



Hartford NEXT Board Meeting Minutes 4/18/2024

Time: 6:00_– 7:30 pm Board Meeting

Mission: A collective voice of Hartford residents and stakeholders working to strengthen and grow our community

BOARD DIRECTORS

| | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|
| ✓ | Marion Griffin, Co-Chair, Frog Hollow | ✓ | Bongi Magubane, Co-Chair, WECA |
| ✓ | David MacDonald, Asylum Hill | | Cindy Fenton, MARG |
| | Janine McMahon, Asylum Hill | ✓ | Charles Teale, Northeast |
| | Sharmeen Wright, Blue Hills | ✓ | Frank Sentner, SODO |
| | Chris McArdle, CSS/CON | | Emely Lugo, South End |
| ✓ | Cheryl Zeiner, CSS/CON | | Lawrence Williams, Upper Albany |
| ✓ | Bernadine Silvers, CSS/CON, Chair Emeritus | | Yackecha Dickenson, Upper Albany |
| | Jean Holloway, Clay Arsenal | ✓ | Susan Lennon, WECA |
| | | | |
| ✓ | Janice Castle, Mayor’s Office, COH | ✓ | Mary Falvey, At-Large |
| | Randal Davis, COH | | Violette Haldane, At-Large |
| | Elizabeth Davis, At-Large | ✓ | Jeff Stewart, At-Large |

MEMBERS

| | | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| | Donna Thompson-Daniel, Blue Hills | | Helen Nixon, Northeast |
| | Bea Powell, Clay Arsenal | | David Morin, Parkville |
| ✓ | Carey Shea, Frog Hollow | | Robin Zaleski, SODO |
| | Marcus Ordonez, Frog Hollow | | Carl Williams, South End |
| | Rhodee Gine, Frog Hollow | | Kathy Evans, SW & BTR |
| | Hyacinth Yennie, MARG | | Blair Hughes, WECA |

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

| | | | |
|---|-----------------|---|--------------------------|
| ✓ | Jack Antonich | | Henry Hester, Keney Park |
| | Jackie McKinney | ✓ | Mary Pelletier |

Expected Outcome(s):

- DECD Funding
- Board Retreat Follow-up Actions
- Update on Digital Equity and Next Steps
- Hartford History Project

| Time (est.) | Agenda Item | Facilitator Presenter | Purpose/Action | Activity/Essential Questions |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| 6:00 | Welcome | Board Chair | Call to Order | |

The meeting was called to order by Bongi at 6:07 pm



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| 6:00–6:05 | Meeting Protocol & Introductions | Jeff Marion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HNXT Board Meeting Protocol • What should we know • Review of Agenda | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices for meeting participation • Add Your Organization to your Zoom name • Additions /changes to the agenda |
| <p>Jeff Stewart read the meeting protocol. Mary Falvey read the Hartford NEXT mission and values statement.</p> <p>Bongi reviewed the agenda with attendees.</p> | | | | |
| 6:05 – 6:30 | Board Business | Bongi Violette Marion Bongi | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of March 2023 Board Minutes • Financial Report • Status of active Grants | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote on Board Minutes • Financial • ED Search Committee • DECD Funding • Prosperity Grant • 2024 GOTV Grant |
| <p>Vote taken on the board minutes from March 2024: motion to approve by Janice Castle, seconded by Frank Sentner. No discussion. Mary Falvey abstained. Minutes approved.</p> <p>Financial Report:</p> <p>Marion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving (HFPG) approved the funding to hire the search firm for the executive director position and funds for background searches. ○ In process of completing application for DECD fund. HNEXT is eligible for \$20k in FY2024 and \$20k in FY2025. The funding is for capacity building project, specifically for the executive director salary. ○ There is no word yet from the HFPG regarding Get Out To Vote 2024 funding. ○ HNEXT applied to LISC for funds to the Neighborhood Training Institute. LISC is looking for private funders. No decision yet. ○ DEEP – EPA Govt to Govt Grant. In partnership with Keney Park Sustainability and Blue Hills Civic Association, HNEXT is preparing a grant for funds related to the flooding in the north end of Hartford. The North End includes Blue Hills, Northeast, Clay Arsenal, Asylum Hill, and Upper Albany. More information to come. Mary Pelletier requested an update about the project outside the board meeting. ○ The HNEXT application to the Prosperity Fund was not approved. Bongi requested a meeting to get feedback about the decision; she will update the board. ○ Marion and Mary Falvey read the Certified Resolution for the DEEP-EPA Grant. A motion to adopt and approve the resolution was made by Mary Falvey and seconded by Frank Sentner. The application includes a budget, a history of Hartford Next, the project plan, and case for why an exec director is necessary. Discussion point: Jeremy Baver’s role in the preparation of the | | | | |



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| <p>package; Marion stated there is no confusion about Jeremy's position now as an unpaid ED vs. having a paid ED. Bongi asked for an estimated release of funds. No abstentions. The resolution passed unanimously. Funds should be available in May 2024. Elizabeth Davis will execute it and Violette Haldane will sign the budget.</p> | | | | |
| 6:30 – 6:40 | Board Education | Bongi | Digital Equity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is it? • Why is it important? Why Role can HNXT Play? |
| <p>Bongi reviewed the purpose of the Digital Equity Program, its impact on Hartford residents, and a potential part for Hartford Next. Important for NRZ leaders to know about the program. Points covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CT Everyone Connected – residents need access to technology for learning, career advancement, state services, health and wellness programs, and to participation in society. • Bongi read the criteria for qualification under CT's program • Plan purposes that align with Hartford Next's mission are economic and workforce development, education, civic and social engagement • Hartford Next may have an opportunity to administer part of the program; it is an important opportunity for NRZs as well • Bongi read the program goals. She asked that a representative from the state address HNEXT board in the near future. | | | | |
| 6:40-7:00 | NRZ Roundtable | NRZ Reps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunity (s) for Collaboration (1.5 min max) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What did your NRZ do that other NRZ's can benefit from? |
| <p>Charles Teale, Northeast: During April meeting of Northeast NRZ, police and fire departments reported no homicides, no sexual assaults, no robberies, and no structure fires, which is a significant achievement. Charles is serving on the transitional committee for quality of life and would like to give a presentation at the May Hartford Next Board meeting.</p> <p>Frank Sentner, SODO: Working on strategic and neighborhood plans, FHI Studio and Petrus Associates, both agencies hired by the city. Working with Hartford Next Program Committee on a Community Outreach campaign to increase membership.</p> <p>Susan Lennon, West End: West End was approached by the landlord of a vacant building, formerly CVS, asking for NRZ support for a variance to allow a discount store Dollar Tree-type retail, for the space. There was a community discussion was held. There is an on-going survey to gauge interest. The discussion included positive and negative impact on the neighborhood. Some dollar stores have fresh produce and meat available, which would be important for areas with food instability. Discussion is ongoing.</p> <p>David MacDonald, AHNA: just had Community Partners Breakfast, the mayor attended, and was enthusiastic and supportive about 2024 plan for the NRZ.</p> <p>Elizabeth Davis, HPL: Grant databases, Foundation Directory Online, may be coming back to the Library; looking for grant funding. Public Access TV will be located at the Downtown Library when it reopens. The goal is to open the main floor of the library in late fall; there will be no computer access but other programs are planned. There is an initiative to get individuals with green cards to consider citizenship. For the library's 250th anniversary, they are collecting stories from people who have used it.</p> | | | | |



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| | <p>Cheryl Zeiner, CSSCON: The primary discussion in the NRZ is about developing a Friends of South Green Park group. The NRZ is working with SODO and Frog Hollow to develop an alternative to the previously suggested dog park. This park is important to Hartford’s history. The area is challenging to develop because it is a high-traffic area, surrounded by homeless shelters, and is used by community services for the homeless. The goal is to develop the park in an equitable way so everyone can enjoy the area.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Janice Castle, COH: Earth Day Celebration on Monday, April 22nd. please come out. It’s a good opportunity to remind residents to become members of their NRZs. The event is dedicated to Lynn Johnson. The mayor will reach out to Hartford Next to have a conversation about public safety and the appointment of a new police chief.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Carey Shea, Frog Hollow: They are working on a meeting format that is more engaging. The NRZ is negotiating with CCMC about their parking garage and following up on the four houses being moved. Hartford Hospital and Hartford Public Library will help accommodate people whose electricity will be off for a couple hours.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Frog Hollow is collaborating with police regarding the substation on Affleck and Ward Streets; conversations include the possibility of turning the front lawn of the substation into a play space/garden. The idea was submitted to Love Your Block, but the project will be pursued even without the award.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Frog Hollow stays in close contact with Hartford Hospital because they own 13 vacant buildings and they have proposed a parking garage twice the size of CCMC’s. They are talking to the city about creating a new neighborhood plan; the NRZ is not happy with the current version. On May 21st at 4:30 (before the Frog Hollow meeting), SINA will give a tour of the two renovated buildings on Madison Street and then go to the library for their meeting. Everyone is invited.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Mary Pelletier, Park Watershed: Mary asked about the initial opposition to the dog park at South Green/Barnard Park. Mary Falvey explained the proposed park did not meet American Kennel Club guidelines, and Hartford has one of the lowest dog registration and vaccination rate in the state. The city’s ability to maintain the park is also an issue. Mary Pelletier put some of the Earth Day activities in the Chat.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Charles Teale, Ascend Pipeline: Part of the \$30 million grant for northeast Hartford to address academic challenges includes tutoring through the library. Tutoring is available 7 days a week from 2:00 to 11:00 pm and it is available from K-12. Many residents, including Charles, were not aware of the resource. It is very difficult for individuals without a high school diploma to get a job. In the Northeast neighborhoods, 90% of adults do not have a high school diploma. The public needs to know this information.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Elizabeth Davis, HPL: Elizabeth mentioned another resource for tutoring, Brainfuse, an online tutoring service matches the tutor and student. There are other online resources for Hartford residents who have a library card. Frank Sentner pointed out to this program is an example of the need for digital equity. Resources can’t be accessed if residents don’t have online access.</p> | | | |
| | <p>Charles: He is talking about the resource because of the tremendous lack of knowledge about the resource. To maintain the positive gains in Northeast there must be an educated society. Getting the</p> | | | |



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| <p>word out about resources is imperative to success. Ascend Pipeline is studying necessary services to identify who will deliver them.</p> <p>Marion: Marion asked if there is a role for Hartford Next such as advocacy. There should be a follow up discussion in May.</p> <p>Monday is Earth Day. Hartford Next and several NRZs will attend. If anyone else is interested, talk to Marion.</p> <p>Trinity College is having a Samba Fest on April 20th. The event is free.</p> <p>On May 1st, SW & BTR is collaborating with MARG and Parkville for a neighborhood Tag Sale. It will be held the first Saturday of every month. If you would like to join or want more information, contact Kathy Evans. The ultimate goal is a farmer's market for the area.</p> <p>CCMC donated children's books to Harford Next. They will be given away at the Earth Day event.</p> | | | | |
| 7:00 – 7:10 pm | Hartford History Project | Bongi | Goal and Objectives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is it? How does it work? What is its impact on Hartford's neighborhoods? |
| <p>Bongi introduced the Hartford Next History Project. Goal is to capture history of Hartford Next to educate the NRZs, other organizations and the city at large. Very few people know who we are, how long we've been around and what we do. The project is a video with founding members like Bernadine silvers will be taken. The video can serve as an anchor for other programs such as Community Engagement.</p> <p>A company identified to help with the project. HNEXT needs material from the NRZs to show what they are doing. Board members were asked to get feedback and input from their boards about the project.</p> <p>Mary Falvey suggested the Program and Communications & Marketing committees have a joint meeting to support the project.</p> | | | | |
| 7:10 - 7:20 | Board Announcements | Frank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Board Retreat Follow-up | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow up Actions |
| <p>Frank contacted Derek about scheduling a Board Retreat follow up. Derek suggested a 90-minute meeting and focus on operational issues discussed at the retreat. Identify things that are stuck and what is working. Derek also wants to help with Google Drive to get documents updated. Frank suggested scheduling the follow up meeting before the Annual Meeting in June. Derek was fine with that timeline.</p> | | | | |



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| 7:20 – 7:25 | HNXT Updates | Bongi Committee Report Chairs/Reps | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive Communications & Marketing Development Governance Program | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What has been accomplished? What needs to be done & by whom? What are the next steps? What can you do? |
| <p>Marion Griffin, Executive: The committee will meet this week.</p> <p>Marion Griffin, Finance: Marion showed the P&L for February and the balance sheet created by Violette. The liabilities are funds for NRZs; Kim is working with them on various projects. Assets listed are restricted funds for NTI, residual money from GOTV, etc. Additional detail will be presented at the May meeting. Reminder, Hartford Next is actively recruiting for the Finance committee.</p> <p>Governance: Governance is working with membership to get ready for the annual meeting; including individuals whose terms are up.</p> <p>David MacDonald & Susan Lennon, Development: David and Susan have met a couple of times. Their regular meeting time is the second Tuesday of every month at 2:00 pm. Bongi would like to know more about Development and will follow up.</p> <p>Mary Flavey, Communications & Marketing: Committee is working on a newsletter, content, audience, style, etc. Funders want to know what's being done. NRZs need to provide information about and photos from their neighborhoods. One recommendation for the website was headshots of the board members. Photos will be taken at the Annual Meeting on June 20. Working on shared files and storage using Microsoft Office software.</p> <p>Mary Pelletier & Jeff Stewart, Environmental Justice: The charter is still in the drafting stage. Haven't had a chance to meet yet.</p> <p>Jack Antonich, Program: Working on the Annual Meeting, June 20th. The theme is public safety. A speaker is lined up; more details to come. The library is a possible location for the meeting.</p> <p>Mark calendars for the Annual Meeting on June 20th.</p> | | | | |
| 7:25 - 7:30 pm | Follow up and Assessment | All | Continuous Improvement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What did we miss discussing today? Does anything need to be documented and voted on? How am I doing as a Board Member? What went well? What did not go well? What needs to change? |
| <p>Bongi asked for old business, new business, or comments. Mary Falvey reported that at the MARG meeting, the subject of PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) came up. Now that COVID money is running out, new sources of funding have to be identified. Those on PILOT should pay their fair share.</p> | | | | |



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| 7:30 pm | Close | | | |
| <p>Motion to adjourn was made by Frank Sentner and seconded by Jeff Stewart. Meeting adjourned at 7:34.</p> | | | | |

| Objectives, Actions, & Decisions: | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Objectives | Action Steps | Accountability | Timeline |
| Outstanding Items | | | |
| New membership for Finance and Governance Committees | Board members consider joining these committees | HNXT Board | By April 2024 |
| Chairs for Governance and Finance Committees | Board members consider chairing these committees | HNXT Board | By April 2024 |
| Establish Environmental Justice Ad Hoc Committee | Draft Committee Charter | Mary Pelletier, Jeff, Marion & Bongji | By April 2024 |
| Review Prosperity Funding Opportunity | Provide report | Bongji | March 2024 |
| Share NRZ Activities/ requests for collaboration | NRZ Reps to Send NRZ Round Table items ahead of the meeting for sharing | NRZ Reps | Monthly |
| Assist HNXT Board in supporting search for HNXT Executive Director | Circulate Executive Director job description | Marion | April 2024 |
| Roberts Rules of Order | Provide refresher to NRZ Board | Jeff | April 2024 |
| Quality of Life Committee | Establish Committee, schedule meeting, determine objective | SW/BTR & HNXT Board | ??? |
| Property Taxes/PILOT/..... | Establish Committee - schedule meeting, determine objective | SW/BTR – Amilcar Hernandez | In Process? |

VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOL

Mute your audio until you are ready to speak
Add your NRZ or organization’s name after your name in your Zoom window

HARTFORD NEXT GROUND RULES

1. **We come prepared.**
2. **We think before we speak.**
3. **We listen to each other.**
4. **We share and respect diverse points of view.**
5. **We don’t attack each other personally.**
6. **We don’t shout.**
7. **We stay for the whole meeting.**
8. **We avoid side conversations in and outside of the meeting room.**
9. **We are guided by the meeting chair or facilitator.**
10. **We turn off our cell phones during the meeting.**
11. **We keep our microphone on mute unless called upon to speak.**
12. **We raise our virtual hand to be recognized to speak.**



Hartford NEXT Board Meeting Minutes 4/18/2024

13. **We speak briefly and to the point.**
14. **We do not make inflammatory statements or accusations.**
15. **We work together to adhere to times noted on the agenda.**
16. **We help each other to stay on topic and on agenda.**
17. **We enjoy Ourselves.**

HNXT Committees and Meeting Dates

Communications & Marketing Committee: Chair Mary Falvey, Meeting date 2nd Tuesdays 8:00 am via Zoom

Development Committee: Co-Chairs David MacDonald & Susan Lennon, Meeting date, 2nd Tuesdays at 2:00 pm

Finance Committee: Chair Violette Haldane, Meeting Date TBD

Governance Committee: Chair TBD, Meeting Date, as needed

Program Committee: Co-Chairs Jack Antonich & Frank Sentner, Meeting Date - 1st Wednesday of each month via Zoom.