



### **WA Business Association Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, April 12th 2017  
Minneapolis Institute of Art - 2201 Blaisdell Ave  
3:30 - 5:00 p.m.

<b>Attendees:</b>	Andrew Norick	Logica Law Firm
	Ari Giles	Hennepin History Museum
	Cedar Phillips	Hennepin History Museum
	Paul Jablonsky	Nicollet Car Wash
	Hassan Warsame	BP
	Martha Nemesi	Learning in Style
	Osman Abo	Banadir Fashion
	Fadumo Abdinur	Tasho Community
	Jamila Wehlie	Tasho Community
	Deb Girdwood	Children's Theatre
	Monique Bourgeois	Nuway
	Denise McAlpin	Nuway
	Michael Malone	Whittier/Tasho
	Laurie	Brave New Media
	Rosie	Brave New Media
	Irene	Brave New Media
	Christine Le	Lake Wine
	Araceli Perez	Marissas Bakery
	Geri Jerez	Calvary Baptist
	Krista Pearson	Minneapolis Institute of Art
	Osman Dagane	

**WA Staff:** Ricardo McCurley, Marcus VanderSanden

**Guest Speaker:**

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#### **Introductions/Call to Order - Ricardo McCurley**

Meeting begins at 3:40pm. Introductions are conducted and the meeting agenda and March meeting minutes are approved.

#### **Spotlight on Business - Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia)- Krista Pearson**

Minneapolis Institute of Art has been in the Whittier neighborhood since its inception in the early 20th century and is not only a cornerstone of the Whittier neighborhood but the city as a whole. Krista emphasized a renewed commitment by museum management to recenter the MIA as a neighbor, working closely with parks and rec and the Whittier and Phillips neighborhoods. They are currently working on a third mural collaboration with Hope Community on a parking wall at Clinton and 24th. Recruiting youth for an additional mural this summer and also seeking walls or places for future collaborations. In addition to that collaboration, Krista highlighted several monthly events to promote engagement with community. Every Third Thursday the museum hosts a themed social hour focused on young adults with activities throughout the museum including live music as well as the second Sunday of every month in which there are free family themed activities inside and outside of the museum. Krista encourages people to

get involved including becoming a member of the museum with membership ranging from free to however much people care to contribute.

Krista also describes the current events of the museum including the 34th annual Art in Bloom the museum's largest fundraising event taking place at the end of April, the Guillermo Del Toro exhibit currently on display as well an artist group from Vietnam that will be displaying photos in the photo gallery. Krista closed with a brief description of the newer Target Wing of the museum she describes as being more "cross curatorially" administered with less formal separation of artistic periods and styles than the original section of museum and highlighted underused library section of museum, encouraging everybody to come and spend more time interacting and hanging out at MIA.

### **35W closure and Associated Traffic Discussion**

Ricardo introduces 35W bridge construction and bridge foreclosures that will affect infrastructure directly affecting Whittier. In August Franklin ramp will be closed as well as 11th st ramp and 38th st bridge. North and South bound traffic will be affected. 26th st bridge will be open until Nov, 19th. 28th st, Franklin bridges closed. Westside exits will be closed first followed by Eastside exits for next stage of construction.

Franklin bridge will be closed for 11 months and will be first bridge to reopen along with 38th st Buses will reroute into Whittier. Express buses will be moved to Portland and Park.

One new exit will be added to Lake St on Southbound 35W

Exit will be on 28th st not Lake St. unclear about Franklin exit

MNDot has more detailed information regarding changes and closures on website.

### **Whittier's involvement:**

Will talk to Reps about potential wayfinding alternatives. Whittier businesses could be affected by potential traffic congestion. Hotline for complaints will be available.

MnDot seeking ways to engage community, information will be available on Whittier Website.

Project is still seeking contractors for and will also be searching for workers and offering training to work on project

How can we be proactive to mitigate potential dangers associated with increased traffic?

Could advocate for increased stop signs or traffic lights on 1st Ave. Could we advocate for turning 1st Ave into one way to increase flow of traffic during construction?

What can be done so that we are heard? Making sure there are proper wayfinding throughout project, proactively reporting issues being "chirpy".

Making "Lemonade" potentially using this as opportunity to bring people into Whittier to hang out here to have food and drink and wait out traffic.

### **Election: Business Association Chair & Business Appointees to Whittier Board of Directors**

One vote per business established (several businesses with multiple attendees)

One vacancy for one two-year at Large Board Seat -if eligible speak to Ricardo will figure that out first board meeting April 27th

Potentially another at Large seat opening up in the near future.

What are duties of BA chair and how much time?

BA Chair- runs BA meetings, staff finds topics and agenda while chair orchestrates meeting. 1-2 hours of BA specific communication can be expected. Chair also comes with seat on Whittier Board which includes 2 hour monthly meeting plus 3-4 hours of communication increasing time commitment to at least 10 hours a month.

Commitment always more than you expect, is what you put into it

Required new board member orientation, as well as other trainings

Board will be focused on Strategic Plan, Eat Street Event, Oral History Project amongst other things

Chair anyone eligible

For-profit business gets one representative

#### Floor Open to nominations:

- Andrew Nordick nominates himself for board chair
- Osman (?) nominates Michael
- Michael turns down nomination, nominates Fadumo for non-profit seat
- Martha N. nominates herself for board chair
- Nominations for chair closed put to vote
- Christina nominated for for-profit seat
- Christina nominates Araceli for for-profit seat
- Only two nominations no vote necessary
- Deb nominates herself for non-profit seat
- Fadumo nominates herself for non-profit seat
- Michael nominates Geri
- Paul wonders if BA could “lobby” for Deb to be part of the board to increase representation
- Arisella nominates Martha for non-profit seat
- Nominations closed, put to vote Martha and Geri win seats
- Paul makes motion to support Deb to member at large board position, unanimous support

#### Outcomes

- Andrew Nordick elected BA Board Chair
- Christina Le and Araceli Perez elected to For-profit seats
- Geri Jerez and Martha Nemesi elected to Non-profit seats
- BA would like to recommend Deb Girdwood for at-large seat on Whittier Alliance board

#### **Business Growth Task Force**

Marcus has been working with Andrew to aggregate resources for businesses within Whittier. Initial focus has been to aggregate resources from across different fields, government, non-profit or otherwise to reduce burden or stress of initial resource finding for business which will take form of a resource page on Whittier website. Will have to be cognizant of Whittier organizational capacity and expertise to avoid being overwhelmed or providing services not within organizational scope. Goal would be to provide a proven resource page on Whittier website that entrepreneurs and businesses could use as a starting point to making own decisions. Next step is to survey Whittier businesses to enhance and cater resources on web page. Marcus will be working closely with Andrew as this project moves forward.

Meeting adjourns at 5:04p.m.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Marcus VanderSanden.