

CapitolRiver Council Meeting Minutes

August 16, 2022, Board of Directors Meeting, 5:15 p.m.

Board members and the public are invited to attend via Zoom videoconference.

- I. Chair Jess Grams called the meeting to order. Attendees were asked to introduce themselves and answer the following question, what is one thing that you would like to change about CRC? Responses including continuing the current trajectory, would like CRC to do so much more, would like to interact more with the skyway committee, increase staff capacity, more hands-on engagement projects / more proactively building community, agendas should be sent 3-5 days before meetings and minutes should be sent 3-5 days after meetings, continue identifying ways to support CRC, increase awareness of what CRC is / make sure people know who we are and how relevant we can be, greater understanding of how businesses and residents can work together / use the Chamber as a resource.
- II. Previous meeting minutes: The May board meeting minutes were adopted.
- III. Resolution from the CRC Public Realm Committee regarding the proposal by The Listening House to purchase the former location of Savoy restaurant at 421 7th Street East to provide services to people who are experiencing homelessness.

The committee requested that the following resolution be considered by the CRC Board:

The Saint Paul City Council recently waived the customary 45-day public notification period and authorized a \$1.4 million “forgivable” loan to the Listening House for the purchase and remodeling of the Red’s Savoy location. While the CapitolRiver Council is in support of the Listening House project and understands its desire to expedite it in order for the facility to be operational by winter, the CRC also supports adequate public notification on issues which affect our neighborhoods. When the City doesn’t follow the customary notification rules it can erode community trust in the City. Therefore, be it resolved, the CapitolRiver Council objects to the City Council’s waiver of the public notification period.

Council member Noecker attended the meeting and discussed the issues and concerns. She clarified that the Listening House purchased the building, so it was one private entity purchasing from another. The 45-day notice was regarding the decision to provide City funding to support the renovation, and not whether the Listening House should be able to move to that location. Several board members watched the video of the July 27 meeting, where this was discussed by Listening House staff and representatives of local businesses and residents, and they found the discussion to be informative.

No board member made a motion to vote on the resolution, so there was no vote on the resolution.

- IV. Financial update: The monthly Financial Statements are posted on the website. A request for \$5,666.74 has been submitted to the City to reimburse CRC for expenses for May. Jon Fure said the City doesn’t make any payments to district councils until after the contract is reviewed and signed, which takes several months, and the City has been taking about one month to send payments in response to each request for reimbursement (of eligible expenses that are specified in the contract and work plan). That makes it difficult to get caught up in terms of cash flow. Several board members expressed concerns about the amount of time the process takes, and asked if more could be done to ask City officials to address the problem. The board also discussed a letter that was sent earlier in the year to City staff on this subject in May, and discussed whether they should follow up with City staff and / or Council member Noecker. No action was taken, and the discussion will continue at the next board meeting.

- V. Pedro Park Update: Julie Printz provided updates on the public meeting on July 25 and other recent updates. The meeting was well-attended, and people were excited to learn about the City's plans to demolish the Public Safety Annex. Michael-Jon Pease had attended the meetings and effectively talked about the importance of parks. A small number of people indicated that they would like to see the City again try to sell the building to a developer, but the majority of people indicated support for demolition. Residents could consider sending letters to the Mayor's office indicating that support. The Friends of Pedro Park has had its first meeting, which is also encouraging.
- VI. Board member updates and requests for future agenda items. A board member asked to continue discussing the successful listening session that took place in June and the other event that is planned for September 22. Board members are encouraged to join the committee and support this series of events. Board members can contact either Judy Miller or Julie Printz.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.