

WeCAN Board Meeting  
Minutes  
August 9, 2015  
Prepared by Leah Rounds

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 3:20pm by Ben Stetler

In attendance – Alan Burch, Cindy DelHierro, Jude DelHierro, Diana Dietvorst, Jim Dietvorst, Mary Gonzalez, Suellen Mack, Nadia Patrick, Leah Rounds, Ben Stetler, and Brittney Vernon

Ben's opening thoughts – the organization needs to change, possible have a multi-pronged leadership, decide on the activities we will do, co-presidency doesn't seem to be working, would move to change the organization and have multi-pronged leadership

Notes from previous board meeting

- Ben announced that he was stepping down as co-president at the end of August.
- Does the current leadership structure work? Does it allow for co-presidents to not be overburdened?
- With WeCAN's history and accomplishments (Sloans redevelopment, outreach, programming, etc), and redevelopment wrapping up, what direction does the organization want to take?
- Have the leadership, but not the depth of volunteers

Discussion on next steps for WeCAN

- There is more development coming to West Colfax, Sloans development is continuing
- The organization structure is not working, need a multi-person approach, it's a lot of volunteer hours, too much work for two people
- Make it a revolving leadership. Have many Co-Presidents and each take a few months. Need defined rolls for each position.
- Need to attract more people, there's a huge interest in sustainability
- Summer is slow, maybe become a 10 month organization
- WeCAN over-commits, need to focus, step back and look at what we do and do it well
- General meeting topics should have more diverse topics, 12 different meeting centered around the neighborhood

- Revisit the mission statement, look at what we want our outcomes to be. Have a voice in the community and a changing neighborhood. The people moving in aren't necessarily interested in homeless outreach, low income housing, etc.
- Can the organization be both? Appeal to all types of people
- Young professionals are moving in, need to look at the wholeness of the entire community
- Need more volunteers to come help
- Need neighborhood centered projects
- Need to reconstruct and move forward. Can have multiple interests. An RNO can be a voice for the community and invite everyone. WeCAN is going through a restructuring just like the neighborhood
- Do we want many people coming to our general meetings? Do we want them to show up at programs? If we do the right kinds of projects we will get people more involved.
- Does the goal drive the leadership? Or the leadership drive the goal? Figure out what you want to accomplish and see if you can do it.
- Look at the mission statement again. Does it need to be changed?
- An organization is built around its goals. Build leadership around it to fit these goals. Personality driven is in a transition. Need to identify the needs of the community.
- People want to be heard, they want to count. Want to do what you feel is well rounded
- Newsletters aren't interesting to a younger demographic, the Hispanic community is not involved
- Organizationally, who is going to do what? How many hours will each person put in? etc.
- Can't change the bylaws mid-year, but board can appoint a new Co-President
- Take into account the information from this meeting, the 2 Co-Presidents can come back with ideas and goals
- As we move forward, need to have discussions on what community is, and have a shared vision. The idea is to come together and be inclusive. Finding people who are passionate about an issue and WeCAN provides an outlet for that.
- Social is not really a part of this organization (the potluck is supposed to be)
- Bylaws can't be changed until January 2016 if needed
- Right now the organization needs to replace Ben.
- There are many personalities in an organization, people are passionate about different things. There are often clashes, need to find a way to channel it. An executive council may be more appropriate for this type of organization
- Want fair and balanced information going out to the community.
- Having diverse views are important
- Motion to nominate Leah to take over as Co-Presidency role

- Leah: Open to the idea, however there are aspects of the organization I do not want to be a part of (bylaws, permits, rezoning, etc). Who would be willing to take over secretary?
- Look into audio recording instead that will transcribe the minutes. Alan will look into program.
- Motion to appoint Leah as the new Co-President, seconded, all voted in favor
- That is a good start, but it is important to sit down in the future and revisit the mission, goals, etc.
- Our concept of community may be different than others. It can be a challenge to get a community together.
- Could have block parties, get to know your neighbor gatherings, etc
- To Jude and Cindy: What are your thoughts on WeCAN's next steps?
  - Revisit the mission statement, the needs of your community, and build the organization around that.
  - WeCAN does carry a presence in the neighborhood, provided a platform for St. Anthony's discussions, been engaged.
  - Need to identify values, decide needs, create outcomes, and put structure in place.
  - There are citizens groups that act as a voice for the community, share a common vision. What are the action points?
  - Need strong leadership to tell us where to go, the volunteers will drive it
  - A diffused leadership could lift some of the burden, sharing the time. Difficult but doable
  - Don't want it to become 'pet projects,' Confluence focuses on bringing the community together (block party, neighborhood festival)
  - Want to have equal time for all issues, both sides presented equally
  - The WeCAN meeting that Ken presented at was very memorable, addressing the pros and cons of the St. Anthony redevelopment
- Need to gain the ear of the people moving into the St, Anthony's redevelopment
- SLCG is just education, they don't take a position, individuals can give input
- A lot of new people moving into the neighborhood, WeCAN can be a force for uniting
- Out-reach hasn't been good – DHA, Hispanics don't show up to meetings. Who typically comes to meetings? Do we want many people at meetings?
- It is difficult to come into a citizens' group when it appears decisions have already been made. It can be intimidating
- Stabilize leadership, move to audio files, processing this information individually, decide on values (safety? cleanliness?), pick your top five, define the needs of your community, communicate those ideas. These are the next steps for the next 6 months.
- The neighborhood is changing fast

- The values of an organization/individual can be difficult to come to, need a safe place to discuss these topics
- Talk to your neighbors, ask them what they want in the community. Can do surveys, but they tend to be skewed. Starts with conversations with a diverse group of people in the neighborhood
- It's a very diverse neighborhood, a positive thing for the community, but it brings challenges

August General Meeting Agenda:

Waste Management dumpster to barrel conversion

School announcements

Dan for Re-Imagine Colfax event

October 17 Clean-up day/ECM ideas

DPD report

Solicit feedback, fact finding on what the community wants

Newsletter – It is necessary to the organization. Leah will contact Don

Adjourn at 4:55pm

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Rounds

Secretary

West Colfax Association of Neighbors (WeCAN)