

CapitolRiver Council Meeting Minutes

March 21, 2023, Board of Directors Meeting, 5:15 p.m., via Zoom videoconference.

- I. Call to Order and Introductions: Chair Jess Grams called the meeting to order, read aloud the land acknowledgement, and asked attendees to introduce themselves.
- II. Previous Meeting Minutes – the group discussed the Feb. 28, 2023 board meeting minutes. Questions were asked about the budget and work plan. Jon Fure explained that the budget is a roadmap – an estimate of income and expenses. The work plan is something that the City requires as part of the contract, and district councils cannot get paid until the contract is signed, and then they can request reimbursement of eligible expenses. He said he creates the work plan each year based on input from the board and committees. Board Member Kathleen O’Neil said “There are a lot of goals, and they should be prioritized. ... One of our top goals should be to have more people involved. How are we going to do that? You talk about a listening session in spring and in fall. Is one going to happen this spring? I haven’t heard anything about it.” Vice Chair Julie Printz said if there is an action item, it needs to be recorded in the minutes. Chair Jess Grams said the work plan that is being discussed is focused on the contract with the City, and the strategic planning processes that is underway could identify other activities that are important for the organization that aren’t strictly related to the contract. As far as action items in the previous meeting, she said board members were asked to email Amy Lee if they were interested in being on the strategic planning committee. Once people sign up for that committee, they can decide when they want to meet. Board Member Kathy Blair said the minutes say that we will be forming a strategic planning committee, and that “I’m just wondering who is forming the committee, how are we forming the committee, when is the committee going to be formed, I mean it just said that when we have a committee formed, then we will start doing the strategic plan, but it didn’t say anything about who is going to reach out, or who is going to chair it, or who’s going to decide what the committee is going to do. And then the budget, it says that because there was less money coming in then going out, we either should fundraise or eliminate expenses, and I didn’t hear any more discussion about how are we going to fundraise or what expenses are we going to cut. So it just seemed like there were things in the minutes that made reference to but didn’t say how this was going to happen, and that was mind-boggling to me.” Jon Fure said the minutes reflect what was discussed. Board Member Blair said, “I’m not saying it should be in the minutes, ... I’m just curious, are we going to have a committee, who is going to form it, what’s going to happen?” Jon Fure said that is on the agenda for tonight’s meeting. There were no changes to the minutes, so they are adopted.
- III. Discussion Items – Review of Committees / Work Groups: Jon Fure said district council staff meet monthly, and there was a discussion about eliminating committees at the most recent meeting. Several districts have eliminated their committees, and instead have one monthly community forum that may or may not have a prepared agenda. Another district council has scheduled some committees on the same day, and one committee will meet for the first hour, another for the second hour, and if necessary, another for the third hour. The current CRC committees / work groups are:
 - Public Realm, first Thursday of the month at 5 p.m.
 - Development Review, second Tuesday of the month at 9 a.m.
 - Skyway Governance Advisory, fourth Friday of the month at 9 a.m.
 - Officers committee, meets at least quarterly, and the schedule is developed by consensus of the officers.
 - Listening Session planning group, meets periodically to plan events and discuss feedback received previously.
 - The Recruiting committee is the officers and committee chairs. It generally meets periodically in March through May and is focused mainly on recruiting candidates for the board of directors.

- Strategic Plan committee, was formed at the February board meeting and has not yet met or established a schedule.
- Public Restroom Work Group has not yet met or established a schedule.

He asked board members if they thought that we should continue to have the various committee meetings at a certain date and time, or if some could be combined. For example, could the skyway committee be from 9 to 10 on the fourth Friday, and then if there are additional agenda items that aren't strictly related to skyways, those topics could be discussed starting at 10 a.m. The listening sessions, for example, could be planned at the Public Realm committee on the first Thursday of the month. Maybe strategic planning and the public restroom work group could also be discussed at that first Thursday meeting. Vice Chair Printz asked, what is driving the desire to switch up the committees? Jon Fure said in other districts, it has been partly based on staff capacity, so instead of having several monthly meetings to prepare, there could be one or two. That also makes sense for the involvement of volunteers, who could make time for fewer meetings. Some districts have also switched to having quarterly board meetings, and they focus more on committees in between those quarterly board meetings, which makes it a more feasible commitment level for people who are board members and committee members. Vice Chair Printz asked, "So do you feel like it's your capacity, Jon, more than other people, or are you just feeling it all around?" She said if we had a strategic plan and a work plan, we would have things to talk about and work on, and we wouldn't want to meet less frequently than monthly, and that "I want to respect your need to not work endless hours, too." Jon Fure said the feedback that he has gotten from board members is that they want to do more hands-on engagement. We can still have monthly board meetings, but maybe there should be more months where the focus is just on updates from committees. Board Member O'Neil said, "We just need to focus more on what are our concrete goals. ... We need a leader, too, to tell us what we are going to try to accomplish." Treasurer Will Travis said he would favor whatever would make CRC more nimble. An example from several years ago is that the skyway committee scheduled a couple of evening meetings, and they were poorly attended. Maybe some committee meetings could be replaced with more engagement work. Chair Jess Grams said she thought that this was a good, high-level discussion, and she suggested that board members should think about this and discuss it again. She said board members who are interested in leading the strategic planning process should contact Amy Lee, and part of that group's work should include developing specific recommendations for committees and related community engagement strategies. Board Member Rich Johnson said he agrees that it would be good to have more of a focus on getting more things done.

- IV. Annual Meeting Planning – Jon Fure said the anticipated Annual Meeting date will be June 20. Possible locations include the 4th floor meeting rooms in Osborn 370, or in the past, the meeting has been at the event space in Camp Bar. Several board members said they like the space at Camp Bar. Jon Fure said he would find out if it's available.
- V. Financial Update -- Executive Director Jon Fure: The final reimbursement request from 2022 was just received (for \$7,878.78). Monthly financial statements are posted on the website.

Committee Updates

- VI. Public Realm Committee: Kyle Rucker, planner of a Pride Fest in Rice Park, has been invited to discuss plans for the event. The meeting will be on April 6, via zoom, at 5 p.m. The current committee chair, Kari Khalil, has been serving in that role for two years, and is planning to step down in June. Jon Fure said he is working to recruit a new person to serve as committee chair or co-chair, so board members should let him know if they know anyone who might be interested.

- VII. Skyway Governance Advisory Committee: The committee will discuss the request by Madison Equities to close some skyway bridges at 7 p.m. The meeting will be on March 24 at 9 a.m.

Board Member Updates

- VIII. Board member updates and requests for future agenda items.

Vice Chair Printz provided a Pedro Park update: The fence will go up on Monday in preparation for demolition of the Public Safety Annex. She met with Rebecca and Michael-Jon Pease to talk about fundraising. The goal is to raise about \$8 million, and one potential funding source is HUD – Michael-Jon Pease sent templates of letters to send to representatives of Congress and the U. S. Senate to advocate for that funding. The request is for \$7 million, and, if that is received, strategies would be developed to raise the remaining \$1 million.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45 p.m.