

## **LINDEN HILLS NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the regular monthly meeting, February 4, 2020**

**LHiNC Board Members present:** Steve Birch, Leah Fish, Peter Gilbert, Robert Haider, Tom Harlan, Barbara Lunde, Elizabeth McDonald, Bjorn Olson, Linda Picone, Wendy Ponte and Abdi Sahal

**LHiNC Board Members absent:** Adam Beck, Ed Bell, Judy Hornbacher and Lauren Linderman

**Executive Director:** Becky Allen

*The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The February agenda and January minutes were approved.*

### **3-STRINGS GRANT UPDATE - Ruth LeMay, SWHS, Music Department**

Ruth LeMay, Director of the Southwest High School Guitar Program and founder of the schools 3-Strings program, reported back to the council on the results of the \$2,000 awarded to the 3-Strings this past fall as part of LHiNC's Grants Program. The \$2K was part of \$65K raised to support a trip to Orlando for 3-Strings, a musical group created for special needs students. The group played at a large music educators conference in Orlando. Since the performance, Ruth LeMay has been invited to present her methods across the country, the 3-Strings has been invited back to the conference next year, and a donor has offered a \$50K challenge match, which would be invested in adaptive music programs and training for all of MPS.

### **COMMUNITY SURVEY - Becky Allen**

Executive Director Becky Allen asked the board to review a community survey which had been drafted and approved by the Community Engagement Committee at the January 2020 committee meeting. Results will be used to select a Neighborhood Priority Project (as required by the city for CPP funding) but also will be used by the board and committees when evaluating how to invest time and resources in the future.

Bjorn Olson and Steve Birch commented that the ranking feature was not excellent on phones. Unfortunately it's a limitation of the program. Bjorn also asked that the categories be randomized.

Elizabeth McDonald made a motion to approve the survey. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

### **NEIGHBORHOODS 2020 - Becky Allen/Steve Birch**

Becky Allen attended the CURA (Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, Univ of MN) session with NCR that presented the newly proposed funding model for neighborhoods. She provided a brief summary.

At the request of City Council, this new model is focused on Racial Equity. CURA created three models - one with no base funding for neighborhoods, one with 10K base and one with 25K base. The way this new model divvys up funds, Linden Hills qualifies for significantly less city funding. Right now, through CPP, Linden Hills receives 43K per year. CURA provides 3 scenarios - the most dramatic of which has Linden Hills in the category that would receive 14-50K over 3 years (so 4.6-16.6K per year).

LHINC's next step is to craft a response to CURA's recommendation to be shared with Council Member Palmisano and NCR. After we, as a board, approve our response, we will share it with other SW neighborhoods and try to align our interests. We also are reaching out to Linea to understand what other council members could be hearing similar concerns, so we could potentially align with them, as well. Public comment on this plan is scheduled to end March 30, committee hearings/votes on it are scheduled for April, with a City Council vote in May.

Steve Birch urged council members to read three documents:

- CURA, NRP and CPP, slide to see where NRP funding went and CPP funding went
- NRP - Racial Equity was not the goal, it was to keep homeowners in homes
- Study done by outside consultants (disagreeing with CURA research)

Steve suggested that the board read all necessary documents and share thoughts via email. He would draft a response that the board could vote on next meeting. Comments are due by end of March.

Becky said she'd create a google folder for 2020, where she'd post all related documents, as well as a google form, so board members could share their thoughts.

#### **Treasurer's Report** - Tom Harlan

\$26K in checks went out - \$5K for Art Shanty, \$5K for Hennepin Co. Library, as well as payments on the Line. Tom and Becky will be working on the annual budget for next month.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

#### **Community Engagement** - Peter Gilbert & Wendy Ponte

- The MPRB has 291K for playground improvements. Community Engagement will be helping them get feedback from residents about how the money should be spent.
- The Linden Hills Line was mailed for the first time. A basic survey of board members showed three people did not receive it. We are going to poll the larger neighborhood, after the next delivery.

- Judy Hornbacher and Abdi Sahal are in the beginnings of organizing an Immigrant/Refugee Event for April/May with other SW neighborhoods and the city's Office of Immigrant and Refugee Affairs.
- The committee has started talks with the library to partner on one or more census-related events.
- At the last meeting, Aaron Isaacs from the Minnesota Streetcar Museum, presented an update on the historic signs for the Trolley Path. The signs are finished, but their installation is more complicated and expensive than first thought. The project needs an additional \$2500 to have the signs safely and legally installed. The funding was approved. The Community Engagement Committee is recommending that the funding come from the NRP strategy: Heritage Preservation. Wendy Ponte made the motion, it was seconded and unanimously passed.

### **Elections Sub-committee** - Elizabeth McDonald

This sub-committee was tasked with finding solutions to low voter turnout for board elections. At the last meeting, the sub-committee recommended:

- One additional box for ballots at the Library
- Seven day voter period
- All ballots look the same
- Ways to vote: 1. By paper at Fall Fest; 2. Absentee ballot; 3. Electronic vote - on survey monkey - make sure all ballots look the same; no hyperlinks; short URL for access to bios; 4. Mail ballot

There was significant concern about the electronic voting piece. Since then, Becky spoke with a lawyer from Mission Guardian, a legal service provided by the city. The lawyer said that neighborhood organizations, as 501(c)3's, can hold online votes. Also through research, it was discovered that South Uptown and Kingfield are already using electronic voting for board elections.

Concerns were raised by Tom Harlan and Robert Haider about electronic voting. Elizabeth decided to strip out electronic voting from the proposal.

### **Environmental & Sustainability** - Leah Fish and Robert Haider

On February 18 from 6-7 p.m. at Bremer, the committee will be hosting an arborist from MPRB Forestry, who will discuss trees influence on climate change. The committee meeting will directly follow the talk from 7-9 p.m.

The committee has set its goals for 2020:

- Secure a dedicated committee webpage
- Create a mission statement
- Organize a green section at the festival
- Host a variety of community roundtables
- Empower LH Youth to become stewards and leaders

- Explore relationship with LHBA, greener practices within the village
- Become a revenue generating committee - grants, fundraisers

**Events Committee** - Steve Birch & Elizabeth McDonald

- Need a group to disassemble LHiNC Shanty; Eric next Tuesday, Feb 11 or Feb 15 @ 10am - Lauren, Bjorn, Robert Tom, Steve, Wendy
- Instagram - Art Shanty providing great publicity for LHiNC
- Festival - Wendy and Bjorn asked everyone to make sponsor asks on our behalf.

**Zoning and Housing** - Tom Harlan

Zoning and Housing Committee heard a variance request for a home on Beard. The committee voted to support the request. It's next meeting will be on Monday, March 9 at 7pm at the park building.

**Comprehensive District Design** - Ira Jourdain, Minneapolis School Board

Ira Jourdain, our representative on the Minneapolis School Board, provided an update on the Comprehensive District Design to the council and members of the community. Ira Jourdain discussed the current 5 models that are being debated and took questions from residents at the meeting. He encouraged people unhappy with the design to attend policy and finance (third tuesday of the month) committee meetings, to email/call the three city-wide school board members, and to send people to board meetings.