League of Minnesota Cities
Board of Directors Meeting
February 20, 2019

MINUTES

Members Present: Heidi Omerza (Ely), Mike Mornson (Hopkins), Brad Wiersum (Minnetonka) Rita Albrecht (Bemidji), Mark Casey (St. Anthony Village), Jon Smith (Perham), Kevin Staunton (Edina), Mary Gaasch (Lauderdale) and Mary McComber (Oak Park Heights)

Members participating via conference call: Jo Emerson (White Bear Lake), Jeremiah Ellison (Minneapolis), Joshua Malchow (Slayton), Brent Mareck (Carver), Justin Miller (Lakeville), Dave Smiglewski (Granite Falls) and Sara Carlson (Alexandria)

Members Absent: D. Love (Centerville) and Amy Brendmoen (St. Paul)

Staff Present: Dave Unmacht, Pat Beety, Luke Fischer, Kellie Sundheim, Ann Lindstrom, Laura Kushner, Marky Engler, Laura Zenz, Anne Finn, Irene Kao, Don Reeder, Kevin Frazell, Mel Reeder, Gary Carlson, Dan Greensweig, Ted Bengtson, Craig Johnson, Daniel Lightfoot and Joe Sathe

1. Call to Order & Pledge of Allegiance
   President Omerza called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Presentations/General Communications
   2.1 Presentation by Kevin Staunton on recent member engagement trip
   Staunton provided a brief overview of his recent trip with Greensweig and Fischer. Together they visited numerous cities and met with more than twenty city officials in the most northern parts of Minnesota. Staunton thoroughly enjoyed the trip and felt good about the connections made along the way. He would do it again but maybe not in January.

   2.2 Local Government Innovation Award (LGIA) winning programs – 2 videos
   The board watched the two remaining videos.

3. Approval of Consent Items
   McComber moved approval of the consent items, seconded by Albrecht. Motion carried.
4. Action Items
4.1 Review of Branding Research and Insights and Recommendation to Approve Updated League Logo
Nancy Doyle Brown, brand strategist along with Zenz and Schoepke, talked briefly about the current logo and branding. It has been more than 10 years since the logo has been updated. Staff felt it was important to get feedback on our brand before moving forward.

Nancy Doyle Brown conducted interviews with staff, board and members to gather feedback about perceptions of the League and what is most valued. These insights were then used to help develop a brand positioning statement, as well as five traits that define the League’s brand personality:
- Helpful
- Friendly
- Knowledgeable
- Trusted
- Professional

In 2018, staff contracted with Replace Design to apply these key insights and personality traits to a refreshed logo. Board members were shown the new logo. Zenz asked for questions on the process and the logo.

Mornson asked about the cost of the project. Zenz commented that gathering the data and reworking the logo and brand has cost around $40,000.

McComber asked if the League’s mission statement is going to be changed. Zenz noted that it will not be changed.

Staunton thought the feedback received from the survey and calls was great and should help the League in many aspects.

Wiersum commented that we want to be friendly but that we need to be helpful at the same time.

Nancy Doyle Brown mentioned that the League doesn’t have to work on trust because it is already there but dialing up (or intentionally promoting) our recognized trait of friendliness will always help.

Mareck made a motion to approve the redesigned logo, seconded by McComber. Motion carried.
5. Briefings
5.1 Legislative Session Briefing and Update on Legislative Conference
Ted Bengston noted a few changes on the agenda due to some presenters having last minute conflicts.

Carlson mentioned that the budget has been released so some committee members might not be very accessible as they will be heading out to other meetings.

5.2 Board Committee Structure and Engagement Matrix
Unmacht talked about the current board committee structure and how the use of certain committees has evolved over the years. He commented that although the current system is functional and efficient it does not provide all board members with a meaningful opportunity to contribute.

A possible recommendation would be to eliminate the Personnel and Governance Committees and distribute their assignments to the Executive Committee. In the past few years the Executive Committee has been meeting regularly for consideration and recommendations on policies, strategies and goals.

Unmacht also talked about the newly developed list of engagement ideas and asked the board members to look at the document. Unmacht feels that there is value in having board members engaged outside of the board meetings and feels the list of ideas is a good start. Board members can choose to do what appeals to them and have a better understanding of the commitment involved.

Mornson commented that the executive committee has reviewed the plan for modifying the board committee structure and feels it makes sense for them to take on some of those responsibilities. The executive committee is made up of the longest serving members and is starting to meet more regularly.

Wiersum added that having committees is great but that it will be nice for the board to get out and do what they want to do and that is to be able to be engaged and contributing to the culture of the League.

Bogany likes the idea of consolidating the committees but would like to see a bit more information on what was behind the decision and how the new committee structure will look. Unmacht mentioned that more information will be brought forward in May but that he would be happy to answer questions that anyone might have.

Omerza shared that she wants board members to be able to use their strengths and talents and feels that the modified committee structure and engagement ideas will be a good start.

The revised committee structure proposal and list of engagement ideas will be brought back for board approval in May.
6. Discussion Items
   6.1 LMCIT Update
   Greensweig mentioned that the LMCIT Board retreat happened earlier in the month and that the focus of their discussions centered around wellness, operations, trustees and policies.

   The consensus of the group is that LMCIT is in good shape and moving in the right direction.

   6.2 Legal Update
   Beety noted that the Minnesota Supreme Court released its decision in the LELS v. Richfield case on February 13th. The court found that the arbitration award reinstating a police officer discharged for failure to report his use of force does not violate public policy. The court found the city’s reporting policies were unclear and because the collective bargaining agreement (CBA) gave the arbitrator the authority to determine “just cause” even the court’s “strong disagreement with an arbitrator’s result does not provide sufficient grounds for vacating the arbitrator’s award.

   Beety also mentioned the Ruffenach v. Met Council case in which LMC recently filed an amicus brief. The case involves a termination of a bus operator whose union represented him in the first two steps of the grievance process but decided not to demand arbitration. The driver then petitioned the Bureau of Mediation Services for independent review of his discharge but BMS dismissed the petition concluding that M.S. § 179A.25 does not apply because the driver had access to a grievance procedure. The case is scheduled for oral argument before the Minnesota Court of Appeals on March 14th.

7. Affiliate Organizations Update
   7.1 Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities
   Omerza mentioned that their recent legislative day was successful.

   7.2 Minnesota Association of Small Cities
   McComber commented that their board meeting is tomorrow, and they will be discussing many issues – childcare, housing and broadband.

   7.3 Metro Cities
   Gaasch noted that they will have their board meeting tomorrow night. She mentioned that Judy Johnson from Plymouth has been appointed to the Met Council.

8. Executive Director Update and Adjournment
   Unmacht mentioned the joint LMC/LMCIT dinner tonight at Herbies.

   The Newly Elected and Experienced Officials conference will be held in Brainerd on Friday.