

Meeting Minutes

Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission
Tuesday, May 24, 2016 – St. Mary's University Event Center

Meeting attendees: Ishmael Israel, Francisco Segovia, David Zaffrann, David Boyd, Raya Esmaeili, Nick Cichowicz, Queen Kimmons, Denis Houle, Antoine Martinneau, Eric Gustafson, Nasser Mussa, Braulio Carrasco

NCEC members excused: Jeanne Montrese, Tessa Wetjen.

NCEC members absent: Doron Clark and Debra Behrens.

Staff Present: Howard Blin

1. Public Comment

No one appeared to address the Commission.

2. Introductions

Call to order: Israel called the March meeting of the Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission to order at 5:14 p.m. Commissioners introduced themselves.

It was noted that due to travel commitments in June, this would be his last meeting. Chair Israel thanked him for his three years of service to the Commission.

Cichowicz noted that the Downtown Neighborhood Association has extended the deadline for applying for board membership.

2b Agenda Approval:

Motion: The agenda was revised to remove item 4a, 2016 One Minneapolis Fund Recommendations. The agenda was approved unanimously.

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

3. Executive Committee Reports

3a. Chairs' Report

Chair Israel stated he had no comments.

3b. Secretary's Report - February minutes

Motion by Boyd, seconded by Esmaili to approve the minutes as written. Motion carried unanimously.

3c. Orientation Task Force

Esmaili reported on the work of the Orientation Task Force. The orientation packet is being developed. A date for the orientation will be set in the near future. A process is also being developed for the member exit interviews.

3d. June Community Forum

Kimmons and Blin reported that the Forum would be held on June 15 at the Sabathani Community Center. The topic will be barriers to participation in voting and elections.

Israel asked if there was sufficient time for

Zaffrann asked for a show of hands to indicate which Commissioners would be there.

The Commission decided the forum would be held from 5:30 to 7:00 PM.

4. Community Engagement

4b. Community Connections Conference

Blin reported on the conference noting that it had the largest audience of any conference.

Cichowicz reported from the conference planning team. He noted that there was good participation from the NCEC. One question for next year is to again do something specific to NCEC or participate in the more general learning labs. It was discussed that NCEC have a greater presence, perhaps a table.

Israel stated that given the timing of the conference, it could be used as a recruiting tool for boards and commissions and specifically the NCEC. Nexus Community Partners should also promote their Boards and Commissions Leadership Institute.

Boyd stated that he and Raya Esmaili helped facilitate a learning lab and found that participants were generally interested in how the City operates.

Kimmons also stated that there was a good turnout from the community and from City staff. A learning lab regarding renters included good dialogue between the City and the community.

Zaffrann hoped to see in further conferences more connection to the work of the Commission. For example, the projects funded by the One Minneapolis Fund and Community Participation Fund could be highlighted. Or more structured discussion on the Community Participation Program.

Israel stated that the Commission may want to form a task force to work on future Conference ideas. He thanked Cichowicz and Carrasco for their work on the conference planning committee.

4c. City Department Engagement Committee

Cichowicz reported that the next meeting on the Committee will be held on June 2nd at 5:30. The agenda for the committee will be to review the previous work of the Committee and determine what the future work plan will be for the Committee. He invited any Commissioners who are interested to attend.

Israel noted that many of the topics raised at the December forum would fall under the purview of this committee. He thought the Committee would be involved in much of the work of the Commission going forward.

5. Neighborhoods

5a. Israel presented the report of the NCEC Grievance Committee. The Committee met on May 11th to consider an appeal of a grievance decision by the NCR Director in the matter of a grievance brought against the Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association (LHENA). The Committee consisted of Commissioners Esmaeili, Boyd, Cichowicz and himself. Present were the two people bringing the grievance forward and a representative of LEHNA. Israel then read the following report into the record:

**Report of the NCEC Grievance Committee
Grievance Regarding Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association
May 24, 2016**

The Neighborhood and Community Engagement Commission (NCEC) Grievance Committee met on May 11, 2016 to review the appeal filed on March 2, 2016 appeal of the February 3, 2016 Minneapolis Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) decision pertaining to a grievance initially filed against Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association (LHENA) on August 15, 2016.

The NCEC Grievance Committee reconvened on May 24, 2016 to conclude its deliberations.

The NCEC Grievance Committee finds:

1. The resident who filed the August 15, 2016 grievance did so in a timely manner.
2. The resident exhausted all grievance processes at the neighborhood level.
3. Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association **DID NOT** have a grievance process in place at the time the initial grievance was filed.

4. The underlying incident detailed in the complaint indeed created a barrier to participation in civic activities sponsored by LHENA.

5. Due to lack of direct evidence pointing to any specific board or staff member of LHENA, LHENA exhausted their options to assist the resident in identifying the culprit.

6. The resident's appeal to the NCR and the NCR's response to the resident were both filed in a timely manner.

Consequently, the NCEC Grievance Committee finds that the Neighborhood and Community Relations Department (NCR) **DID NOT** err in its February 3, 2016 determination letter.

Lowry Hill East Neighborhood Association (LHENA) acted within their responsibility as a neighborhood board based upon their policies and the expectations of the Neighborhood and Community Relations department.

During the NCEC grievance presentation both parties to this action admitted that the LHENA board on many occasions and in reference to multiple board members created a hostile environment that may have led to barriers to involvement of community members. Creating barriers to participation can lead to CPP funds being withheld.

At this time the NCEC Grievance Committee asks that the LHENA Board of Directors continue to work with the city's Neighborhood and Community Relations department to further the development and implementation of their initial code of conduct policy and eliminate all barriers to participation.

Lastly, on behalf of the Grievance Committee, we urge the NCR management to work with its neighborhood staff to be more sensitive to communication that may ultimately create a barrier to participation whether intentional or unintentional in adhering to the department's communication protocol.

Respectfully,
Ishmael Israel

NCEC Grievance Committee Chair

6. NCR Report

Blin reported that the report on the Neighborhood Evaluation conducted by Biko and Associates for the City's Internal Auditor. The report was presented to the City Council Audit Committee earlier that day. A more extensive presentation on the report will be made at a future City Council Health, Environment and Community Engagement Committee.

He noted that a meeting for neighborhoods on the Art of Hosting meeting facilitation techniques will be held on May 25th at 6a:30.

He also reported on the NCEC elections scheduled for June 16th at 6:30 PM at the Crown Roller Mill. At the present time there are no candidates from District 6.

Zaffrann noted that the neighborhoods established the election process and asked how long it has been since the process was changed. Blin responded that the last changes were in 2011. Zaffrann suggested that the Community Connections Conference could be a forum to discuss the election process.

Cichowicz stated that there needs to be greater education and messaging to the neighborhoods on the election process to generate more interest.

Boyd suggested that commissioners need to get out more to speak to neighborhoods to raise the awareness of the commission which will generate more interest in the elections.

Israel suggested that the commission should put together marketing materials that NCR staff could distribute to neighborhood organizations.

Houle suggested having the elections at a different location which is easier to access and parking.

6. New Business

Zaffrann reminded the Commission that under new business Commissioners may bring up topics for future meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 6:14 p.m.