



District 10 Community Council Board Meeting
Tuesday, April 21, 2020
7:00 PM
MINUTES

I. Call to order

Chair Melissa Liu called the meeting to order at **7:02** pm.

We are conducting this meeting online due to the stay-at-home order at meet.google.com/viy-kycp-zjh

II. Introductions (name and neighborhood)

Board Present (online): Jill Henricksen, Mike Ireland, Melissa Liu, Sara Benzkofer, Debra Verber, Jennifer Victor-Larsen, Annie Huidekoper, Rebecca Calvo, Sarah Reuter, Marika Staloch, Maggie Zimmerman, Juan José Miranda Ruiz, Cody Zwiefelhofer, Olivia Mulvey Morawiecki, Alexis Baker, Sarah Reuter

Board Absent: Amanda Rohrer, Thomas Coburn

Staff Present (online): Michael Kuchta

Neighborhood Introductions (online): Dawn Lamm, Joanne Swanson

III. Review, Amend agenda

MOTION: Adopt as printed (first/second) passes

IV. Community Section

A. Community Concerns. None stated

V. Board Business Section

A. Financial reports (Mike Ireland)

March Treasurer Report

Notable Expenses

- \$180 phone expense is for both Comcast and CenturyLink's final bill
- Due to timing of invoice, Communications and Technology expense includes \$60.46 for February's cell phone and hot spot reimbursement to the executive director
- The Harrington and Langer March invoice for \$548 was not received in time and will be reflected in April's reporting
- As reported last month, due to the timing of February's last payroll period, Michael's second paycheck and payroll taxes and both of Emily's paychecks and payroll taxes were not reflected in the financial reporting. These are now in March's reporting
- ComoFest expense of \$63.51 for GoDaddy is comofest.org domain rights for 3 years

Notable Revenue

- \$13,000 reimbursement received for Community Engagement grant 2019 expenses, with \$230 applied as revenue (see Other Highlights for the explanation)
- \$6,049 reimbursement received for Innovation Fund grant 2019 expenses, with \$5,799 applied as revenue (see Other Highlights for the explanation)
- Citywide Drop Off Education and Outreach reimbursement: \$1,700

Other Highlights

- Checking account balance is \$44,543.77
- All 2019 revenue reimbursements have been received
- Accumulated 2020 grant expenses ready for submission to the City:
 - \$2,004 toward the Innovation Fund grant
 - \$17,622 toward the Community Engagement grant
- Mike met with our outside accountant to understand 2019 grant revenue reimbursements received this year and how it is applied against the Accounts Receivable lines:
 - At the end of the year, anticipated grant or other City reimbursements for incurred expenses are listed as revenue in the Statement of Accounts and listed in the general ledger
 - The 2019 end of year total accounts receivable balance was \$18,320. In 2020, we received reimbursements toward our 2019 Community Engagement grant (\$13,000), our Innovation grant \$6,049), our CRWD Partner grant (\$2,012) and the Citywide Drop-Off (\$3,289) totaling \$24,349.
 - Our accountant applied reimbursements to each grant's accounts receivable balance; Community Engagement and Innovation grant amounts exceeding each line were applied as revenue to March's 2020 Statement of Accounts
 - Mike will separately track monthly accounts receivable activity at the specific grant or other source line item and report when each is offset by reimbursements

B. Minutes

MOTION: Approve March 2020 meeting minutes (first/second) passes

C. Board Chair and Officer's Report (Melissa Liu)

All D10 events through May have either been postponed or canceled. We were notified that the June citywide drop-off has been canceled - will look to reschedule in late summer or early fall. We are abiding by the standards set by the governor. We were looking at starting a strategic plan. We did not receive the grant to support this, but we do have a membership for Catchafire, which are webinars offered pro bono. Melissa and Michael are testing this out to see how it might be helpful for D10. Tonight was supposed to be the annual meeting. We will have action items coming soon about how to vote, how to keep our community healthy, and meet the needs of the organization.

ACTION REQUESTED:

MOVED, the Como Community Council:

- Postpone the 2020 Annual Meeting required by the organization's Bylaws to be held on the third Tuesday in April, and reschedule at a date after Minnesota lifts emergency restrictions placed on public gatherings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Postpone the 2020 board elections required by the organization's Bylaws to be held on the third Tuesday in April. Elections will be rescheduled at a time after Minnesota lifts

emergency restrictions placed on public gatherings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, or rescheduled through other means allowed by changes to the organization's Bylaws.

- Mandates that board members and Council committees abide by public health requirements and transition to holding meetings via video and phone conferencing, rather than in-person, following requirements set up in Minnesota Statute 317A.450, Subdivision 4. This includes providing access information that allows community members to participate; access information will be made available to those who request it in a timely manner from the Como Community Council office.
- Will explore revisions to its Bylaws allowing alternative methods for community members to vote in Board elections. This authority is granted retroactively to March 13, 2020.

Motion (first/second) passes

ACTION REQUESTED:

MOVED, the Como Community Council:

- Gives notice, as required in its Bylaws (Article XII Section 2 and Article XIII Section 1), that it intends to vote on May 19 on whether or not to amend its Bylaws in order to allow alternative methods for community members to vote in Board elections.
- Gives notice that it will consider the attached proposed amendments to the Bylaws. (see Board Packet for detail)

Michael Kuchta walked through the proposed amendments to the Bylaws (see Board Packet, Article VI and VII) and asked if there were questions for each section. Board members brought up questions and clarifications, but there were no significant concerns or questions at this time. Jennifer Victor-Larsen suggested changing the language to allow for hybrid/blended meetings where some are present in-person and some are participating online.

Motion (first/second) passes

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, the Como Community Council:

- Appoints an Ad Hoc Committee on Elections, as permitted under Article IX Section 4 of the Bylaws. Outgoing Vice Chair Cody Zwiefelhofer will chair the committee.
- The Committee will research alternative methods of conducting board elections (including, but not limited to, electronic, mail, and absentee ballots). The Committee will make recommendations at the May 2020 board meeting on whether and how to implement any alternative methods for the 2020 board elections. The Committee also may make recommendations and provide guidance for future board elections.
- The Committee will work with staff and other community members to oversee any alternative methods that are implemented for the 2020 board elections. The Committee will disband at the conclusion of the 2020 board elections.
- The committee will be chaired by Cody Zweifelhofer. Rebecca Calvo, Debra Verber and Jennifer Victor-Larson are the board members. Joanne Swanson will represent as a neighborhood member.

(Note: Rebecca subsequently withdrew due because she is running for re-election, which could be perceived as a conflict of interest.)

Motion (first/second) passes

Mike Ireland moved to reopen candidacy application process.

Moved: Immediately reopen candidacy application process and closed no sooner than 21 days before the election date **(first/second) passes**

D. Committee Updates

Environment (Sara Benzkofer)

Considering a DIY lake clean-up event. Grant provides funding for organizers. Seed swap will be going virtual. Neighbors are swapping seeds using little libraries. Dawn Lamm has some great ideas for a curbside or alleyway exchange arrangement. It will happen on May 16. People can list what they have and make arrangements to pick them up. New invasive species: Asian jumping worm which will devastate the top couple of inches of organic matter.

Land use (Maggie Zimmerman)

No new business. (Gasp.) Michael and Rebecca attended the Parks Commission meeting in March where they discussed the Pathways report and commended D10's effort on the community engagement (over 500 people's input.) They were impressed with the quality and structure of the report and seemed serious about taking on the recommendations that were put into the report.

Parks staff engineering the repaving of Como parking lots were also present and impressed with the ideas. In 2020, they plan to repave the bike path that goes along Lexington and widen it and make it a 2-way bicycle path, amongst other ideas in the report. They are considering more reliance on icons and less reliance on reading written English on signage. They hope to bring plans to either Land Use meeting or as an Open House (if gathering is reopened in time.)

The Como Zoo was looking into paid parking — they have decided to keep parking free.

At any point, there may be re-striping near Como by the Lake between Nagasaki and Maryland to mark bike and turn lanes.

Talked about zoning hearings for old Shalom Home and apartment building in Bandana Square.

Neighborhood Relations (Olivia Mulvey Morawiecki)

Met April 7, virtually. Talked about the increase in crime (muggings) and discussed the safety walk, how to get better information from SPPD, and how to communicate that out to the community. Discussed highlights from the year. Discussed the racism resolution from City Council. Also discussed the cancelation of the Ice Cream Social and the creation of a fall event. Melissa shared that Olivia will stay on the board, but is putting her name in for Vice-Chair. She will be stepping down as Neighborhood Relations chair.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, D10 cancels the ice cream social and creates a fall event. **Motion passes**

Jill Henricksen shared the resolution she drafted. If passed, she hopes we can share with the Saint Paul City Council and in the D10 newsletter.

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, the Como Community Council adopts the attached Resolution to Condemn Racism and Xenophobia, forwards notification of the action to the Saint Paul City Council, and publicizes the action in the District 10 newsletter. **Motion passes**
(Copy of resolution attached at end of minutes)

E. Staff Report (Michael Kuchta)

Received a list of all Neighborhood STAR grant applicants. Two are in D10: 883 Front Ave., where they would like to make a coffeeshop, and 1053 Dale (near Edgar), which is an office building that a lawyer is refurbishing. Michael will reach out to see if there's anything we can do to support these grants.

We have submitted all our city grant work for 2020. This will be reviewed by city council office, they may ask us to make minor adjustments, then gets routed through city hall and a PO to seek reimbursements. The usual process is now being done remotely and signatures are electronic. We've been told not to expect to hear anything for 4-6 weeks. We will monitor checking account reserves but should get city grant approval before we get close to running out of money.

Cody mentioned that he is stepping down from the STAR board, which means Ward 5 will have an opening if you're interested.

F. New Business (Board Members)

It was noted that Thomas Coburn resigned his seat, effectively immediately, via email during this meeting.

VI. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:56 pm by Melissa by Melissa Liu. *(first/second) passes*

Respectively submitted by Marika Staloch. These minutes are not official until approved.

Action Item

DATE:

April 21, 2020

FROM:

Officers

ITEM:

District 10 meetings and elections

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, the Como Community Council:

- Postpone the 2020 Annual Meeting required by the organization's Bylaws to be held on the third Tuesday in April, and reschedule at a date after Minnesota lifts emergency restrictions placed on public gatherings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Postpone the 2020 board elections required by the organization's Bylaws to be held on the third Tuesday in April. Elections will be rescheduled at a time after Minnesota lifts emergency restrictions placed on public gatherings in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, or rescheduled through other means allowed by changes to the organization's Bylaws.
- Mandates that board members and Council committees abide by public health requirements and transition to holding meetings via video and phone conferencing, rather than in-person, following requirements set up in Minnesota Statute 317A.450, Subdivision 4. This includes providing access information that allows community members to participate; access information will be made available to those who request it in a timely manner from the Como Community Council office.
- Will explore revisions to its Bylaws allowing alternative methods for community members to vote in Board elections.

This authority is granted retroactively to March 13, 2020.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The Como Community Council's Bylaws:

- Require the Board to meet on the third Tuesday of each month (Article VIII, Section 1).
- Allow committees to meet at the call of the committee chair or on dates set in advance by the committees (Article IX, Section 8).
- Require that directors be elected at the annual meeting (Article VI, Section 1).
- Require that the annual meeting be held immediately preceding the April Board meeting (Article VII, Section 1).
- Prohibit absentee voting at member meetings (Article VII, Section 4).

However, state and federal health requirements in response to the Covid-19 pandemic prevent the board, committees, the annual meeting, and elections from being held in person as the Bylaws require or as practice has established. The Historic Streetcar Station, where board and committee meetings typically take place, is closed to the public. The Como Lakeside Pavilion, where the annual meeting was scheduled, is also closed to the public. Specifically:

- On March 13, 2020, the State of Minnesota declared a peacetime state of emergency in response to the pandemic; on April 13, this state of emergency was extended for an additional 30 days.

- On March 13, President Donald J. Trump declared a national emergency and, on March 16, announced guidelines recommending that all Americans avoid groups of more than 10 people. On March 29, these guidelines were extended until April 30.
- On March 15, the City of Saint Paul closed all city Parks and Recreation facilities to the public through at least March 27. Since then, these closures have been extended through at least May 10.
- On March 16, the State of Minnesota issued an emergency executive order that closed “places of public accommodation” until May 1, 2020. On April 8, this order was extended through May 3.
- On March 27, the State of Minnesota issued a “stay at home” order through April 10. On April 8, this order was extended through May 3.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Community members will be informed of meetings, scheduling, access and related issues through the Council website, email newsletter, and other means as appropriate.
- The board will explore alternative methods of voting by community members. If necessary, board members will propose revisions to the Bylaws under terms required by Article XIII Section 1 and other relevant sections.

ISSUES UNRESOLVED OR YET TO BE DETERMINED:

- The resumption of in-person meetings will depend on the continued existence or relaxation of public health directives. In addition, any changes to the Bylaws require advance notice before a vote can be taken; any scheduling of elections will depend on timetables and methods established in the Bylaws.

Action Item

DATE:

April 21, 2020

FROM:

Officers

ITEM:

Amend District 10 Bylaws

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, the Como Community Council:

- Gives notice, as required in its Bylaws (Article XII Section 2 and Article XIII Section 1), that it intends to vote on May 19 on whether or not to amend its Bylaws in order to allow alternative methods for community members to vote in Board elections.
- Gives notice that it will consider the attached proposed amendments to the Bylaws.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

The district council's Bylaws currently require that members of the Board be elected at the annual meeting (Article VI, Section 1). The Bylaws prohibit absentee voting at the annual meeting and other member meetings (Article VII, Section 4).

However, the emergency health directives in place as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic restrict public gatherings. These restrictions:

- Currently prevent our traditional in-person voting (which is the only type of voting allowed in the Bylaws)
- Could limit our ability to hold an annual meeting in the near future
- Could discourage participation for an extended period of time by community members who are concerned about the health implications of participating in a public gathering

On a broader scale, allowing voting only by those community members who can show up in a specific place at a specific time on a weekday evening is exclusionary by nature. A significant portion of our neighbors have family, work, or other commitments that do not allow them the luxury of participating on our terms.

The community survey that was authorized at the March board meeting had limited participation, but showed a clear preference for allowing additional forms of voting.

The restrictions in place in response to the pandemic point out the limitations of our Bylaws, and give us an opportunity to be more inclusive and equitable by expanding who can participate in our elections.

These proposed amendments to our Bylaws broaden the types of voting methods that would be allowed. They do not eliminate the traditional in-person elections. Nor do they dictate specific alternatives. They allow the Board to explore different methods and implement one or more that seem feasible and prudent, whether on a trial basis or permanently.

The proposed amendments:

- Allow the board to select additional methods by which community members can cast ballots beyond voting in person at the annual meeting
- Remove the restriction on absentee voting
- Change the amount of notice that must be given about the election
- Set a deadline for when advance ballots must be received
- Add clarifying language

IMPLEMENTATION:

Under the current bylaws, these proposed amendments could not be voted on until at least May 19. The language could be revised at that meeting. Any changes would require a two-thirds vote of board members present. Under the proposal, the election could not be held for at least 21 days after the amendments are adopted.

ISSUES UNRESOLVED OR YET TO BE DETERMINED:

- Scheduling of an annual meeting
- Authorizing specific alternative types of voting
- Establishing an election date or voting period
- Whether or not to extend the deadline for candidates to get on the ballot
- Costs and logistics of alternative types of voting

ARTICLE VI: Elections

Section 1. Directors shall be elected to staggered terms at the annual meeting.

Section 2. Each subdistrict shall have two seats on the Board reserved for it (“subdistrict Directors”) and those seats may only be occupied by members of that subdistrict. The remaining seats on the Board, including the positions of Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer may be occupied by members of District 10 at large.

Section 3. The Chairperson, Secretary, one subdistrict Director from each subdistrict, and three at-large Directors shall be elected in odd-numbered years.

Section 4. The Vice-chairperson, Treasurer, one subdistrict Director from each subdistrict, and two at-large Directors shall be elected in even-numbered years.

Section 5. At least 10 days but not more than 30 days before the annual meeting, notice of the date, time, and place of the annual meeting must be given in a manner designed to notify all members with voting rights to the extent practical.

Section 6. The election shall be conducted by ballot or, **if there is only one candidate**, by a unanimous vote of acclamation, at the discretion of the person presiding over the vote. A plurality vote shall be sufficient to elect, **unless directors have chosen to allow preferential ballots for that election.**

Section 7. A member may vote in elections for **officers**, at-large positions, and for subdistrict Directors of the member’s subdistrict. Directors may vote in any election.

Section 8. **At the annual meeting, elections** shall be held in the following order: Chairperson, Vice-chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, subdistrict Directors, at-large Directors.

Section 9. **In addition to voting in person at the annual meeting, Directors (by two-thirds vote) may authorize members to vote in elections by submitting an absentee ballot electronically, by mail, or by other authorized methods in advance of the annual meeting. Any absentee ballots must be received before the annual meeting is called to order. Notice of authorized advance voting methods and requirements must be given no less than 21 days before the annual meeting.**

Any authorization of advance voting methods may not alter the quorum requirements under these Bylaws.

Before any absentee ballot can be cast, persons requesting said ballot must attest that they meet the membership requirements of District 10 and, if necessary, can supply sufficient identifying information and evidence to the satisfaction of the Chair, as required in Article III. Any member who votes by absentee ballot may not vote in person at the annual meeting in that election.

ARTICLE VII: Member Meetings

Section 1. There shall be an annual member meeting, which shall be held immediately preceding the April Board meeting.

Section 2. In the event that it is impossible or impracticable to conduct an in-person meeting of the members, the Board may (through a two-thirds majority vote) authorize the meeting to be conducted remotely, pursuant to Minn. Stat. 317A.450, and may designate any questions to be put to a member vote at such meeting. Any persons who provide evidence to the satisfaction of the Chair that they would be able to satisfy the requirements of Article III, Sections 1, 2, or 3 if the meeting were held in person shall be a member with voting rights for purposes of such remote meeting.

Section 3. Special member meetings may be called through such procedures and with such notice as provided by law.

Section 4. The quorum for the annual member meeting or a special member meeting called for the purpose of filling a vacancy on the Board shall be the number of members present at the meeting. The quorum for all other special meetings shall be 50 members.

Section 5. Except as allowed in Article VI Section 9, voting by proxy and absentee voting is prohibited at member meetings.

Action Item

DATE:

April 21, 2020

FROM:

Officers

ITEM:

Ad Hoc Committee on Elections

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, the Como Community Council:

- Appoints an Ad Hoc Committee on Elections, as permitted under Article IX Section 4 of the Bylaws. Outgoing Vice Chair Cody Zwiefelhofer will chair the committee.
- The Committee will research alternative methods of conducting board elections (including, but not limited to, electronic, mail, and absentee ballots). The Committee will make recommendations at the May 2020 board meeting on whether and how to implement any alternative methods for the 2020 board elections. The Committee also may make recommendations and provide guidance for future board elections.
- The Committee will work with staff and other community members to oversee any alternative methods that are implemented for the 2020 board elections. The Committee will disband at the conclusion of the 2020 board elections.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Public health directives in response to the Covid-19 pandemic prevent the district council from holding in-person elections, as required by the Bylaws, for the foreseeable future. Even if those directives are lifted soon, it is uncertain how comfortable community members will be in assembling for board elections. Indeed, such an assembly could put the health of many community members at risk, and thus discourage participation. This challenge, however, gives the district council an opportunity to be more inclusive and equitable by expanding methods of voting, and thus expanding how many community members can participate in our elections.

IMPLEMENTATION:

If this Committee is appointed, the Board Chair will appoint additional members, with the consent of the full board, at the April 2020 meeting.

ISSUES UNRESOLVED OR YET TO BE DETERMINED:

Action Item

DATE:

April 7, 2020

FROM:

Neighborhood Relations

ITEM:

Ice Cream Social

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, D10 cancels the ice cream social and creates a fall event.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

Social distancing restrictions could still be in place in some form in July. It will be hard to hold event and abide by those restrictions. Even if restrictions are not in place, many people may not be comfortable gathering yet.

IMPLEMENTATION:

Staff will notify Parks and other partners. Committee members will begin planning for a similar event in fall, possibly cider and doughnuts instead.

ISSUES UNRESOLVED OR YET TO BE DETERMINED:

Action Item

DATE:

April 15, 2020

FROM: Jill Henricksen

ITEM: Resolution to Condemn Racism and Xenophobia

ACTION REQUESTED:

Moved, the Como Community Council adopts the attached Resolution to Condemn Racism and Xenophobia, forwards notification of the action to the Saint Paul City Council, and publicizes the action in the District 10 newsletter.

BACKGROUND/RATIONALE:

When the COVID-19 pandemic became associated with China recently, our Asian American and Pacific Islander neighbors and community members were targeted by overt and subtle acts of racism. In response, on April 8, 2020 the St. Paul City Council unanimously passed Resolution 20-621, “Condemning xenophobia and racism against Asian American and Pacific Islander communities in the City of Saint Paul.”

Before this vote was taken, City staff members invited community members and organizations to support their efforts to condemn racism and xenophobia against the AAPI community and all communities of color through photos, hashtags, and videos. Five members of District 10, including the Executive Director participated in a Zoom video to show their support for the City’s Resolution 20-621.

While several other board members were unable to participate in the Zoom video, the Neighborhood Relations Committee discussed proposing our own Resolution to Condemn Racism and Xenophobia. Jill Henricksen offered to draft a resolution.

IMPLEMENTATION:

The resolution will be recorded in the minutes and promoted as described in the motion.

ISSUES UNRESOLVED OR YET TO BE DETERMINED:

None

RESOLUTION to Condemn Racism and Xenophobia

WHEREAS, the St. Paul City Council has passed Resolution #20-613 condemning xenophobia and racism specifically against the Asian American and Pacific Islander communities (AAPI) in the City of Saint Paul in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as condemning racism and xenophobia against all communities of color throughout the City of St. Paul, and,

WHEREAS, the City of Saint Paul’s Resolution #20-613 recognizes the history of racism during times of crisis against AAPI, Indigenous, Black, Latinx, Muslim, Hindu, Jewish and Sikh; immigrants; refugees; and undocumented people; and

WHEREAS, while our communities are responding to a new normal in response to COVID-19 pandemic, AAPI Minnesotans now also report that they are targets of harassment and discrimination and that their safety is compromised because of increasing racist behaviors; and

WHEREAS, community members and leaders are seeing dangerous hate and discrimination show up daily in St. Paul neighborhoods, including the Como Community, in both overt and subtle ways, and,

WHEREAS, District 10 seeks to be an inclusive community that values the lives and contributions from the AAPI community and all people of color to our workforce, economy, political representation and arts and culture; and

WHEREAS, the novel COVID-19 pandemic does not discriminate against race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexuality, ability, nor citizenship status and we, as a community, will not either, and,

BE IT RESOLVED, the Como Community Council Board of Directors stands with our City leaders to rise above racism and xenophobia and care for each member of our communities as we recognize that we are in this together now and always, and be it

FURTHER RESOLVED, the Como Community Council Board of Directors supports the City of Saint Paul’s efforts to protect all people of color including immigrants; refugees; and undocumented people against racism and xenophobia.

Signed: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____

Como Community Council: Officers Meeting

May 14, 2020 / Google Hangouts

Present: Melissa Liu, chair; Marika Staloch, secretary; Mike Ireland, treasurer; Michael Kuchta, staff

Events

- **Seed Library.** We typically sponsor Como Community Seed Library's Garden Kickoff at Streetcar Station. This year, they are holding it remotely May 16, driving it through their Facebook page. We are promoting. They have a long lineup of video presentations, including the debut of the online version of Ramsey County Master Gardeners' online diagnostic clinic.
- **Como Lake Clean-Up.** Mike and other organizers are creating a do-it-yourself approach: a personalized kit for volunteers to sign up for a date of their choice within a 7-10-day period, probably the first or second week in June. Will be first-come, first-served; still have to work out drop-off, pickup, handoff, cleaning, etc., depending on demand.
- **Citywide Drop-Off.** City has officially cancelled June 6 event at Fairgrounds, June 22 event at Washington Technology Magnet School, and Sept. 12 event at Harding High School. They are hoping to reschedule Fairgrounds event for Sept. 12 and hold usual Shepard Road event Sept. 26. D6 says they will help us on new date. There is much to be determined about availability and willingness of vendors and volunteers to participate, how to spread out stations, senior pick-up, and a lot of safety protocols. In the meantime, we are supposed to promote bulky item feature of trash collection, or encourage people to take items directly to transfer station. We have no sense of their decision timetable, though we have talked about how long to wait to pull the plug if we are not getting enough volunteers. We don't think we have road construction this year outside the Fairgrounds.

Community

- **Speed Limit Lawn Signs.** Public Works can provide us 100 lawn/window signs to promote the new lower speed limits on residential streets. Michael has created web form for D10 residents to reserve their sign.
- **Covid Lawn Signs.** Neighborhood Relations hopes to create lawn signs and prints of a yet-to-be-determined design to build community cohesion during pandemic. Proceeds would go to organization for pandemic relief. Waiting for more board members to rank favorites; other details still need to be worked out.
- **Scavenger Hunt.** Neighborhood Relations also developing two scavenger hunts to help residents get to know their neighborhood better. Mike is finalizing east side of Lexington, Sarah Reuter is finalizing west side. No firm timetable yet.

Communication

- **Website** (view lack of progress at <https://167d10cc.aeronauticvigilante.com>)

Financials

- **2020 City Grants.** Our community engagement grant has been approved for 2020; Michael and Melissa have signed electronically, but paperwork is still being routed at City Hall. We do not yet have a PO number to begin seeking reimbursements. Through April, we have roughly \$24,000 reimbursable through Community Engagement Grant and \$2,600 reimbursable through Innovation Grant.
- **Vendor Outreach Program.** One reason for delay in contract approval is that city attorney's office determined that district councils must meet requirements of VOP, which promotes use of certified small businesses and businesses owned by women, minorities, or

veterans. There are not a lot of businesses in city data base that we would use, but we have to do reporting and at least show good-faith effort. Most of our involvement actually may be in steering vendors we use to get VOP certified. This could include local print shops, and artists we use for events. It is also possible we could apply. We don't know how long it takes to get certified. Michael will share information with committee chairs so they are aware when they schedule activities.

- **City vendor registration.** We were informed today that we also have to become a registered vendor with the city to participate as lead organization for drop-off event. We don't know details.
- **City funding.** With looming budget deficits city faces, Melissa asked if we should look at cutting expenses this year, and whether our current budget reserves (roughly 7 months) are adequate. Michael says district councils have been told that although city has to do budget reconciliation this year, there has been no talk of cuts to our grants in 2020. District council staff have been talking about preparing to have evidence in hand in time for 2021 budget discussions to demonstrate value we bring to city and our communities, and to prepare to mobilize board members and volunteers to advocate for us if necessary. Mike pointed out that because city grants are based on reimbursable expenses, we want to maximize what we have available, and not leave reimbursable money on the table at the end of the year. Mike and Michael have had preliminary talks about revising the current D10 budget to more accurately reflect changes in revenue and expenses as a result of cancelling events. They will work on a reassessment in late June. Consensus is to do a formal revision after new board members are in place; it will be a good way for them to get familiar with our activities, plus we should have a more accurate sense of what rest of year will look like.

Organizational Business

- **Board Meeting (May 19).** Action items include:
 - Bylaws (amendments as proposed in April)
 - Elections (from the Ad Hoc Committee): Recommending a virtual annual meeting, absentee voting through mail and online ballots that residents must request in advance, and no in-person voting in 2020. Committee is working through a lot of the timelines and logistics. Officers discussed where there might be gaps and glitches in the process. Two proposals still under discussion would be mailing a postcard to all addresses in D10 letting residents know about the ability to request a ballot, and allowing candidates to prepare a video to replace the in-person speech that usually occurs. Postcard would cost about \$2,000 to print and mail, which is not in the budget. Option could be taking out ad in Monitor; half-page ad would cost about \$800. However, Monitor does not get into apartment buildings and won't be delivered until June 11, which is tight turnaround for requesting ballot. Consensus is that it makes sense to show good-faith effort to send postcard as a way to inform and include more residents in the process. Discussion considered offering card in multiple languages, but that would be superficial if we did not also provide ballots and other election materials in multiple languages as well. Also discussed branding on the card, including the possibility of including the lawn sign art to tie our community roles together.
 - Candidate video faces real logistical challenges in short time frame, and could disadvantage candidates who lack technical skills or tools.
 - Two from Land Use: 978 Front Rezoning, and Hmong College Prep Academy conduit revenue bonds. Discussion about whether we have discussed with the school the

impact of the state's potential borrowing against school funding. That led to larger discussion about how much we should investigate finances of businesses and organizations that ask our support for things such as bonding, STAR funding, etc.

- **Future presentations.** Near-term possibilities include the Fire Department's Safe Haven Program and the Saint Paul 350 climate group. Discussion about possibly lining up representatives from Como Zoo, local rec centers, and Saint Anthony Park library to help people navigate the summer and coming months while public restrictions are in place.
- **Annual meeting.** As a remote meeting, how can we incorporate features we had discussed earlier, such as presentations from Melissa, Mike, committee chairs, and Michael? Don't want to lose the planning that's taken place so far. How much should we do live, how much could we record in advance – such as PowerPoint or video – and present remotely (or whenever residents have an opportunity to watch)? Or can we do live presentations that are recorded and available for viewing later? Melissa will ask committee chairs their preferences. Also would help to find volunteers with editing or technical skills to make this go smoother. For dot democracy or resident engagement during the meeting, there also are real-time websites that can create interactive elements (such as mentimeter.com)
- **Strategic plan.** Defer discussion until after elections and annual meeting.
- **Board orientation.** Need to figure out onboarding. Could we do this in person shortly after elections, focused on new members, make it optional for existing members? May be able to do that and still stay within state guidelines. Binder is there as resource, but how much is it used, relevant, understood without having an interactive way to discuss roles of who does what, be explicit on expectations, answer questions. Ideally, we could have social event afterward, help board members get to know each other. Also could set up informal mentoring or buddy system, giving new board members someone specific they can reach out to with one-one questions. Should this outreach come from committees once assignments are made?

Could schedule through Doodle poll immediately after elections; people likely won't be travelling, could hold it in a timely manner. Could also record orientation as a webinar or other presentation. This could make it available to board members who win special elections. How quickly this could be set up depends on how much learning curve is there technologically, how much time will election and annual meeting demands eat up.

Staff Report

- **Community garden.** Permit issues are ironed out, water is supposed to be hooked up May 15, and there is a waiting list for plots. But part of area where new plots will go has too much debris, tree roots, and other obstacles to hand-till. Michael and the garden coordinator, Barb Clark, have talked with a local resident who does landscaping and is willing to come in with a skid steer, clean up the site, and do necessary grading. Cost is \$600, which eats up nearly all of garden fees. Consensus is that this should be done to make plots usable; it is core to our mission, and we will be leaving people out if we don't do it. Officers will bring action item on Tuesday.
- **Bird survey.** 15 community members completed yearlong survey of lake and woodland areas, and observed many more species than were seen in similar 2006 survey. Longtime environmental committee member Mike MacDonald wrote final report; summary of the findings are on our website, along with complete report and spreadsheets for archival purposes.
- **Land Use items.** The committee sent letters of support for Como High Schools sign variance, and the STAR grant application for the Brassavola Building, 1053 N. Dale.

Paperwork for both of these requests had to be filed before the board's May 19 meeting. Also, City Council votes May 20 on rezoning request for 1015 Bandana Blvd.

- **District councils.** Council staff have been having weekly video meetings (instead of monthly in-person meetings) to keep in touch during lockdown, and share advice and support.
- **City items.** City Council has delayed hearing on rental protections ordinance until June 10. District councils are supposed to receive list of Capital Improvement Budget proposals submitted for their communities; councils have option of sending recommendation to CIB board. However, no one has seen a list; timetable for final CIB rankings supposedly has been delayed from June 30 to July 31.
- **Response to questions.** Michael said there appears to be no significant change in use of Beulah Lane compost site since lockdown, and we have received no neighborhood feedback on impacts of TCGIS construction. The lack of everyday school traffic seems to have minimized the disruption from construction.

Other Business

- **Chromebook extensions.** Debra Verber shared some links that could make use of Google Hangouts more robust. Michael will share these again with board packet.

Environment Committee
May 13, 2020
Online via Google Hangouts

Present

Board: Sara Benzkofer, Jennifer Victor-Larsen

Community: Mike MacDonald, Mike Ireland, Julie Wegscheid, Susan Jane Cheney, Dawn Lamm, Bill Niebur, Ted Benson

Staff: Michael Kuchta

Sara called meeting to order at 7:03 pm

Members shared one thing they are enjoying during lockdown

Lake Clean-Up Planning

Mike, Sara, Jennifer, Michael met for planning. Plan is to provide personalized kit, deliver kits possibly 2nd week in June. Have to wait for CRWD to finish alum treatments. 3 organizers have agreed to help deliver and pick up kits. Number of kits will depend on how many people volunteer. Discussion about including masks in kit if we can get some; including instruction sheet; other logistics that still need to be worked out.

Dawn advises people stick to pathways and single-track areas to avoid trampling plants.

Will use web form for registration and reservations

Como Community Seed Library

Dawn: quite a bit of activity of people listing plants, seeds ready to swap for May 16 event. Some really good stuff available. You Tube channel will be set up with playlist of individual videos available Saturday only, including:

- Judy Petkau, Wild Ones
- Permaculture Guild walkthrough
- Tutorials on gardening with children, Folding Bee, stir fry of hosta greens, breeding tomatoes

Ramsey County Master Gardeners will use event to roll out their online diagnostic clinic, which they intend to use all summer. People can phone in or join via video. Can sit with cup of coffee and get advice from master gardener.

Also have equipment swap. The community can find the virtual event on the Como Community Seed Library Facebook page.

Dawn also noted they are estimating 6,000 seeds have been exchanged in Outplant the Outbreak endeavor, using Little Free Libraries.

Bird Survey

Mike MacDonald: Survey is done; unveiled in last Friday's D10 email. Had 15 volunteers for sightings in Como Woodland and around Como Lake. Effort originally was to compare with 2006 survey, see if habitat changes had impact in bird population. He thinks there has been, but can't compare surveys directly, so can't say that scientifically. At very least, now have two data points for future use.

We had lots of good help; pleased with what we got.

Summary of survey, the full report with tables, and spreadsheets of all sightings are posted on D10 website.

Citywide Drop Off

Michael: City cancelled two June events (Fairgrounds, Washington Technology Magnet School) and Sept. 12 event at Harding High School, which doesn't have capacity to be first event. City does have Fairgrounds reserved for Sept. 12, though not officially scheduled. We would be lead organization. Also hope to have second event Sept. 26 on Shepard Road.

Examining lot of logistics: how to spread out space, whether vendors are willing/able to participate, whether enough volunteers are willing/able to participate, how do we practice social distancing in collecting money or unloading vehicles, how can we do senior pick-ups. City also looking at fees in charges.

Concerned about dumping; will be promoting bulky item pickup that is part of consolidated trash program as stopgap.

If this is Plan B, Plan C would be to provide residents vouchers to take junk to private transfer stations.

Dawn asks Jennifer whether she can provide a tutorial on how people can parse through items in their house, what are resources that are out there. Is there way to facilitate exchanges? Jennifer says things still fluid right now, but she can put something simple together.

Churchill Gardens

Michael noted that residents in area have been garden stewards for years. They are also trying to get newer residents to take ownership. Officially, however, D10 is the main steward since the street reconstruction and installation of rain gardens through Capitol Region Watershed. Lately, residents have been talking about moving and removing plants. Because these were paid for with public money, we should be concerned about how much can and cannot be done.

Dawn asked how many water stewards are involved? Michael does not believe any. Dawn asks if we can tie them in for a guided re-design. Or consult Metro Blooms? Michael will pass this along to CRWD.

Residents also remain frustrated by water-flow issues. Curb cuts and street grading to not steer water into garden as intended. There may be some re-grading of dirt we can do to improve retention inside the garden, but getting new curb cuts seems unlikely.

Other

Mike MacDonald said CRWD's 10-year plan is now out for public comment.

Michael noted CRWD plans alum treatment of Como Lake next week.

Dawn noted that people on Facebook are commenting about behavior of turtles, wondering if it is related to lake treatments. She urges CRWD to reply directly, notes wildlife is more visible this year, people more aware of it. It would be good to educate people.

Bill recommends that CRWD use signage as opportunity to educate people, invite participation from community.

Next meeting: June 10

Land Use Committee - District 10 Como Community Council – 5/6/2020 - Minutes

1. Call to order **7:06pm** – Meeting held remotely via Zoom

Present:

Board: Maggie Zimmerman, Annie Huidekoper, Rebecca Calvo, Juan Miranda

Community: Larry Opelt (Como Senior High School), Ted Benson and Janet Pope (978 Front Ave.), Matt Schneider, Dayna Thomas

Staff: Michael Kuchta

2. Amend/Adopt Agenda

MZ proposes to amend agenda to reorder items of New Business. Amendments pass.

Amended agenda passes.

3. New Business

a. 978 Front Ave.

The property owners are seeking to rezone the lot at the southwest corner of Front and Chatsworth from B2 Community Business to T2 Traditional. Many of the uses allowed in the two types of zoning districts are the same. However, T2 allows a wide range of residential uses that are not allowed in B2 districts. These potential residential uses include 1, 2, 3, and 4 family dwellings; townhouses; live-work units; multifamily dwellings of up to 45 feet; and cluster residential developments. In addition, T2 zoning allows some commercial uses that are not allowed in B2. The building currently houses Giffy Dog on the first floor and one residential apartment above that has one tenant currently. Surrounding blocks typically are zoned RT1 (which is two-family residential) or B2. The rezoning request will be handled by the city's Zoning Committee, perhaps as soon as May 21.

Property owners Ted Benson and Janet Pope are present to discuss the request and take questions. Ted said they have owned the property since 1998. The current tenant's lease expires at the beginning of June. The reason for seeking rezoning is to be able to use the property to its fullest, to allow for more options for commercial and residential space.

Responding to a question, Ted said they have not talked with neighbors but are on good terms and don't expect any issues. Neighbor Matt Schneider, who lives on Chatsworth, was present in support of the rezoning request.

Motion: The Como Community Council supports the request to rezone 978 Front Ave. from B2 to T2.

Seconded by AH

Motion passes.

b. Como High School Sign Variances

As part of its ongoing renovation, the school is seeking two variances to install exterior signs. Zoning code allows one sign on each street frontage, not exceeding 30 square feet.

The school is proposing two signs: the sign over the school entrance of 41 square feet, the other mounted on the chimney is of 90 square feet. In addition, the chimney sign tops out at 60 feet above grade; zoning allows a maximum height of 30 feet above grade. The request goes to the city's Board of Zoning Appeals on May 18.

Larry Opelt, from Saint Paul Public Schools, said the school has had construction projects ongoing for

the last several years. These projects are expected to be completed this summer. A flagpole and new signs would be installed this summer.

Motion: The Como Community Council supports the variance requests by Como Park Senior High School for new exterior signs. Specifically, the Council supports variances to allow:

-- two signs facing Rose Ave.

-- the signs to have a total size of 161 square feet

-- the larger sign to be mounted on the school's chimney at 60 feet above grade.

Seconded by AH.

Comment in support of school's construction offered by one neighbor.

Motion passes.

c. Brasavola STAR Grant endorsement request

The property owners are seeking a \$29,000 grant for additional building improvements at 1053 N. Dale, as described in their letter to the committee. This is the commercial building at the northwest corner of Dale and Edgar. The owners are seeking a letter of support from D10 to the city's STAR board. The STAR Board has not yet scheduled their review of applications. Michael noted this is within the scope of the STAR program.

Motion: The Como Community Council supports the Neighborhood STAR grant application of \$29,000 for the continued physical improvement of the Brasalova building at 1053 N. Dale.

Seconded by RC

Motion passes.

d. Hmong College Prep conduit bond endorsement request

We heard details a few months ago about Hmong College Prep Academy's plans to build a middle school building and additional remodeling. As the letter to the committee indicates, the school intends to seek more than \$22 million in conduit revenue bonds through the city's Housing and Redevelopment Authority. The school is seeking a letter of support from D10. We have not received word from HRA about when they will take up the school's request. Michael gave a list of bond requests from neighborhood charter schools that we have supported recently.

Motion: The Como Community Council supports the conduit revenue bond request by the Hmong College Prep Academy to Saint Paul's Housing and Redevelopment Authority to support the construction of a middle-school building and related improvements.

Seconded by AH

Motion passes.

e. Zoning code amendment proposal to expand the State Fair parking overlay for Back to the 50's event.

In September, the committee and full D10 board supported exploring ways to activate the parking and vending districts beyond the State Fair. At the time, there was some discussion that the city was taking a comprehensive look at adopting uniform standards for the impact that event parking has on residential areas across the city. That comprehensive approach apparently is not taking place. So, it is up to us to pursue any modifications we want.

Michael has talked with the office of Ward 4 councilmember Mitra Jalali; they are willing to support

whatever recommendation we bring forward, as long as we are comfortable that there is neighborhood consensus. This would require a zoning change, and we have drafted some language that is being reviewed by the city's Department of Planning and Economic Development.

Our request might qualify as a "minor text amendment," meaning that it would be a request from D10 to the Planning Commission, documenting the issue's history and our evidence of community engagement. That would take roughly 6 weeks to go through the Planning Commission process, which then would make a recommendation to City Council. Before we do that, we should be confident that our request represents the wishes of the neighbors in that area. 45 people attended the meeting in September and the consensus was that neighbors were comfortable extending the special overlay district for additional events at the State Fairgrounds. We should do one well-publicized outreach event to neighborhood.

Dayna Thomas, a neighbor who lives near Midway Parkway, was present in support of the parking overlay expansion. She is concerned about safety during events with people parking/circling the blocks looking for parking. Her neighbors are also in support. She asked if this would include the vending district also.

Maggie said yes, we'd look to expand the entire overlay district for parking and vending.

Dayna said neighbors have seen different maps circulated during the Fair for where vending is allowed. Neighbors are upset about how police fail to enforce the zoning laws.

Michael said there was a map generated as part of a discussion several years ago centered around expanding the overlay district to areas not currently included in the overlay, perhaps that has been circulated? D10 has also been working with Department of Safety and Inspections to enforce peddling violations; in the past year, fines and license suspensions have been issued.

After discussion of possibly holding an outreach event, it was determined that due to the COVID-19 pandemic it is unlikely that we would be able to hold an in-person event. Committee will make overlay district the main topic of June meeting and notify residents in the overlay districts.

f. State Fair Parking counts and overlay expansion (Tentative) Tabled for a future meeting.

5. Staff Report – Michael Kuchta

- The Back to the 50's event at the State Fairgrounds, which takes place at the end of June, has been cancelled for 2020.
- The Hmong International Freedom Festival has been cancelled for 2020
- The State Fair has not made a decision about the 2020 Fair

a. 1015 Bandana Square

Planning Commission unanimously approved recommending rezoning and variance May 1.

Recommendation now goes to City Council First site plan review took place April 30. Among items yet to be resolved: a traffic study; access for emergency vehicles on the private streets in Energy Park; additional landscaping details; and exterior lighting. Also, it turned out that the setback variance may not have been necessary because, despite what county plat maps say, Bandana Blvd. is a public street, not a private street.

b. Essence Event Center

License hearing was held April 13; hearing officer indicated she is likely to recommend that city council approve liquor and entertainment licenses. No vote scheduled. Center needs 68 parking

spaces; has 65 on its property. Owner promised outreach to neighboring businesses for agreements on additional parking and security. Wellington Management opposed licenses due to concerns about security and parking for larger events. Pandemic has pushed back anticipated opening until at least autumn 2020. District 10 has not taken a position on licenses.

c. Pathways Project update

Bike path along west side of Lexington Ave. has been repaved, east side will be finished when they can remediate the soil. No update on parking lots or new signs.

d. Como Park free parking

Parking at Como Zoo and Conservatory will remain free through 2021. There is no plan to implement paid parking.

e. Como Ave reconstruction

East Como Blvd. restriping: Markings are in place; no details on when actual restriping of vehicle and bicycle lanes will take place.

Como Ave. between Hamline and Snelling: This is a two year project, no construction this year east of Snelling; that is pushed to 2021.

f. Community garden

State and city finally renewed permit for 2020. Utility survey completed April 20. Water meter will be installed about May 15. Expanded to 25 plots this year: 15 returning gardeners, 12 on waiting list. Gardeners are working to clean up new areas and abandoned plots. Gardeners are being advised about physical distancing measures, and are working out guidelines on washing hands, equipment, etc. Resident Barbara Clark is coordinating logistics and record keeping.

g. Licenses

Foxtrot Burger Spot: The liquor and patio licenses for this restaurant at 1341 Pascal are up for renewal on June 1. Anyone who has concerns should contact the office of Ward 4 Councilmember Mitra Jalali.

Como Lakeside Pavilion: The liquor, entertainment, and patio licenses (currently being managed by Spring Café) are up for renewal on June 4. Anyone who has concerns should contact the office of Ward 5 Councilmember Amy Brendmoen.

Pope Automotive: The garage license for this auto repair shop at 991 Front is up for renewal on June 13. Anyone who has concerns should contact the office of Ward 5 Councilmember Amy Brendmoen.

6. Coming events

- a. Next Board Meeting – May 19th @ 7pm –Virtual
- b. June Land Use Meeting - June 3rd @ 7pm –Virtual

7. Adjourn **8:06pm**

Minutes respectfully recorded and submitted by Rebecca Calvo.

District 10 Como Community Council Neighborhood Relations Committee

Tuesday, May 5, 2020

@ 7:00pm Online

I. ADMINISTRATIVE

A. Attendance: Sarah Reuter, Jill Henricksen, Debra Verber (board appointees); Darcy Rivers, Mike Ireland, Sarah Wein (community); Michael Kuchta (staff)

II. OPENING

A. Call to order 7 pm

B. Introductions

C. Add to Agenda for 4/7/2020 NRSO Committee Meeting

D. Updates from Board Meeting

- Environment: Looking to create do-it-yourself kits for Como Lake Clean Up in June
- Land Use: Como high school requesting sign variances; building on SW on Front and Chatsworth (dog training) seeking rezoning; Brasavolo Building on Dale seeking Neighborhood STAR grant

III. NEW BUSINESS

1. Annual meeting. The board will decide on May 19th about the election and annual meeting. Virtual annual meeting? Slide show will need to be prepared? Election: Mail and online ballot? Dot democracy questions? Committees will still have to do 5-minute annual review / plans for 2020.
2. Community art for yard signs and prints Send the submission to the art teachers in the community, Andrea Lynn from Como Fest Art Fair, advertise on Next door and Facebook, 2-side yard sign (cheaper) and art print (more expensive), try to decide by next Wednesday who the winner is through email within Neighborhood Relations.
3. District 10 kid bike parade not appropriate to do at this time, but we can sponsor Como/D10 scavenger hunts.
4. Front porch portraits: Possibly a fundraiser, could showcase families on the weekly newsletter, website
5. Community safety concerns: We have had some violent attacks, random patterns, robbery and violence, not much update, unknown where the investigations is. Crime is up from a year ago.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Recent Events Review

1. Current Initiatives

Next Generation. Emily has a system set up to communicate to senior citizens. Notes being sent from around 12 families. Emily has been in touch with Front Ave. Hi-Rise tenant council. They do not have access to printers, so we sent them some renter refund forms and books. They have requested help with documents being translated to Hmong

B. Community Concerns. Is there anything about Como Park walking paths, runners not wearing masks. Suggest runners run the opposite direction, counter clockwise.