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# DMNA Council Meeting Minutes for 01/03/2024

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6:45 pm, Zoom remote call

## IN ATTENDANCE

Diego Saenz, Marc Gartler, Catherine Jagoe, Dennis Trest, Daryl Sherman, Tom Huber, Marie Trest, Laura Checovich, Dahn-Young Dong, Lisa Grueneberg, Carole Kantor, Kathy Engebretsen, Peter Gascoyne, Ann Clark, Michael Schneider, Annie Balch, Renie Schapiro (new co-editor of the *Hornblower*), Shawn Schey, Ryan Rainey

## PROCEDURAL

- Call to Order: 6:45 p.m.
- There was a unanimous vote to approve the agenda.
- There was a unanimous vote to approve the December meeting minutes.

## ALDER'S REPORT

Tag could not make tonight's meeting—no City Council meetings since December so things have been quiet.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

Dennis reviewed DMNA's income and expenses for December.

Income: Total \$1,539.13

Expenses: \$2,214.55

Current Membership: 773

The treasurer's report was accepted by unanimous vote.

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Diego is working on an event for January 26<sup>th</sup> or 27<sup>th</sup> at Garth's Brew Pub—maybe a social with hot chocolate. DMNA's Winter Solstice celebration was a great success.

## AGENDA ITEMS

- Michael Schneider and Tom Huber of the Transportation Committee asked for feedback on the Council's level of support for the following: *Should DMNA request the City look into banning Class 3 ebikes on shared use paths?*

While the Transportation Committee is sensitive to the climate change need for ebikes, cyclists aren't uniformly good citizens when using them, and many neighbors have expressed concerns about pedestrian safety on the path. Many walkers are not comfortable with ebikes and road bikes passing them at high speeds in close proximity on the path. Michael has not heard of any bike-pedestrian collisions but has heard from pedestrians who no longer use the path for safety reasons.

Tom Huber gave a background on the 3 classes of ebikes. Class 3 ebikes are pedal-assisted with a maximum speed of 18 mph while pedaling. Michael has contacted the City about the uptick in ebike use and asked them to monitor and collect data on the situation. The City's Transportation Policy and Planning Board did examine the issue in 2022. Although no action was taken at that time, they may add it to their agenda for 2024.

At Marc's request, Michael listed the pros and cons quickly. Those in favor of a ebike ban or control want more pedestrian perception of safety, which is diminished by higher speed bikes. (This is especially true for elders and people with young kids or limited mobility). People supporting ebike usage on the path do so because it allows more folks to bicycle for recreation, commuting, and transporting kids or groceries. Speed limits would be one option, e.g., stipulate that Class 3 ebikes not exceed 20 mph. Another option would be more outreach to the biking community requesting courtesy to pedestrians by giving them a wide berth.

Diego has reservations about the feasibility of enforcing a speed limit or ebike class restriction and feels they likely would not work any better than outreach. In any case, a speed limit would be best applied only to densely populated neighborhoods—it would not be necessary to apply it to the entire path system because for major stretches there are few pedestrians.

Ryan Rainey: are class 3 typically cargo bikes to carry groceries and children? Has the TC considered a carve-out for those? Tom thinks cargo bikes are probably Class 1 or 2.

Dennis has experienced very fast ebike use but also avid road cyclists going that fast. Speeding is not limited to ebikes. He doesn't think a ban on the Class 3 would work because it is the users, not the bikes, that are the problem. He suggested posting a speed limit of 20 mph when people are present, as is done in school zones.

Marc doesn't think proposing a ban to the City would be a good idea. It would be better to ask that the issue be studied and express our concern about the rise in commuters traveling at speed. We should ask Tag to do that on our behalf.

Carole said there is no signage between Glenway and Odana to indicate any rules. We could recommend some system of guidance signage, e.g., alerts to people with Class 3 bikes and road bike riders, like that outside schools.

Michael Schneider: In 2022, the city Transportation Board did not want to recommend speed limits; they were considering widening the path and/or more signage and education. Daryl does not support speed limits but educating people and signage might help.

Ann: in Minneapolis they divide the pedestrian and bike sectors of the path.

Daryl moved that we recommend the City study this process more fully and then make a recommendation. Seconded by Shawn. Friendly amendment by Michael to the effect that DMNA's Transportation Committee will draft a statement to be sent via Tag to the City re our concerns over bike speed on the SW Commuter Path, including ebikes. Motion passed unanimously.

- The Transportation Committee recommends adding left turn arrows at the intersection of Monroe Street and Spooner (off West Lawn Avenue by Trader Joe's).

There are ongoing concerns about pedestrian and auto safety and visibility for drivers turning left onto Monroe at that intersection. Tag reached out to the City with concerns over this intersection and Yang Tao, Director of Traffic Engineering says the City will be reviewing this request.

- The Transportation Committee recommends traffic calming measures be adopted on Commonwealth Avenue due to resident concerns about speeding, especially where the bike path crosses Commonwealth. DMNA did reach out to the City in the past but were told speed humps wouldn't be installed because it is a City bus route. But curb bump-outs and other options are a possibility. Tag will be our advocate to the City.

Carole: More of Commonwealth is in Regent NA than in DMNA. Whatever we do, we should coordinate with RNA.

All present support the Transportation Committee's recommendation re traffic calming on Commonwealth, though Daryl and Shawn requested more discussion. Shawn: Since Commonwealth is a connector from an arterial street, would it be excluded from traffic calming? Michael: based on last year's guidance from the City, Commonwealth would be eligible for traffic calming. Children are still being picked up there by yellow school buses.

Ann moved that DMNA proceed to request traffic calming on Commonwealth but contact RNA and research accident statistics. Make our request to Tag and Alder Vidaver of Regent at the same time. Michael Schneider seconded with a friendly amendment: the Transportation Committee will draft a statement requesting traffic calming be studied on Commonwealth and simultaneously reach out to RNA to get their feedback on the request. If RNA is supportive, TC will send the statement to the alders to submit to the City. Marc said he can only support if the statement is supported by RNA without any substantive adjustment. Motion passed unanimously.

- Peter Gascoyne expressed his thanks for DMNA donation to Friends of Lake Wingra.
- Peter suggested we transfer some funds from the money market to a CD for a better interest rate.

Responding as treasurer, Dennis said that would be fine, but we would need to decide how much to allot, because any funds in a CD would not be accessible in the short term. On a personal level, Dennis pointed out that last year we took in \$22,000. We spent \$15,000. We have a lot of money in excess of our expenditures. When people pay neighborhood association dues, that money is supposed to be used. We have trouble spending the money we have. Adding more money to our account is of no benefit to residents if we already take in more than we spend. The money market at least has a higher rate of interest than the bank account.

Ann recommended making a financial plan before locking up a substantial chunk of money. Our interest rate is 0.18%, which is negligible.

Daryl: If we are looking to use up excess funds to benefit the neighborhood, DMNA once discussed putting a bench at the intersection of Odana and the bike path. Would be a nice thing to do.

Tom: if we do transfer funds to a CD, we could, if necessary, withdraw the money and get the principal back but forfeit the interest.

Dennis will go to UWCU and research options for CDs. Tom moved we take out a \$20,000 CD for one year. Seconded by Daryl. Friendly amendment from Lisa Grueneberg to stagger the CD so we buy a \$10,000 for six months and then another at six months. Marie proposed another amendment that Dennis purchase a 13-month \$10,000. Diego made a further amendment that Dennis place \$20,000 in CDs at his discretion as to if or how to stagger them. Motion passed unanimously.

- 2024 Annual Meeting plans – Ann Clark

We need a more specific set of directions for planning the Annual Meeting. By this April it should not be too dangerous re Covid for us to hold an in-person general meeting. We need to put some energy into planning it. All officers should be involved.

The Executive Committee can choose 3 people for the nominating committee, but nominations must be run by the council in February. This process needs to be codified somehow. Feb 15 is deadline for *Hornblower* ads – we need to announce the date, place and topic. Carole has documents from Aileen Nettleton but they do not specify the process for the Annual Meeting. In the past, someone has always stepped up with an idea for a speaker. Currently, we cannot hold the Annual Meeting at our former locale at Edgewood. Carole recommended we use the Friends Meeting House for our AGM. Marie will contact the Friends using the contact info furnished by Carole. Presentation topics suggested were sustainability or a history panel featuring older residents. Ann recommended the Executive Committee collect topic recommendations and present them to Council at the February meeting. The date we set for the AGM is Saturday April 13 at 2pm, for an estimated 40 people.

- Discussion on election of officers at the Annual Meeting – Ann Clark.

Shawn is not clear what the slate will be. Will Diego be stepping down? Will Marc be starting then? Diego proposed the following nominating committee: Marie Trest, Shawn Schey, Lisa Grueneberg. They will bring us the slate by the next meeting. Slate must be announced 3-4 weeks before the AGM. They will consult the bylaws, which stipulate what the exact period is. Diego is willing to stay on as president another year but would like it if someone else stepped up.

Ann moved to adjourn. Marc seconded. Meeting adjourned at 8:51pm.

*Minutes respectfully submitted by Catherine Jagoe.*