

Meeting Minutes

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission Tuesday, October 27, 2015 – Minneapolis Central Library

Meeting attendees: Raya Esmaeili, Braulio Carrasco, David Zaffrann, Jeanne Montrese, Nick Cichowicz, David Boyd, Dennis Houle, Queen Kimmons, Tessa Wetjen, Antione Martinneau, Debra Behrens, Eric Gustafson.

NCEC members excused: Francisco Segovia, Doron Clark, Ishmael Israel and Nasser Mussa.

NCEC members absent:

1. Public Comment

No members of the public were present to speak during this allotted time period.

2. Introductions

Call to order: Vice-Chair Wetjen called the regularly scheduled October 27, 2015 meeting to order at 5:12p.m.

Approve Agenda:

Motion: Boyd moves, seconded by Esmaeili, to approve the agenda with the correction of Central Area Neighborhood Development Organization's name as it is listed on the agenda, add agenda item 5c One Minneapolis Fund Update, and, under the Upcoming Committee Meetings, change the following: delete the old Neighborhoods 2020 meeting and add new One Minneapolis Fund meeting on November 4th and the new Neighborhoods 2020 meeting on November 19th. Motion carried unanimously.

Future Meeting Dates: The committee discussed the December 2015 NCEC meeting. NCR staff will work with MTN to determine a location.

Motion: Boyd moves, seconded by Montrese to move the December NCEC meeting to December 15th. Houle, Nay, Wetjen abstain. Motion carried.

3. Executive Committee Reports

Chair's Report: Commissioner Wetjen, Vice-Chair of the Committee reported to the commission in Chair Israel's absence that the Executive Committee is still in the process of working with NCR staff to look back through One Minneapolis Fund proposals for possible policy issues to bring forward.

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Para asistencia 612-673-2700 - Rau kev pab 612-673-2800 - Hadio aad Caawimaad u baahantahay 612-673-3500.

Secretary's Report:

1. Minutes:

August Minutes: Cichowicz moves, seconded by Kimmons, to approve the August 27, 2015 Minutes. Motion carried unanimously.

September Minutes: Esmaeili moves, seconded by Zaffrann, to approve the September 22, 2015 Minutes with one correction; change Behrens from absent to excused. Behrens abstains. Motion carried.

2. Attendance Report: There is a quorum present with 12 Commissioners in attendance. Commissioners Clark, Segovia, Mussa and Israel are excused from the October meeting.

3. Bylaws Task Force: Zaffrann reported that Chair Israel was inadvertently left out of the meeting to review the bylaws. The Task Force would like to present and discuss the changes to the bylaws today, however, it would like to let Chair Israel weigh in and offer any friendly amendments before next month's adoption of the bylaws.

Zaffrann outlined a few changes that the Task Force is proposing. The first is to change term limits from three, 2- year terms to two 3-year terms. This would allow for greater continuation of membership and allow new members to have more time to get acquainted and understand the way the Commission operates before their term is up. The other changes would be to conduct a more robust orientation for new members and seat new members on the commission as non-voting members two months prior to the start of their terms so they are able to better understand the way the board operates before their first meeting.

Comments:

- Esmaeili asked what happens to current members during the transition.
 - Zaffrann responded that this will take a Council action to change, and that current members would not be affected by the transition of term limits.
- Boyd stated that it should be up to the new commissioners to take the initiative to pre-learn about the commission.
- Wetjen asked if these new terms would be lifetime term limits.
 - Zaffrann responded that he interprets it that way.
- Carrasco commented that the purpose of the changes is to ease the transition of new members into the commission. He also interpreted the term limits as lifetime limits.
- Kimmons commented that the new members not being allowed to vote for two months might be seen as exclusionary.
 - Carrasco replied that the new members would be appointed but they'd be seated early as non-voting members.
- Esmaeili noted that the orientation should allow interaction between new members and all existing members.
- Wetjen noted that the excused versus unexcused absences should be looked at.
- Boyd commented that NCR should offer a more detailed orientation.
- Wetjen commented that section 3.1.5. notes a 5 year Community Engagement Plan. The committee should revisit that.
- Houle stated that he supports the 2 month training as it took him 1 year to fully get acquainted with how the commission operates.

- Cichowicz stated that he supports the orientation process.

4. **October Committee of the Whole:** A recap of the October Committee of the Whole will be given during agenda item 5a.

4. Neighborhoods

- A. **City Funding of Central Area Neighborhood Development Organization (CANDO):** Wetjen said that this was brought to the commission's attention because there are people involved in CANDO on our Commission and others that are interested in this topic. Commissioners received a copy of the letter that Director Rubedor sent to the Executive Director of CANDO regarding the Community Innovation Fund grant they received and the use of the Community Participation Funds. The Commission oversees the development of the guidelines of both funds, and makes funding recommendations to the Council on the Community Innovation Fund program. In the letter, Director Rubedor advises CANDO that some of the activities outlined in their proposal would be considered labor organizing and is against the rules of the funding guidelines.

The discussion was brought forth to the Commission because there is concern whether or not it was appropriate for the Director to send a letter of this nature to a neighborhood organization. The question is for the commission to determine how, as a commission, to address this situation.

Comments:

- Zaffrann stated that it is his understanding that there was a verbal conversation similar in nature to one with Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha (CTUL), a recipient of the One Minneapolis Fund. This is concerning for the Department to be threatening the funding of a neighborhood organization and a grantee of the One Minneapolis fund with terms that seem to be unfounded. These organizations are doing good work. These organizations, whether or not they are doing union organizing, are not doing political advocacy. NCR, through the guidelines can say what is and is not allowed for uses of these funds, however, in any of the guidelines it is unclear how NCR could say that either of these organizations are doing union organizing. What they are doing is issue advocacy and organizing.
- Wetjen commented that we don't have the attached Community Benefits Agreements referenced in the letter here; NCR staff will send it out.
- Blin responded that this letter was sent in response to a number of verbal conversations held with CANDO around the Community Benefits Agreement. At this point, that issue may be moot because we have an agreement with CANDO about how the Community Innovation Fund grant can and cannot be used. Similarly, there is an agreement with CTUL regarding the One Minneapolis Fund grant. This letter was sent as advisory to the organizations notifying them that there are some limitations on the uses of public money, one being political activity. These funds are prohibited to be used for union organizing. It can be challenging to determine what is union organization, so we were simply advising that if public money is used for union organizing, they may not get reimbursed.

- Carrasco stated that he lives in Corcoran, but when his family moved to Minneapolis, they lived in the Central neighborhood and he wanted to note that when Henry started as the Executive Director there was a shift in the atmosphere of the neighborhood. Central has become such a vibrant and active place because of him. He also noted that engagement is another word for organizing and all engagement for people in under-represented communities is political.
- Kimmons asked if there was a Community Benefits Agreement with the Seward Co-op. She also stated that when this proposal came in front of the Community Innovation Fund Committee, she didn't want to vote for it because there was no agreement with the neighborhood and Seward Co-op. Did we give the money to CANDO do job training?
 - Martinneau stated that there are ongoing conversations with the Seward Co-op regarding the Community Benefits Agreement. Wetjen also responded that CANDO received money for economic development.
- Martinneau wanted to clarify some of NCR staff comments. Conversations are ongoing between CANDO, Bryant and the Seward Co-op regarding the Community Benefits Agreement. Just to be clear, the statements in the Community Benefits Agreement related to labor neutrality not labor organization. It asked that the Co-op not interfere with any attempts for them to organize. And related to the Community Innovation Fund grant the focus has been on connecting people to job training programs and when new immigration laws come into place, CANDO will work with individuals on connecting them to the proper resources.
- Gustafson commented that the Neighborhoods 2020 committee is looking at getting high quality training developed so that future situations like this could be avoided. He also wanted to echo commissioner Carrasco's comments about CANDO and they have been doing great work on building leadership. Gustafson also questioned how this item landed on our agenda? What action is being taken? This is the first time that something like this has come up; why not other neighborhood issues? He is aware of a situation where a neighborhood organizations policies are excluding a whole class of people. This seems to be an issue between the neighborhood and the City.
 - Wetjen commented that the Executive Committee takes requests for agenda items, and one of the Executive Committee members wanted to discuss this item. This is also in front of us because we are responsible for creating the guild lines and recommending these proposals for approval.

Motion: Zaffrann moves, seconded by Boyd to request that the NCR Department provide a written reasoning for the basis of this letter and why they are advising grantees that their activities are in violation of any funding that the NCEC helped govern and approve. Along with a copy of the Central Area Development Organization's Community Innovation Fund grant application, language from the City attorney that defining what union organizing is and the draft language that would have been added to the Community Benefits Agreement. Motion carried unanimously.

- Cichowicz asked that staff be allowed to respond before the motion is voted on.

- Blin responded that Commissioner Martinneau is correct that discussions are on-going between CANDO, Bryant and the Seward Co-op. In fact, the City is funding the mediator that is helping the discussions take place. The NCR Department and CANDO has met many times regarding their Community Innovation Fund grant and to summarize their grant, they were talking about doing job training, immigration legal services, and general outreach on all of those activities. All of those activities are eligible, even organizing around the Community Benefits Agreement is eligible, except for when it steps into that area of union organizing. NCR became aware of this because City Attorney's wanted to make sure that CANDO was aware that they could not do union organizing and get reimbursed through these funds with it. That was the purpose of the letter to ensure that CANDO knew that.
- Boyd would like this item tabled until we have the additional information.

5. Community Engagement

- A. Blueprint for Equitable Engagement:** Blin shared that this item was discussed at the October 14th Committee of the Whole. The commission gave staff some feedback on the document and staff revised the document based on feedback received from the commission, then sent out the document for a 45-day review period. The [document](#) that was included in the NCEC packet is the revised version with the commission's comments.
- B. City Department Engagement Committee:** Blin commented that the committee is working on revamping the City's Community Engagement Process Model Guidebook.
- C. One Minneapolis Fund Committee:** Wetjen commented that this committee is looking for feedback on the guidelines for next year regarding how two tracks are working, Boards and Commissions development and organizing and leadership development.

6. Policy

- A. Food Policy:** Wetjen stated that through some initial research, the City has a Food Council and they have developed policies related to garden lots. It would be best for the commission to look at their recommendations and develop a resolution to support them.

7. NCR Report

- A. Resident Survey:** Blin reported that The City conducts a survey of residents approximately every two years to measure opinions and expectations of City goals and services. A request for proposals was issued for the survey in late 2014 with four proposals submitted. A team consisting of representatives from the Public Works, Fire, HR, Coordinators Office, Civil Rights, IT and Neighborhood and Community Relations Departments reviewed the proposals and selected the Wilder Research division of the Wilder Foundation as the most responsive proposer on the project. The contract will cover surveys to be conducted in early 2016 and again in early 2018.

The survey will use a sample of 1,100 residents which will be geographically and demographically representative of the Minneapolis population. Special emphasis will be placed

on reaching the underrepresented communities, including the African American, American Indian, Latino, East African, Southeast Asian, residents with disabilities, LGBTQA adults and youth ages 18-25.

Previous surveys were conducted by telephone. With the decrease in households with land lines, it became increasingly difficult to gather a representative sample. The sample of residents participating in the upcoming surveys will be contacted by mail and asked to complete an on-line survey questionnaire. Those not responding to the first request will receive a home visit by Wilder who will provide assistance in completing the survey. Wilder will provide multi-lingual surveyors to support greater inclusion.

A team of representatives from City departments will work through the end of the year to develop the survey instrument. In order to track trends in resident opinions, many of the questions will remain the same from previous surveys. There will also be the opportunity to ask new questions which address issues currently before the City.

Comments:

- Esmaili asked when the questions will come to the NCEC.
 - Staff responded that it would be likely that they would come to one of the next meetings.
- Gustafson mentioned it would be interesting to get insights from individuals who are not involved in their neighborhood.

Staff will send out results of the last [Resident Survey](#).

8. New Business

- Behrens mentioned that NCR was going to organize a NCEC gathering. Has a date been set for that?
 - NCR staff will look to schedule something for early December.

Adjournment: Zaffrann moves, Esmaili seconds, to adjourn at 6:43p.m. Motion carried.