

**Community Engagement Committee Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 9th, 2020, 6:30-8:00 pm — Zoom Meeting**

Attendees: Nick Hutchinson, Christine Popowski, George Rishwami, Josh Ranta, Micah, Sydney Burroughs

Staff: Kaley Brown, Marcus VanderSanden, Robb Larson, Oscar Nieves Rubio

Welcome at 6:35pm by Marcus VanderSanden.

Introductions.

Agenda & Standard of Conduct is reviewed.

Community Updates

Whittier Alliance - Marcus VanderSanden

- Summarized recent work of Whittier Alliance including:
 - Annual Meeting took place on May 26th. Four new resident directors were elected: Deja Jendro, Erika Boelk Tapia, Cyndi Hovey, Kami Brodie; two nonprofit reps elected: Sydney Burroughs (MCAD), Stephanie Brown (Calvary Church). One business rep seat still open.
 - Two new committees: Housing and Land Use (formerly Housing Issues) and Community Engagement (formerly Community Issues)
 - Good Neighbor award: Community Aid Network MN, Good Business award: Pimento Jamaican Kitchen
- Next Wednesday 6/16 Whittier Alliance will be tabling at a community event at Calvary Church 5:30 - 7:30 PM.
- Whittier Park is collaborating with Mia and Hope Community for “Tell Me But With Colors”, a 15-hour community arts program for youth ages 7-13.

Whittier Alliance - Kaley Brown

- We will convene a nominations committee this summer to fill vacant seats. If you or a neighbor who would like to be involved, email kaley@whittieralliance.org.
- Following WA's purchase of the 2116 Nicollet vacant lot, we are putting together a steering committee to guide the development of the site and eventually develop an RFP and select a development partner.
- Housing and Land Use Committee meets next Tuesday 6/15
 - Midtown Greenway Access Improvement Project to create an ADA accessible ramp to the greenway between Harriet and Garfield by Soo Line Gardens. Starting an engagement process with the community, presenting at the HLU meeting on Tuesday.

Lake & Nicollet Engagement Series

Cultural Wellness Center is hosting an ongoing series of community input sessions around redeveloping Lake & Nicollet to center community aspirations, promote equitable outcomes and create new opportunities for residents and businesses.

Next session will be next Thursday. We are also recruiting a Whittier-specific delegation to be representative of the neighborhood, and are offering stipends for participation.

Committee Name Change

Marcus VanderSanden - WA Staff

The motion at the 2021 Annual Meeting to establish the Community Engagement Committee (formerly Community Issues Committee) was passed by the voters. The goal is to increase opportunities for people to create and for the community to be in contact with each other. The committee will be focused on: community safety, small business engagement, voter outreach, environmental sustainability. We invite and encourage people who have experience and passion for these topics to get involved.

Community Engagement Committee Chair Election Marcus VanderSanden - WA Staff

Per WA bylaws, a committee chair is elected at the first committee meeting after the Annual Meeting. Nick Hutchinson is currently the only applicant to the board, but we also accept nominations from the floor.

Nick: I've been involved with WA for a while as well as establishing the Really Really Free Market and the Whittier Solidarity Network. I'm passionate about community engagement and look forward to serving the neighborhood.

Motion to elect Nick Hutchinson to the position of Community Engagement Committee Chair by acclamation. 2nd. Voice vote unanimous. Motion passes.

Community Thoughts and Concerns Marcus VanderSanden - WA Staff

Q: Calvary Church used to have a Farmers Market every year, this year they aren't. Could Whittier organize a Farmers Market?

A: Whittier Alliance could not jump in this late in the season and facilitate a successful market. There's possibilities for popups, but at this point it would not be a sustainable event. There's a lot of competition around Minneapolis for markets. Calvary's permit process was hindered by COVID restrictions.

Q: Stevens Square does one, could WA do something like that?

A: SS has a dedicated staff person and support from the church. There's a permit process with the City that goes over the winter, so it's too late at this point. The Really Really Free Market could have opportunities for something similar to what you might find at a farmers market. We can work on ramping up that market to bring in more participation. We can also collaborate on a one-time event with vendors.

Next Really Really Free Market is on July 10.

Meeting adjourned at 7:16pm.
Minutes submitted by Robb Larson.