave public comment prior to the meeting. He shared that he felt that persons with disabilities were under-represented in their neighborhood organizations.
2. Introduction (Action)	The meeting was called to order at 5:21pm with Israel in the Chair. A. Agenda. Motion: Strand moves to approve the agenda, Lewis seconds the motion. Motion carried unanimously.
3. Executive Committee Reports (Informational and Action)	Secretary Report: A. Minutes. Motion: Commissioner Strand moves to approve the minutes, Clark seconds the motion. Dobratz abstains. Motion carried. B. Attendance Report: Commissioner Strand reported on attendance. Commissioners Hortillosa, Wetjen and McKnight reported their non-attendance.
4. Digital Equity Discussion (Discussion)	Summary: Elise Ebhardt discussed the Digital Equity Program in Minneapolis. It is a program to bridge the digital divide and close the employment gap in Minneapolis. The City of Minneapolis IT Department Partnered with PCs for

People, USI Wireless, University of Minnesota-Broadband Access Project, and the Minnesota WorkForce Centers in Minneapolis. The program saw successes during the pilot stage and now the Minneapolis IT department would like input from the NCEC on how neighborhood organizations could be a partner in this program moving forward.

Discussion:

- Roggensack asked how many companies in the City of Minneapolis provide internet access and what do they cost.
 - Elise responded that Comcast and Century link provide internet access, as well as USI wireless. USI wireless is the least expensive.
- Roggensack also commented that possibly adding more internet providers in the City of Minneapolis would help lower the cost.
- Pass commented that many of the East Phillips board members do not have computers or internet access at home. She asked if the Community Participation Program would allow the Neighborhood Organization to purchase computers and internet access for board members.
 - Robert Thompson, Neighborhood Support Manager, responded and said that the Community Participation Program guidelines would not allow an organization purchasing computers or internet access for individuals.
- Barthelemy commented that the City needs to make its own website more engaging. He said he is also happy to hear that outreach is being done with community organizations so that those who are not connected with their neighborhood organization are not left out.
- Strand commented that the City should target its unused or excess Wi-Fi capacity towards those who need it and should be partnering with the Park board and Libraries to come up with some concrete recommendations to get this gap closed.
- Lewis was surprised to hear that the Community Participation Program guidelines wouldn't be able to address digital Equity. Some neighborhoods don't have coffee shops or li-

braries in them so the access to internet and a computer at home is a real need.

- Clark clarified that the Community Participation Program guidelines wouldn't allow for a neighborhood organization to purchase a computer or internet access for an individual board member. That wouldn't exclude the organization from developing a program related to digital equity. Neighborhoods could also use their NRP funds for a program, too.
- Segovia commented that Minneapolis needs to develop an overall plan to get internet and computer access to everyone. Little plans here and there won't help. USI wireless is very slow and doesn't work well at all.
- Houle asked if there was some way to donate. The City should be able to take donations for this. Also, have you been talking to the school district about this? Every child should receive an iPad from the school.
- Strand commented that he questions neighborhood organizations funding being responsible for this due to reduced funding levels under the Community Participation Program when compared to the former NRP. If this is a city goal, the city should develop the capital improvement budget to pay for it.
- Dobratz would like to determine who (and where) computers are needed and focus on that.
- Director Rubedor commented that he concurred with the concern about neighborhood levels of funding being able to pay for digital equity, but that the neighborhood organizations can undertake the community engagement around the issues.

5. Neighborhood Best Practices Guides (Discussion)

Summary: Director Rubedor shared that in recent months Robert Thompson, the NCR Neighborhood Support Manager, has presented neighborhood best practices guides on a number of subjects. The guides are intended to serve as resources for neighborhood organizations on topics such as by-laws, board responsibilities and outreach to residents.

There has been some discussion by Commission members on

whether elements of these guides should be included in the funding guidelines for the Community Participation Program.

Rubedor suggested to the NCEC that this discussion be tied into the work and outreach process of the Blueprint for Equity and ask the stakeholders their opinion.

Discussion:

- Strand wanted to make sure that nothing in the Best Practices guides are inconsistent with the Community Participation Program guidelines. NCR staff responded that they are not.
- Lewis commented that the role of the NCEC is to make policy suggestions and have them implemented. It would be very concerning if you shared these as guides then pulled pieces out and made them policy. Neighborhoods might have a problem with that. This should be tabled until we decide if we want these guides to be policy or best practices.
- Pass asked if these guides have gone out to neighborhoods. If they are just guides they can be shared, but if they are policy, then much more input and feedback from neighborhoods is needed.
- Clark commented that if these guides become policy, then that is something neighborhoods would have to do, with less money.
- Strand commented that he supports Rubedor's suggested plan. He noted that the NCEC/NCR has several items going out for 45-60 day comment. He suggested consolidating and taking a holistic approach to the various policies under development.
- Israel commented that he supports Rubedor's suggested plan but wants to caution to not over-engage neighborhoods and community groups.

6. Committee and Task Force Reports (Discussion and Informational)

A. Committee of the Whole: Chair Israel shared that at the Committee of the Whole meeting held on Wednesday, April 9th they discussed the comments received from the Community Innovation Fund outreach meetings. The Mayor has three very important goals to include in the

program as well as the City Goals that need to be considered in the program. The May and June Committee of the Whole meetings will be used to develop and finalize the program. The proposed program guidelines will be brought to the June full commission meeting for approval from the NCEC to release the program for a 60 day comment period.

- B. NCEC/HCEC Joint Meetings:** The group is looking at hold meetings in June and July. Two questions that will be asked is "How can the City of Minneapolis help neighborhood and community organizations better engage with the city" and "How can neighborhood and community organizations help the City better engage with them." There is also discussion about offering small amounts of money to organizations that are helping with outreach. NCR will arrange for a facilitator. There will be a budget for child care. These matters will come back to the NCEC CoW.
- C. One Minneapolis Fund Committee:** Howard Blin, NCR Staff reported proposals are being reviewed by April 29th then the committee will reconvene to discuss proposals.
- D. City Department Engagement Task Force:** Commissioner Clark reported that the Task Force is looking at bringing forth recommendations for City Departments on how they can use better engagement practices. At the April 16th Task Force meeting the group held a conference call with Portland's office of Neighborhood Involvement.
- E. Community Connections Conference:** Commissioner Roggensack commented that the post-conference report is being created and will be presented to the City Council in May. The group has decided to continue conference planning all year long for the 2015 conference. Current representatives will serve through June 2014, and new membership will be considered at the July meeting. No objections were raised.
- F. Equity Steering Committee:** This committee was created to work with the NCR department as they move the Blueprint for Equity forward. Commissioner Lewis will send out a doodle for the next meeting.

7. NCR Report
(Informational)

Summary: Director Rubedor shared that he would like to bring Karen Francois to the next NCEC meeting to discuss the Racial Equity Toolkit. He also reported that there are 3 positions being filled in the NCR department. The Southeast Asian and East African community specialist's positions have been filled and the African American community specialist position closes on Friday, April 25th.

He also stated that the department is working on its business plan and budget on a fast track process.

Comments:

- Strand commented that the NCR business plan should come to the next NCEC meeting for comment as that is provided for in the City Council charge to the NCEC.
- Commissioner Shaie mentioned a difficult subject that Somali family members had been killed. She stated that people need to stand up and talk about these issues.

8. New Business
(Discussion)

A. Commissioner Open Forum:
No new business was discussed.

Adjourn

The April 22, 2014 meeting was adjourned by Chair Israel at 7:21p.m.