

**Minneapolis Clean Energy Partnership
BOARD MEETING**

Virtual Platform

Wednesday, August 26, 2020

10:30 am – Noon

2020 Q3 Meeting Notes

Board members present: Mayor Jacob Frey (Chair), Council Member Cam Gordon, Council Member Jeremy Schroeder, Council Member Steve Fletcher (alternate), and Mark Ruff from the City of Minneapolis; Amber Lee (Vice Chair) and Brad Tutunjian from CenterPoint Energy; Bria Shea and John Marshall from Xcel Energy.

Board members excused: Todd Berreman (alternate).

Planning Team present: Sara Barrow, Bridget Dockter, Peter Ebnet, Kim Havey, Luke Hollenkamp, Bjorn Olson, Emma Schoppe, Al Swintek, Karlee Weinmann, Robin Garwood, David Zaffrann

Guests/Staff present: Zoe Bourgerie, Jocelyn Bremer, Brett Carter Sr., Seth DeMerritt, Matt Kazinka, Rebecca Olson, Lee Samelson, Jamez Staples, Elizabeth Turner, Ethan Warner, Ross Corson

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mayor Jacob Frey called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m. He noted that the meeting includes the remote participation of members as authorized under Minnesota Statutes Section 13.D.021 due to the declared local public health emergency. Mayor Frey added: “Even though we continue to confront the ongoing civic and health crises, the clear tenacity and resilience of this group to meet these events head-on in addition to the already daunting scope of the work of the Clean Energy Partnership (CEP) is sincerely appreciated and is a testament to the spirit the members have and bring to this work. Environmental issues cannot take a back seat.”

Bjorn Olson, Sustainability Program Coordinator for the City of Minneapolis, reviewed Microsoft Teams features as well as virtual meeting protocol required by the City Clerk’s office. He explained how roll call will be used for taking attendance, and the process for introducing and voting on motions. The chat area is to be used to indicate when there are questions or comments. Anything entered into the chat area is subject to Open Meeting Law requirements. Bjorn then conducted the roll call.

2. Review and Approve Agenda and Minutes

Mayor Frey asked for a motion to approve the agenda, as well as the minutes from the 2020 Q1 CEP Board Meeting. It was MOVED and SECONDED that the agenda for August 26, 2020, be approved. Motion CARRIED. It was MOVED and SECONDED that the minutes from February 27, 2020 be approved. Motion CARRIED.

3. Xcel Energy's Electric Vehicle Vision

John Marshall, Community Relations Director at Xcel Energy, introduced Brett Carter, Executive Vice President and Chief Customer and Innovation Officer. Brett handles physical and cyber security, branding and marketing, and works on customer engagement and organizational innovation. Xcel Energy recently issued a big announcement tied to electric vehicles (EV) and Brett is the executive champion on that initiative. Mayor Frey offered a welcome to Brett on behalf of the Partnership, and said it is appreciative of his presence in Minnesota and at the meeting. He added that the City welcomes participation by senior leadership of all Partners.

Mr. Carter said that Xcel Energy has been a leader in the clean energy space for more than a decade and is really excited about bringing its commitment to clean energy into the transportation space. It recently announced the company's vision to power up 1.5 million EVs by 2030 which will save its customers billions of dollars on fuel. Average savings on owning an EV over fuel, including maintenance, is \$700-\$1000 per year. Xcel Energy's EV plans and partnerships will have a strong focus on equity and accessibility, allowing everyone to benefit from the growth of EVs whether they own one, take transit, or use ride sharing. Xcel Energy's vision is that by 2030 they will have built the infrastructure and have 1.5 million vehicles in its system, which represents about 20% of vehicles. Auto makers are due to release about 500 new EV models by the end of 2023, and they anticipate spending in the range of \$300 billion. Xcel Energy is looking for partners – like GM, Ford, Amazon, Pepsi and others – to help create affordable EVs, not just automobiles but buses, bikes and scooters. Because it anticipates this will lower the upfront cost for new charging infrastructure and the vehicles, Xcel Energy wants to help ensure that everyone can have charging stations in their communities, especially those areas disproportionately affected by air quality issues seen around the country. As it partners to build that equity organization – and especially looking at multifamily buildings and apartments – they are filing those requests with the Minnesota commissions. These programs will bring down the upfront costs while addressing landlord-tenant challenges through a set of new payment options and turnkey charging solutions. Xcel Energy hopes to get the City involved with some of its current programs for fleet conversion and infrastructure.

Mayor Frey thanked Mr. Carter, adding that getting the infrastructure and electric set up for 1.5 million additional vehicles is a huge improvement. The City and its Public Works Department want to do their part in working with Xcel Energy to make that a reality. He invited Mr. Carter to attend CEP meetings any time in the future. Council Member Schroeder seconded Mayor Frey's invitation and also offered his thanks and appreciation of engagement by Xcel Energy senior leadership.

4. 2019 CEP Annual Report [\[PPT\]](#)

Luke Hollenkamp referenced the Metrics Scorecard introduced last year which shows the primary metrics of the Partnership, which illustrate progress toward the City's climate, energy efficiency, and renewable electricity goals. [PPT 4] Two are on-track to reach goals, three are off-track, and there are two where data is either inconclusive or trends are not yet clear. In the interest of saving time at this meeting, the Planning Team will focus on three metrics.

- Metric 1 - Community-wide Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions reductions [PPT 5-6]
The City has the community-wide goals of GHG reductions of 30% by 2025 and 80% by 2050. In 2019 there was a 19% reduction since the baseline year of 2006. The trend since

then has been predominately downward, but the forecast shows that the 2050 goal will not be met. Electricity and natural gas are the two largest contributors to the GHG emissions inventory - initially electricity was the largest source of emissions, but that has switched to natural gas. As explained in the Report, forecasting has been applied to emissions trajectories. Assuming some reduction in electricity consumption, paired with further decarbonization of the electricity system, electricity emissions are projected to continue to decrease and ultimately achieving carbon-free electricity sector either by 2030 under the City's 100% New Electricity goal or by 2050 under Xcel Energy's Carbon Free by 2050 vision. Natural gas emissions since 2006 have increased slightly and the historical trend suggests they could continue to increase to potentially 2 million metric tons of CO2 in 2050. Emissions from all five sectors of the inventory must be cumulatively below approximately 1 million metric tons of CO2 in 2050 for the City to achieve its 80% goal. That shows both the importance of decarbonization of electricity sector and increasing focus on decarbonizing the natural gas sector. There are aggressive plans by Xcel Energy to decarbonize vehicles, which transportation is the third largest sector in the emissions inventory.

Luke pointed out an item that is different from last year's forecasting: a projection has been added for Xcel Energy's pending 2020-2034 IRP based on the supplement filed in June. The supplement for the pending IRP decarbonizes at a faster pace than the currently-approved 2017-2031 IRP.

Emma Schoppe presented and explained a graph [PPT 7] introduced at the Q4 2019 Board meeting by Amber Lee and Brad Tutunjian, CenterPoint Energy's representatives on the CEP Board. The blue and light-pink wedges represent reductions in natural gas emissions via new technologies and clean energy resources. In 2019 CenterPoint Energy worked collaboratively with the City and many other partners to better position itself to tackle emissions from natural gas in a bigger way. It continues to deliver its nation-leading Conservation Improvement Programs and demonstrates progress on Partnership activities to improve access to energy efficiency, inclusive financing and testing carbon capture technologies. CenterPoint Energy continues to build momentum in bringing renewable natural gas options to Minnesotans with its 2018 Green Tariff filing, 2019 Stakeholder Engagement, and 2020 Interconnection Tariff filing. While the PUC denied without prejudice the Green Tariff filing in 2019, they encouraged CenterPoint Energy to return with a new proposal after working with stakeholders. After a robust engagement in 2019 – including a full day workshop with industry, government, research and environmental representatives – CenterPoint Energy believes it is in a better position with its Interconnection filing which will help allow natural gas producers in Minnesota to connect to CenterPoint's system. Meanwhile, it continues to work through the challenges of decarbonizing natural gas end uses with the Minnesota G21 Group, which continues the work of the Rocky Mountain Institute e-Lab Accelerator. This year CenterPoint Energy announced its company-wide carbon policy to reduce emissions from its operations as well as to help customers reduce theirs. CenterPoint Energy made significant progress to engage bipartisan legislators and stakeholders in the development of Minnesota's 2020 Natural Gas Innovation Act which would help establish the regulatory framework necessary to achieving the Partners' shared climate goals.

- Metric 5 - Renewable Electricity (Community-wide) [PPT 8]

This metric measures progress towards 100% community-wide renewable electricity use by 2030. In last year's report this was rated yellow because there had not been a full year of data since the goal was established, making it uncertain if it was on-track. In 2019 the percent of renewable electricity, according to the City's methodology (explained in the appendix of the Annual Report), is approximately 24%. This is not on the trajectory to meet the 2030 goal so it is now rated as red (not on-track). Xcel Energy is currently exploring a potential error in data reporting which may be suppressing the adjusted grid mix percentage, leading to a smaller community-wide percentage. If there is an error and this calculation changes then an amended annual report will be sent to the Partners.

Council Member Gordon asked Luke to clarify if the goal of 100% renewable electricity must be met without counting any local actions, or if what is shown in the chart is an informative piece that is included to show the contribution from local actions. Luke said it was an illustration of how local actions are helping support the effort. The City wants to simultaneously get to 100% renewable in the community and have a minimum of 10% of that coming from these local actions. Bridget Dockter added that realizing that the City's goal is 100% renewable electricity community-wide by 2030, Xcel Energy's latest Integrated Resource Plan has a planned goal of 65% renewable energy by 2035 in the generation mix. Should the City add a community-wide element in their upcoming RFP Xcel Energy will happily continue those conversations for the community-wide element as well.

- Metric 7 - Renewable Electricity (Local and Directly Purchased) [PPT 9]

There is a goal of 10% of renewable electricity use by 2025. Significant progress has been made on this metric, which counts attributes from four programs offered by Xcel Energy: Windsource, Renewable*Connect, Solar*Rewards Rooftop and Solar*Rewards Community (Solar Gardens). At 5.7% this is almost at the trajectory needed to achieve the 2025 goal, primarily due to two of the programs increasing rapidly in recent years: Renewable*Connect and Community Solar Gardens, both of which the City is a large subscriber. It is noteworthy that Solar*Rewards Rooftop is currently a smaller share but it is very significant and is expected to increase in coming years. Minneapolis has many programs that support it, such as the Green Cost Share (GCS) program, which provides funding for renewable programs. Another year of data will indicate if we can add to or surpass that trajectory, at which time it would be considered to be on-track. It has changed from off-track status in 2018 and put on unknown in 2019.

CM Schroeder reiterated that the GCS program was a great success. Looking at the numbers, there is a lot of work to do, but it is important to recognize the role that the GCS program has already played in creating local solar production, resilience and wealth creation. For the past two years the number of local solar installation projects supported by the GCS program have risen from 23 to 331 and demand has still not been met as more people want to take advantage of the program. These projects will create more than \$31 million in lifetime energy production for organizations in Minneapolis and are twice as likely to occur in Green Zones and cultural corridors due to intentional development

incentives. Areas that have less investment in solar and are disproportionately impacted by climate change now have a greater investment in solar than any other part of the City. CM Schroeder commended Xcel Energy at how quickly it has looked at reducing its emissions, but the most difficult thing is going to be getting residents to be able to have more efficient homes and use less electricity. That will take investment in programs that work, like GCS.

CM Schroeder added that the City will be starting its solar training programs - a workforce concept that will allow people from Minneapolis to work on solar projects happening in their communities. These living-wage jobs (\$25 per hour, which is twice the median income in North Minneapolis) will allow people to provide for themselves and their families, and create an opportunity to not just survive climate change but thrive and make the City the place we all dream it can be.

5. CEP Partnership Updates [PPT 10]

Members of the Planning Team and Partnership presented on activities that are being undertaken and provided timely updates as they relate to the annual report on these metrics.

a. EE.5: Energy Disclosure and Time of Rent Tool Status & Impact of PUC Data Privacy Docket

Emma said EE.5 proposes new and enhanced utility and data access tools to support implementation of the City's energy data disclosure policies. To meet the City's time of rent policy implementation needs, both CenterPoint Energy and Xcel Energy are developing tools that will help renters and rental property owners access aggregated energy cost data. CenterPoint Energy expects to complete its tool by the end of the year at a cost of about \$50,000. Xcel Energy, with different and more complex technical considerations, expects to complete its project by the end of the year or early 2021.

In July the PUC held a hearing to consider the Citizen Utility Board's proposal for data release policies. In this docket the Partners had asked the PUC to consider the City's time of rent policy as it relates to customer data in buildings with one-to-four units which cannot be adequately aggregated. While the PUC did not address this issue specifically, they indicated that they would leave the proceeding open and continue considering issues raised. The Partners will continue to engage on this effort. Regarding implementation of the City's truth-in-sale of housing policy, CenterPoint Energy is providing up to \$60,000 to pilot the Center for Energy and Environment's (CEE) energy advisor service providing customer support for the required energy reports.

CM Schroeder thanked CenterPoint Energy for addressing these actions, mentioning that in previous meetings he had expressed his concern that their efforts would be enough to achieve the City's climate goals. While he appreciates getting the update on CenterPoint Energy's long-term goals, and remains a bit skeptical that those will be enough, he said it is helpful to hear what they are working on right now going into the winter, being that the last two years have seen more increases in natural gas use. He added that he was glad to see the investment and collaboration with CEE, and hopes to see more of this in the future.

- b. RE.2: Achieve 100% Renewable Electricity for City Enterprise and Community Pathway
Kim Havey, Director of Sustainability for the City of Minneapolis, provided a brief update on the efforts of the City's plans to achieve the enterprise renewable electric goal of 100% renewable electricity for the entire enterprise by the end of 2022. In late 2019 the City issued a request for information (RFI) for strategies to achieve those City renewable energy goals. The RFI became the basis for the type of generation sources that are included in two new requests for proposals (RFP) that the City will be issuing soon to achieve its goals for renewable electricity.

One RFP will cover 90% of the City's consumption plus potential aggregated loads from other cities in Xcel Energy's territory. The review criteria for this RFP will have a priority on the price, but it also includes scoring for workforce development, minority business participation, and proximity to the City. It is believed there is an ability of Minneapolis residents to be engaged in the development of these resources the closer they are to the City. This RFP has received quite a bit of consulting support, including the Rocky Mountain Institute via the Bloomberg American Cities Climate Challenge.

The second RFP will represent 10% of the City enterprise's electric consumption and focus on local renewable electric generation both on City buildings and properties as well as other properties within the City. The review criteria will be different for this RFP and prioritize location within Green Zones, cultural corridors and opportunity zones, and will include scoring regarding participation of minority- and women-owned businesses, workforce development opportunities, job creation and price. This upcoming series of RFPs will provide valuable information as the City looks toward strategies to achieve its 100% renewable electric electricity goal for the entire community by 2030. Kim thanked City staff, members of the Planning Team, and Xcel Energy staff who have been involved in developing this RFP. The plan is to have the RFP out in mid-September with responses due by early November. The City will continue its coordination and communication with Xcel Energy as it looks for opportunities being presented as a result of the RFP.

John Marshall said Xcel Energy is excited to respond to the RFPs, being mindful of the regulatory framework and retaining its response within the bounds of that framework. Over the past few months there have been a lot of conversations and transparency with the Planning Team and City staff, and Xcel Energy as a company is very much in support of responding.

- c. IF.1: Inclusive Financing

Amber Lee, Director of Regulatory Affairs for CenterPoint Energy, reminded everyone that in Q4 2019 the CEP Board voted to support the City's intervention in CenterPoint Energy's rate case for an inclusive financing program. In June they filed a proposal for inclusive financing in that docket. CenterPoint Energy and the intervenors, including the Department of Commerce, have submitted rebuttal testimony in response to the City's proposal. The next steps include an evidentiary hearing at the beginning of September, and briefing an Administrative Law Judge (ALJ) report that will be issued in November.

A Commission decision and order is expected in Q1 2021. There have been quite a few public comments filed in the docket and a robust policy discussion is expected to continue.

Kim said the process with the Public Utilities Commission (PUC) has led to a pilot of a new way for public participation. The City worked with Community Power and the Clean Energy Resource Teams (CERTs) to develop a way for community members to provide a three-minute comments on the CenterPoint Energy rate case, thus allowing for more input and transparency into a PUC process. There were 72 individuals who commented through that process, with the majority of those expressing strong support for an inclusive financing program and reservations in regard to some of the increases and rate increases, especially those that were focused on residential and small commercial fixed rate increases. It is important to look at ways to learn from these virtual meetings to encourage more community participation. This docket provided that opportunity and it was quite eye-opening as to the scale of the participation.

Kim added that the City, CenterPoint Energy and other intervenors have been in discussions with a mediator and settlement meetings, and are looking right now to find a way forward for inclusive financing to be included in any settlement agreement. Kim thanked CenterPoint Energy for being very forward on this and said conversations would continue going forward.

CM Gordon asked for clarification on who was making settlement agreements and if the City would be involved, to which Jocelyn Bremer from the City Attorney's office referred these detailed procedural points to internal briefing scheduled for later in the day. CM Gordon expressed his concern that inclusive financing, which was a big priority of the Partnership, is being replaced by settlement talks among a limited number of parties, adding that since CenterPoint has made rebuttals to the comments, he asked Amber to talk about the main high level points of those comments if they are public knowledge.

Amber explained that the procedure at the PUC for a rate case varies by docket and company. CenterPoint Energy is working to settle the financials in the rate case and what could become the inclusive financing program, or tariff on-bill financing as it is referred to in the rate case. Those discussions are par for the course in any rate case proceedings. The rebuttal testimony from CenterPoint Energy regarding inclusive financing was very appreciative of the City's position, and it finds a lot of value in the principles of inclusive financing. The City put a very good starting position on the table for CenterPoint Energy, which continues to work through this with a lot of interested parties. As Mr. Havey mentioned this issue received a lot of attention and that can only help drive through a program that will be determined legal and properly scoped. The Commission is encouraging pilot programs so CenterPoint Energy is very hopeful that it can tailor a program that can be implemented starting in 2021.

CM Schroeder said he shared CM Gordon's frustration of inclusive financing needing to be negotiated as a part of a settlement, pointing out that programs and solutions are needed now that will get the City to its goals. City staff has already put in a lot of time

and effort on inclusive financing, and he wants to make sure that the Partnership is working with the City full force to make sure it gets something on the table for Minneapolis residents as soon as possible.

d. EE.2: Energy Savings Initiative for Low Benchmarked Buildings

Bridget said this workplan activity is targeted at the benchmarked buildings within the City and in particular the 25% with the highest energy saving potential. Xcel Energy and CenterPoint Energy reviewed the list of those benchmarked buildings from the City and identified previous and current program participation and potential participation given each building's age. They also looked at impacts given COVID-19. These are all managed accounts because of the size of the buildings.

The utilities met numerous times to discuss mutual customers and approaches, and they recently met with the City for an update to the activity and GCS dollars which are also critical on the energy efficiency side. The utilities appreciate the availability of coupling GCS dollars with their energy efficiency Conservation Improvement Program dollars. The application process for GCS dollars and the timelines for that will be added in the outreach that the account managers will be doing in the identified buildings. The utilities, who will hold one final meeting with those account managers for the identified buildings to ensure that messaging, have a comprehensive approach for the launching of this project. They will be leveraging enhanced rebates and new rebates will be added to help with the rebuilding after the civil unrest, with approximately 24 customers currently targeted for this activity. Once they have worked through that group – which are large customers so they would likely be large projects that would happen over the span of time and budgeting cycles – they will start going through the next step. This will be a continuing process, not just through this triennial plan.

Bridget added that the City was interested in a coordinated or joint business audit program. Beginning with Xcel Energy's and CenterPoint Energy's 2021-2023 CIP triennial filings the utilities will begin coordinated outreach, intake, and delivery of their program efforts related to their own respective audit programs for commercial buildings. The modifications were informed by a third-party evaluation on CenterPoint Energy's natural gas energy analysis program which found that customers expressed different opinions about a joint gas and energy audit offering. Not all of them wanted a combined audit, so they will be able to choose. The draft evaluation will be filed in CenterPoint's triennial plan docket and then there are negotiated price points with their respective auditors that are significantly less than what they were before, and it will be a combined \$500 commercial audit price between CenterPoint Energy's and Xcel Energy's business audits.

6. EVAC Co-Chair Update

Patty O'Keefe reported that since the Energy Vision Advisory Committee (EVAC) had to cancel its official Q2 2020 meeting she did not have much to report. Since many EVAC members work in organizations that work directly with communities, she wanted to share some reflections on the needs on the ground as they see them related to the pandemic and in the wake of the civil unrest. These are reflections from individual EVAC members and do not represent the positions

for all of EVAC, but they are a good barometer for what some members of the Committee are thinking on these topics.

- Indigenous communities along with Black and Latinx communities have been hit hardest by COVID-19 as well as energy burden. The Little Earth community here in Minneapolis needs more access to solar power, and residential backup power for when outages occur, so community members can continue to stay in their homes during and beyond this crisis.
- I would love to hear more from Xcel and CPE around what their electrification/gas decarbonization plans are and how this work will benefit existing under-resourced communities and new affordable housing developments in Minneapolis. This work has serious implications for indoor air quality, health and safety, and cost burden for residents, not to mention the City's ability to reduce GHGs to meet its stated climate goals.
- The raw uncut footage of the George Floyd murder has pulled back the curtain on the Minnesota Miracle; the passive aggressive behavior that held Mr. Floyd down as Officer Chauvin held his knee on his neck as if it were no big deal. For decades Black and Brown people have been subjected to unfair treatment and a subtle undercurrent or what could be considered economic warfare or economic apartheid. As a result, Minnesota has been ranked as one of the worst places for Black people to live in 3 consecutive years (since 24/7 Wall Street started measuring).

All of you who sit at the table as department heads, business leaders, policy makers, and leaders have a responsibility to make decisions and should understand the impact of your decisions on everyone, including Black and Brown people. At this moment in time and with history as your judge, what decisions will you make? Will you continue with the status quo that progresses some at the expense of others? Or, will you challenge yourself and your fellow leaders to make a positive change for more of the people who you sit in service to?

As we look to the future, I implore you to be a leader and change agent. Consider how to ensure equitable opportunities in the emerging clean energy economy can serve as a pathway for all, not just a select few, to economic opportunity. And the clean energy industry will benefit from true diversity – reaping the benefits of innovations, a sustainable workforce to meet growing demands, and being a part of the movement which is changing the world as we speak.

What choices will you make? The world is watching – choose wisely.

- I've been doing volunteer design assistance to impacted businesses and one business worker. I've been working with needs to repair window damage that occurred during the unrest. It's been interesting because the current conditions of the building are surprising. It doesn't have insulation, just electric baseboard heat and the building is pretty leaky. It's been eye opening and it isn't super unique for the area. It was particularly painful to hear he had the chance to repair windows but could only do double pane when triple could do so much more. Right now is the opportunity to invest in those highly efficient improvements and it's already too late for him. Also we know with COVID that aerosol spread is high. Through my work in passive house we've found there is a lot of disinformation out there that is resulting in businesses turning off their ventilation because they think it's increasing the spread of COVID. For example, the business owner I'm working with doesn't have ventilation, they have window AC and electric baseboards. So they have no way to get fresh air in and are

worried about what that means for the winter.

And this example isn't in Minneapolis, but it's a good example of what we could be facing here. Colleges are starting to shut down buildings, but the ones they're keeping open for labs are doing increased ventilation. And since they don't have energy recovery on that added ventilation the overall campus use might increase. One thing I would do is create programs that support continuous ventilation and energy recovery.

And the Rebuilding Better legislation is coming before the House committee on Thursday. The goal of the legislation is to use RDA money to funnel towards buildings impacted by civil unrest in Minneapolis and St. Paul and help with energy efficiency upgrades, which feels sorely needed.

- Both the COVID-19 public health crisis, and the ongoing crisis of racism in this country, made more visible by the murder of George Floyd in our city, has opened people's eyes to the reality that systemic racism is continuing to plague the lives of people of color in a City that has some of the worst racial disparities between Blacks and Whites in the whole country. People are also starting to better understand how systemic racism is at play in our energy system, from the increased energy burden in Black and Indigenous communities, from the higher levels of pollution these communities endure, and the lack of equal access to clean energy and efficiency. Our work on the rebuilding and the broader work of this Partnership must build out an energy system that heals inequalities, which maybe feels like a large task and is probably the most challenging task of our time, but it's how we build a better world.
- As people continue to lose their jobs, and as unemployment scales back it will be increasingly important to maintain a commitment to not disconnecting people's power. Utility disconnections affect our City's most vulnerable residents most, who are oftentimes experiencing the compounding effects of systemic racism and poverty.
- Small business owners and residents need more access to affordable and low income energy efficiency programs. This was the case before COVID-19, but the need has since been magnified and deepened. Programs like inclusive financing and more programs like it, where credit score, upfront cost, and taking out debt are not barriers for people who need the improvements the most should be pursued.

Patty invited CEP Board members to submit any issues they would like EVAC to discuss at its Q3 meeting (September 17) to the EVAC Co-Chairs or Planning Team. Mayor Frey thanked Patty for her remarks, adding that were accurate, strong and poignant. In the following agenda item he touched on a couple of specific areas that the City is working on that EVAC could discuss at its next meeting.

7. COVID-19 and Minneapolis Rebuilding – Partner Impacts and Efforts

Mayor Frey said the City's top priority right now is recovery and transformation. This is not just a rebuilding effort, putting the buildings back together and getting the bricks in place, but a full-on rethinking of how the City has traditionally handled economic inclusiveness and how ownership is structured along some of these corridors that were hardest hit, in some cases both by COVID-19 and then the unrest following the killing of George Floyd. The City established a Minneapolis Forward Community Now Commission which is co-chaired by Felicia Perry, Executive Director of the West Broadway Business and Area Coalition; Allison Sharkey, Executive Director of the Lake Street Council; and Jonathan Weinhagen, President and CEO of

the Minneapolis Regional Chamber. It is centering Black and Brown voices not just in a decision-making process but also ensuring that they are key beneficiaries of the work and the decisions that are happening. The City feels very strongly that this needs to move to a point not just of assistance but of ownership, avoiding what it usually sees with outside investors, or outside or inside developers, coming in and swooping up these properties, then booting some of the communities that have made these corridors wonderful to begin with. In addition to seizing the opportunity to double down to see true ownership and economic inclusion in Black and Brown communities, there is now an opportunity to utilize some of the funds that we have available to do energy retrofits to include solar.

Mayor Frey suggested that one of the topics EVAC could discuss at its next meeting would be what can be done, not in the long term but right now in the very near term, to assist along these specific corridors, focusing on BIPOC communities and making recommendations that would be particularly helpful in seeing some of this transformation, recovery and rebuild link up as one. The Minneapolis Forward Community Now Commission came up with eight specific topic areas they are focused on and each one of those topic areas has these specific recommendations, and there is a clear linkage with sustainability and renewable energy. [\[link\]](#)

Mayor Frey introduced Matt Kazinka from the Lake Street Council (LSC) and thanked him for all of the work he is doing following the civil unrest. Matt shared data about where things stand with businesses directly in the Lake Street corridor. LSC put out a grant application for grants to support small businesses in July and received applications from approximately 400 businesses which they believe is a substantial sample of the businesses that were damaged during the civil uprising after the murder of George Floyd. It is not totally complete, but is a snapshot of where businesses stood one to two months after the events of the uprising. Of the 400 applications 82% identified as BIPOC or immigrant. Damages totaled over \$36 million, and 55% of those businesses that applied for funding did not have any form of insurance or it was not as substantial as they would have thought for a variety of reasons. About half of the businesses had found a way to reopen at the time that they applied, a month or two after the uprising.

One task the Lake Street Council took on was to determine how they could support immediately the businesses that were impacted. They launched the “We Love Lake Street” fundraiser and were amazed by the response. To date they have raised about \$10 million in support of these small businesses, with people from the local community and from around the country and world contributing. With the guidance of an oversight committee that has a lot of stakeholders and LSC’s local economic community development partners, half of the money was dedicated up-front to businesses, so about \$5 million in grants has gone out to or has been committed to small businesses. About 315 businesses and nonprofits have received those grants and are in the process of receiving the funding.

Now that businesses are starting to get a bit more stable LSC is looking at what other things it can focus on, and energy is definitely an important part of this conversation. About one-third of the applicants to its grant program said they planned to buy some sort of energy-using equipment in the process of rebuilding their businesses. If we can get those businesses to buy efficient when they do that and bring the resources to make that cost lower to them that’s going to be huge. LSC continues its partnership with Energy Smart to help deploy assistance to businesses and they are

helping businesses get in to Xcel Energy's and CenterPoint Energy's enhanced rebate programs that have been offered to businesses that received damages. Matt added that although it is obvious that Lake Street received some of the starkest damages during the uprising, other corridors in the City and the Twin Cities as a whole have been impacted severely as well. LSC has been working very closely with the West Broadway Coalition as well as other organizations in the Twin Cities that represent business districts that were damaged. With the help of Metro _____ it has engaged in some conversations around this question of how energy can be a part of the rebuilding process as a consideration. Matt is hopeful that LSC can help businesses in their recovery and be thoughtful about how many people make investments in energy efficiency.

Amber said that the rebuild is incredibly important and everyone at CenterPoint Energy wants to support and partner with the City to the fullest extent through several rebuild programs. [\[Link\]](#) In March CenterPoint Energy voluntarily suspended residential disconnections; following that the PUC ordered that suspension and some other deviations from normal disconnection procedures. CenterPoint Energy is also offering flexible payment arrangements and they are trying to reach their customers so that they know it has available funds and reductions in its normal repayment plans. Customers need to reach out to CenterPoint Energy for assistance, and any communication around that is helpful to CenterPoint Energy and its customers.

Amber added that the PUC has opened up a very interesting docket related to what utilities can do to help the state in its economic recovery. CenterPoint Energy will continue to innovate and think about what projects they can bring that will help with equity goals, climate goals, and GHG reductions along with the stability and reliability of its system. They will continue to work in that docket which Amber believes does provide a good mechanism for these kinds of thoughts to be brought to the PUC.

Brea Shea, director of Xcel Energy's Regulatory Department, said they have done a lot in this space. At the outset with regard to disconnection Xcel Energy has discontinued them, has not resumed them and it will be quite a while until they do, at least November. With regard to what Amber mentioned with the relief and recovery of COVID-19 Xcel Energy filed a large proposal with the Minnesota PUC to aid in the recovery for the State of Minnesota. Its proposal was more than \$3 billion worth of projects that will bring more than 5,000 jobs directly to the state of Minnesota, create more than 8,000 indirect jobs and reduce annual carbon reduction by 500,000 tons, or the equivalent of 98,000 cars being taken off the road. Of particular note for the City Xcel Energy has a non-wires alternative project that it had proposed in response to its conversations in their distribution planning work, which is about \$8 million with a variety of solutions including solar and demand response and storage and electric vehicle charging. Xcel Energy committed to double its statutorily-required low-income spend which is about \$7 million. This will help its customers provide services to low-income customers and increase staff to reach even more customers and address health and safety issues like asbestos removal. Xcel Energy also has a low-income rooftop solar proposal that involves them working with local solar installers to construct about 100 solar installations on low-income residents. Xcel Energy is working with CEE on a proposal to target the designated Green Zones in Minneapolis and the areas directly impacted by the recent civil unrest. This program will focus on two areas: rental energy efficiency pilot which will address specific barriers in delivering residential energy programs to low-income customers, and a workforce development pilot where it will work with

community partners to develop and implement models for a more diverse and more equitable energy efficiency workforce. Xcel Energy has quickly doubled its energy efficiency rebate for impacted businesses in Minneapolis and has distributed more than a half million LED lightbulbs to Minneapolis foodbanks for distribution to customers. Xcel Energy is proud to be a partner and aid in the City's goals.

8. Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

*This constitutes my understanding of items discussed and decisions reached.
If there are any omissions or discrepancies, please notify the author in writing.*
Submitted by: Marsha Wagner, CastleVisions, marsha@castlevisions.com

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