**SNG Board Meeting Minutes**

6:30 – 8:30pm, June 26, 2024

**ATTENDANCE**

***Board Members Present****:* Tami Traeger, Terry Barnes, Ryan Morgan, Mary Pumphrey, Lisa Boehlke, Steve McCauley, Andy Carroll, Farah Habad, Ron Schlatter, Greg Smalley

***Board Members Absent:***

***Others Attending****:*  Celeste Robinson, Policy Aide to Robin Wonsley, Councilperson for Ward 2

**PRELIMINARIES**

Mary called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. The meeting began with welcoming newly elected board member, Greg Smalley.

**Consent Agenda**:

* Approve this Agenda
* Approve minutes of May Board Meeting
* Financial Report

**Motion: The consent agenda is adopted**. ( Motion passed unanimously.)

**Election of Officer Positions**

The Board approved the following slate of officers.

* President Andy Carroll
* Vice President Farah Habad
* Secretary             Mary Pumphrey
* Treasurer            Ron Schlatter

**Updates**

* Reports
  + \* Financial Report Narrative - Ron
  + Garden Tour Recap -Terry
    - Increase in ticket sales to around 165+
    - Organizers were able to secure several sponsors including Xcel Energy and TrueStone Financial.
    - An estimated $3500 was raised for SNG
    - There are some expenses left to be reimbursed. Ron asked board members with outstanding expenses to submit them as soon as possible.
  + Small Grant Program - Andy, Ryan, Tami
    - - Status of awards process
      * 17 applicants
      * 10 programs were chosen after a review/ revision process. In some cases applicants were asked to revise project proposals to reflect smaller awards than requested.
    - 2 programs can be funded through the Equitable Engagement Fund (SLRJ and BIPOC shared space)
      * SLRJ funding was approved in May
      * The board has not yet approved funds for the BIPOC shared space.

Something about Little Free Library

* RISE event - - Andy
  + Equitable Engagement Fund can be used for project planning costs.
  + Jasmine Epps-Flowers has agreed to work on this project on a contract basis.
* \*Hub of Heaven - Tami
  + No ask of the board at this time
  + Steve and Tami attended a meeting with the City of MPLS’s Homegrown Minneapolis program and the Minneapolis Park Board’s Community Garden Program.
  + The City has proposed a pilot program to sell plots of land owned by the city currently occupied by community gardens to the Park Board.
    - The City has proposed the Park Board pay $22,000 for the Hub of Heaven site
    - While the Park Board is not in the business of developing green space, the land could still be sold in the future
  + Steve and Tami will continue to monitor the situation.
  + Steve suggested that SNG contact Becky Alper to advocate for the Park Board to agree to purchase the site
  + Farah asked if there are any other possibilities for ownership of the land. Tami and Steve said there are none at this time that are known to the Hub of Heaven organizers.
  + Ryan asked if there is a possibility of another neighborhood entity, neighbor, group of neighbors, or other groups to submit proposals.
  + Farah asked for a process to suggest SNG purchase the site.
    - Discussion tabled until discussion section of meeting.

* \*Somali Independence Day - Tami
  + Farah offered to help Tami find an interpreter since Mahamoud is not available.

Written reports and committee notes are in the board materials folder. Please send

any questions to admin@sng.org.

* Celeste Robinson provided updates from Councilperson Wonsley (Ward 2)
  + An ongoing issue with contractor yard on 27th ave is being triaged. The business has requested a variance and there will be a 11th of July public hearing. Councilperson’s office will set a meeting for staff to meet with community members.
  + Council is considering the mayor’s proposed police contract. There will be a meeting on Tuesday of next week to discuss the proposal. Celeste encouraged SNG and other groups to submit letters regarding the contract proposal.
  + Councilperson’s office is working on efforts to reduce vacancies including a proposed ordinance change that will reduce the amount of time that buildings can receive a pause in administrative fees for vacancy.
    - There is a dashboard on the city website that tracks buildings that are vacant
* (Proposed?) Renter’s rights ordinance to require that landlords give prospective tenants information about the property including any recent violations and to provide tenants with information about their rights at move-in/ lease signing.

Andy asked if Councilperson Wonsley would consider coordinating office hours at Seward Co-op with SNG as Councilperson Osman’s office has done. Celeste said she thought the Councilperson would be open to this idea.

Greg asked about Councilperson Wonsley’s response to drug use among the unhoused population in West Seward. Celeste said she agreed that the City’s response was inadequate and that this is a city-wide issue that Councilperson Wonsley is aware of and interested in.

**Action Items**

**Motion:** The Board of Directors of Seward Neighborhood Group, upon review and

recommendation by its Community Development Committee, approves and endorses the request of the Debre Selam Medhanealem Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo

Church (DSMA Church) to build its church at 2629 30th Ave. S, including its request

for a height variance; With the understanding that the DSMA Church will communicate

each quarter with the CDC chair and/or Board representative about project progress

until the project is completed.

**Discussion:** Mary asked why the CDC’s recommendation was contingent on continual updates from DSMA. Lisa and Steve said this was requested because of the DSMA’s history of not responding to communication from SNG and Seward Neighbors (Truck Parking, Homeless Encampment)

Discussion of approval process CDC -> SNG board

Motion to table until decision is made regarding process for committee recommendations for Board actions. Motion passed. Steve and Lisa opposed.

Lisa made a motion to untable. Steve seconded. Passed unanimously.

Lisa made a motion to amend the motion to the original language proposed by the CDC.

Steve seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion on motion as written by the CDC. General agreement that original motion was substantially same as the amended motion with the notable difference that the motion as written emphasizes that SNG will not support DSMA’s proposed parking lot screening plans. Lisa and Steve said neighbors who live close to the site had requested this condition.

Lisa called the question

Vote:

In favor - Steve, Greg, Lisa, Ron, Terry

Opposed -

Abstain -Mary, Ryan, Tami, Andy

Motion passes. The Board will address the process with CDC going forward.

**Motion:** The Board of Directors of Seward Neighborhood Group, upon review and

recommendation by its Community Development Committee, endorses and supports

plans of the Arbitrarium Housing Co-operative @ 2200 28th Ave. S to establish

long-term, non-profit, shared affordable housing for low-income creative individuals.

Does anyone remember who made the motion? Does it matter?

Unanimously passes.

Finance Committee approved a funding request of up to $200 for drink and

refreshment at an organizing gathering of block club leaders at Darling Cafe in July.

Finance Committee will provide board with recommendations on policy for small (under $500) requests

Finance Committee will amend budget to account for roughly $500 in such requests each month ($6000 annually)

**Discussion**

**State of the Board**

VP is in charge of board training and development. Andy will work with Farah on a board development program.

**Committee work and board activities**

Andy said he has a vision to empower committees to do more and for bringing more community members into the committee process so that the Board can focus on strategic work.

Terry described the model she has established for the **Environmental Committee** (she has served as facilitator rather than “worker bee”).

Andy said SNG should think “committees first.”

Tami said she would like to see the **Community Engagement Committee** reactivated. Possible projects could include work with Hub of Heaven, survey work including office hours at co-op, renter engagement and engagement with the larger Seward community.

Ryan said there may need to be a standing committee for the **Small Grants Committee** and that there should be a **Fundraising Committee**.

Andy said he would like to establish a **Health Equity workgroup** as an Ad Hoc to support the RISE event.

Andy said he thinks a **Small Grants Committee** might also be better constituted as a workgroup.

A suggestion was made to call such groups, “action groups,” rather than “work groups.”

The group discussed whether every committee should have at least one board member.

**Administrative task management**

- Is there a need for hired support, either contractor(s) or staff position(s), to

meet the administrative and/or community engagement needs of the

Organization?

- What, if any, needs that exist?

Andrea was managing social media, website, and newsletter.

What can be put in place to support basic functions like monitoring the inbox and other communications?

Can we determine how many hours and what functions are needed?

Reach out to Andrea to request handoff (passwords etc) and see if she’d like to continue with project work.

**Old Business**

Apologies. I was not at the meeting in May. There seem to be lots of loose bits of

unfinished questions or actions that I did not have details to describe. Rather than

leaving them in emails and potentially lost, I collected them here in case they need

to be addressed in the future. Not intended to be part of our agenda business

(unless they need to be!)

**Organizational impact of website and newsletter contractor leaving**

EC will determine the process for monitoring [admin@sng.org](mailto:admin@sng.org) and other communications.

Mitigation plan for getting the website out.

Clarification of Jim Lovold position on the Board

Mahamoud activity report

Board Introductory and Orientation Board Training and mentorship

Flag Committee

Office Hours for the community

Goal: Moving toward formation of committees to undertake doing of projects

Groundbreaking for Wadaag Commons - Friday 28, 2024, 10:30-11:00 am

1900 E. 22nd Street, Mpls

ExCom to meet with LCC and CDC

Adjourn 8:30 pm.