

**Whittier Alliance Board Meeting Minutes**  
**October 22, 2015 6-8:30 PM**  
**Whittier Park**

**Present:** Erica Christ, Andy Cohen, David Bagley, Ted Irgens, Laura Jean, Christina Le, , Jesse Oyervides, Araceli Perez, Erin Sjoquist, Daphna Stromberg, Kenya Weathers **Absent:** Natascha Shawver, Brett Vandebussche **Staff:** Marian Biehn, Lucy Lawson **Guest:** Keith George

**Call to Order** at 6.10 by Erica Christ, Board Chair. Standard of conduct and conflict of interest reviewed. **Motion** to approve the October 22 agenda, with addition of a shelter ordinance update, **Carried**.

**Comments from the Chair**

Erica Christ

The order of business of the board meetings has been shuffled. Task force information now comes under Acting Committees to keep substantive agenda items earlier in the meeting, and the Finance Committee category will come later in the agenda because it gives rise to very few board motions.

**Media coverage/tweeting at Board Meetings**

Reporters sometimes attend the board meetings and tweet the discussion. If board members feel they are being misrepresented, they are encouraged to take it up with the reporter or the reporter's supervisor.

**Secretary's Report**

Minutes from September 24, 2015 were reviewed and a **Motion** to approve as written was **Carried**. Attendance was reviewed. Nov. Board Meeting Date is Nov. 19.

**Executive Committee**

Erica Christ

**Personnel Policy/Miscellaneous Policies Updates and Additions**

The policies were reviewed by the EC. A social media policy has been added, and the sexual harassment policy has been tweaked to include a definition and other changes have been made per the marked up doc email out and available in printed form.

**Motion** to take EC Motion 1 off the table **Carried 9-0-0**.

Personnel policy does not end up on file with NCR, only grievance and finance policies.

**EC Motion 1:** The Executive Committee recommends adoption and inclusion into the Whittier Alliance Personnel Policies the policies on: Media/Social Media relations & personal use, Work Products and Files, Electronic Equipment & Communication, and Membership/Board/Staff List. **Motion Carried 9-0-0**

**Executive Director Review**

Erica got everything needed for the review from Erin, and will be completing it shortly.

**Hiring Committee Report**

The hiring committee for a new Executive Director interviewed 7 people this week – 8 hours of meetings. All 7 were interesting candidates, and they are getting 4 back for second round interviews. Committee is confident they will get someone good for the job. Still on the time line as well.

**Acting Committee & Task Force Reports & Motions**

**Community Issues**

**Bike Police Patrols**

Board members discussed the Bike Police Patrol funding proposal put forward at October CI meeting. There was consensus at the CI meeting that people were positive about the proposal. A board member raised the seasonal nature of a bike patrol – could there be a foot patrol instead during winter? Board members discussed extending the use of the funds over a longer period of time and further discussed whether the NRP contract specifies bike patrols, or whether could use funds for foot patrols instead. Lyndale's experience of bike patrols has been very positive, and Whittier already has some beat cops along the major streets. Board members raised the urgency of the safety issue, and bike patrols could not begin till April. Board raised concerns about the temporary nature of the proposal. The bike/foot

patrols are also an effective for outreach and community building. Can put off making a decision to investigate having foot patrols rather than bikes, as bike patrols will not begin till April anyway.

**Safe Streets Task Force Update**

The new WA Safe Streets task force met with some representatives from Public Works this week, including Shane Morton, who was at the last CI meeting. The task force needs to get feedback from the community as to what actions it should take. Public Works is willing to make some extra changes, starting right now, but they can't do anything about Franklin and Nicollet. There is no traction on the idea of painting curbs to discourage parking close to intersections – it's considered vandalism and will be removed.

**Whittier Farmers Market**

Mark Yamaguchi gave a presentation at CI meeting about starting a farmers market. The Calvary Church on Blaisdell is willing to host it and pay for someone to coordinate it. At this stage they just want support, and are not asking for resources. But it's possible the WA could participate in some way in the future in some way.

**Motion:** The WA Board supports the proposal for a farmers market in the Whittier n'hood.  
**Carried: 11-0-0**

Board members discussed farmers market further. The Organizational Sustainability Task Force had discussed the possibility of running a farmers market in order to generate income. A flea market is another idea.

**Business Association**

Andy Cohen

BA meeting was mostly a presentation from the Workplace Fairness Coalition, which represents businesses on the Working Families Agenda. The City Council has dropped the scheduling component of the proposal, and it sounds like they may slow down for more consultation on the paid sick time component.

**Strategic Plan – NRP**

Laura Jean

**2118 Blaisdell Historic Designation Study**

Board members discussed the historic designation study. A more complete version of the study than the draft in the minutes arrived by email today and has been forwarded to all board members. Board members can read it and send Marian any comments. The first draft was quite dry and not as compelling as it could have been. The mansion addition is not historic but the original building definitely is, and it's the last building of its kind on its street. It is also Ernest Kennedy architecture, and housed Titanic survivors. The final draft will be available at the Nov board meeting.

**Reopen Nicollet, Cuningham Group Planning Workshops – Sat. Oct 3 & 10 Recap/Comments**

The first two workshops were an interesting slow build to consensus. The next meeting will be mostly about the Greenway, and after that it will get really interesting. Reopening Nicollet would represent about \$1 billion worth of investment. Board members discussed whether existing property owners should be given assistance to become developers, alongside traditional developers. An online wiki is being developed, and all the presentations from the workshops are already on the website. A link to the wiki will be sent to the WA email list with an invitation to respond.

**Somali Outreach Initiative**

Camilla facilitates a women's leadership initiative as part of her Somali outreach work in Lyndale. She has met with women at the InStep program who are learning English and has found that they need better job hunting and computer skills, which has led to this proposal for an employment training initiative. The proposal has a timeline and benchmarks. One adjustment is that many women are out of town in December, so the program will now start in January and end in May. Board members were positive, and asked that she track outcomes of the program so they can be reported back.

**EC Motion 2:** The Executive committee recommends allocating up to \$2500 from Community Building E.1.5.1 for the Somali Women’s Employment Training initiative. **Motion Carried 11-0-0**

**Shelter Ordinance Update – Ted Irgens**

Board members were briefed on City Council's proposed changes to the shelter ordinance. Last week at a very non-advertised meeting they produced a plan with many new categories. The councilmembers were questioned about preventing concentration of shelters, and preventing slumlords from running shelters. Currently shelters are attached to religious orgs, which are likely to act in the best interests of homeless clients. St Paul and several other municipalities have licensing requirements for shelters, but the Minneapolis plan does not. The proposal recommends a 1000 foot spacing requirement between shelters, which is only two blocks. The proposed ordinance will allow shelters with many more beds in high density areas compared to low density neighborhoods Providers are unlikely to build a 6-person shelter; they will build a 36 person shelter. This is likely to increase the concentration of shelters in n'hoods like Whittier with less expensive housing and high zoning.

The next Planning Commission meeting is Monday, Nov. 2, and the next draft is being released on Wednesday 28 Oct., giving only a few days to review. Have contacted the Stevens Square n'hood association about the ordinance change, but haven't heard back. The proposal has essentially been written by shelter providers, and there isn't a groundswell response from residents, as very few people know about it. The proposal is for two categories of shelters: emergency shelters, and overnight shelters. Emergency can have up to 350 people in up to 5000 sq feet. There are no parking regulations. Board members conjectured that Jordan, Folwell, Phillips n'hoods will all be angry about the changes. Minnesota has the highest financial disparity in the nation, but the Planning Commission doesn't see a connection – 'concentration of poverty' is seen as an outdated idea. Board members discussed whether the WA could file a complaint or an injunction, although shelters don't fall under the Fair Housing Act. City representatives were asked to go to CI meetings of the n'hoods to present on this issue, but claimed no-one was complaining. Shelter operators make the argument that churches don't run the shelters anymore, they just lease the space to providers. However, it is a safeguard in the system that churches are unlikely to lease to unscrupulous landlords.

Board members discussed that the ordinance doesn't reflect what was said in the 2 community meetings. Will contact Phillips n'hood about the issue. Would be good to build alliances with other Councilmembers, emphasizing that this is a rushed proposal.

**Motion:** The WA Board opposes the shelter ordinance on the grounds that it does not address the concerns brought up at the community meetings, that it does not have a licensing and oversight requirement, and that it inequitably directs the shelters to neighborhoods with high density and poverty. **Carried: 11-0-0**

**Finance Committee**

Andy Cohen

**September 2015 Financial Statements:** The financial report was presented. The balance sheet was reviewed. Apart from Attorney's fees, tracking very well in terms of profit and loss.

**FC Motion 1:** The Whittier Alliance Board accepts the September 2015 financial report for the Whittier Alliance. **Motion Carried.**

**2016 Budget**

Board members reviewed a draft budget for 2016, which is very similar to 2015. Salary and benefits are a question, because WA has no group health plan, which changes how a benefit can be supported – can't have a group of one. Budget contains the same information as the monthly reports but more itemized. Board members should review the document and raise what they might want to change. Board members discussed shifting the paradigm from being very protective of funds to spending more aggressively, as the survival of the organization is now more secure. For example, could spend more on budget items. It takes work to spend money, so, oddly enough, need to direct some resources towards spending money. On the other hand, whether CPP funds will be renewed next year is still an open question, and could look at the Organizational Sustainability Task Force again. NRP funds could be unleashed further – e.g. bike cops. Will look at the NRP initiatives breakdown again at the next meeting – that would be helpful.

**2014 Audit**

Board members reviewed a draft of the audit – it has not yet been submitted. The opinion is the most important part and is positive.

**Motion:** We, the undersigned, state and acknowledge that we are duly constituted officers of this organization, being the Board Chair and Board Treasurer respectively, and that we execute this document on behalf of the organization pursuant to the resolution of the Whittier Alliance Board of Directors adopted on the 22 day of September 2015, approving the contents of the document, and do hereby certify that the Whittier Alliance Board of Directors, has assumed, and will continue to assume, responsibility for determining matters of policy, and have supervised, and will continue to supervise, the finances of the organization. We further state that the information supplied is true, correct and complete to the best of our knowledge. **Carried 11-0-0**

**Fall Fundraiser Goal and Board Pledges**

Board members each pledged a contribution to the Fall Fundraiser. It's a community board, so everyone is asked to contribute only what they can afford. The board pledge is so community can be confident the board is 100% behind the organization. Will announce the collective pledge at next board meeting. WA is \$8000 below its fundraising goal for the year, with Fall Fundraiser still to come.

**Staff Reports:**

Marian Biehn

Reports from Paul and Camilla are in the board packet.

**Old & New Business:**

**Fall Clean Up** was on Sat Oct 17. There was a lot of litter, and about 30 participants, so couldn't get to the entire n'hood. Thanks to those who came. **Blueprint for Equitable Engagement** is back, and very similar to draft. **Greater Goods** is going to start selling Whittier n'hood merchandise. The WA should also start producing merch! **David and Tamara Bagley's** house is going to be on the cover of Old House Journal at the end of November.

**Adjourn**

**8:35PM**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Lucy Lawson.**

Meeting Minutes Approved on \_\_\_\_\_

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Erica Christ, Board Chair

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Natascha Shawver, Board Secretary