

Council Member Cam Gordon's Report to the Seward Neighborhood Group May 24, 2017

Cam's Next Office Hours:

Thursday June 1, 9:30-11:00am, Nabo Café, 2211 Riverside Ave

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***Working for a Minneapolis
where each of us has the
freedom and opportunity to
reach our individual
potentials while caring for
one another, improving our
environment and promoting
social well-being.***

***Focused not only on our
immediate needs, but also
on the future we want for
ourselves, our children and
for generations to come.***

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- 1) Minimum Wage
- 2) Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing Preservation Fund
- 3) Yard Waste Collection Begins
- 4) Green Zone Policy Passes
- 5) Mental Health Co-Responder Program
- 6) Commercial Waste Study
- 7) Public Health Advisory Committee Appointment
- 8) Openings on Boards and Commissions

- 1) Tomorrow, the Council's Committee of the Whole will receive a very informative staff report about the local minimum wage. You can read the report here:
<http://www.minneapolismn.gov/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmosp-199132.pdf>. This report does an incredibly good job laying out the policy rationales for - and concerns about - raising the minimum wage, summarizing the large number of public comments we have received on this topic, and describing the policy choices before the Council and staff's recommendations. I agree with nearly all of the staff recommendations, from their stance against adopting a tip penalty to their recommendation that we give the smallest businesses more time to raise their wages. I am interested in the policy question around training wages for youth workers, and will be paying especially close attention to that question. I am also very thankful that this report includes analysis about the impacts of a minimum wage increase on the health of Minneapolis workers and racial equity. It's important for everyone to know that this policy - which has been discussed and debated for several years now - is close to a final vote. I expect that a minimum wage policy will be adopted by the Council within a month or so, by late June.
- 2) The Council has approved \$1.5 million for a new Minneapolis Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing (NOAH) Preservation Fund to assist non-profit housing providers to acquire and preserve NOAH rental property in Minneapolis. NOAH refers to rental housing affordable to households with incomes at or below 60 percent of the area median income (\$51,480 for a family of four) with rents usually between \$550 and \$1,200 per month. Minneapolis has about 38,000 units in this range. The strong real estate market and low rental vacancy rate (2.7% regionally) has made these properties more attractive to investors, leading to increased sales, higher rents and displaced tenants who cannot afford increased rents. You can learn more here
<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@cped/documents/webcontent/wcmosp-191816.pdf>
- 3) The season has begun for 2017 City of Minneapolis collection of leaves, brush and other yard trimmings. Yard trimmings and leaves must be in compostable bags – paper or compostable plastic – or unbagged in a reusable container at least 26 inches high with sturdy handles. Yard waste is not allowed in City-provided carts or bins. Set prepared yard waste at your alley or curb next to your garbage cart by 6 a.m. on garbage day. Bundles should weigh less than 40

pounds, be less than three feet long with branched less than three inches in diameter and must be bundled with string or twine.

- 4) In April, the Council adopted our first-ever Green Zones policy and established two Green Zones (one northern and one southern) and two pilot areas within them. Green Zones are a way to make targeted environmental and health investments in areas that have historically faced environmental injustice and racism. The northern pilot includes the McKinley and Hawthorne neighborhoods and both sides of the river in north/northeast. The Southern Pilot includes Ventura Village and East Phillips and Little Earth. I am glad to have reached this milestone, and proud to have helped shepherd this complex and important policy through the Council. I hope that this will improve the environment and people's health in some of the most overburdened communities in Minneapolis and serve as a model for others to follow in the future.

<http://www.ci.minneapolis.mn.us/www/groups/public/@clerk/documents/webcontent/wcmssp-197530.pdf>

- 5) The City is contracting with Hennepin County for Psychiatric Emergency (COPE) mental health professionals who will participate in our Co-Responder pilot program for mental health crisis response. In this program that I pushed for last year a specially trained patrol officer will be paired with a mental health professional to respond to 911 calls involving people who may be emotionally disturbed or suffering a mental health crisis of some kind. There will be three officers and two mental health professionals assigned to these teams who will work Monday – Friday, from 10:00am-6:00pm throughout the service areas of the Fifth and Third Precincts, with offices at the Fifth Precinct headquarters at 3101 Nicollet Ave.

- 6) A Council committee has received the final report of a Commercial Waste Collection Evaluation Study that identifies ways the City can reduce waste from the commercial, industrial and multifamily (or CIM) sectors. We currently have almost no information about the CIM waste stream and don't know how much of what kinds of waste are generated, and where it ends up or what rates people are paying for what services. This contrasts with the City's work on waste from small residential sources, where we are making great strides in reducing waste and increasing diversion through robust recycling and composting programs. This study lays out best practices from a number of other cities that have taken steps to address CIM waste. The ideas range all the way from tweaking and better enforcing our existing ordinances to completely taking over service to the CIM sector and providing it as a City utility, as we do for 1-4 unit residential buildings. I am very interested in using this study as a jumping-off point to further explore the options it lays out, and move forward with implementing something in the next year or so. Whatever we do I want to see it result in:

- a. A very high diversion rate, where most, if not all, of the waste is recycled or composted and diverted away from the garbage burner and landfills,
- b. A much more transparent system with a higher rate of reporting on what is collected, what happens to it and what it costs ratepayers; and,
- c. A system with higher transportation benefits, reduced greenhouse gas emissions and fewer truck trips on our streets.

To that end, I passed a staff direction that moves this work forward as part of the Zero Waste plan, and will result in another touch-point for policymakers in September. I am glad that my office has been a part of this work since its inception. Please check out the study at <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/meetings/legislation/WCMSP-198737> and let me know what you think if you have time.

- 7) After receiving applications from a number very well qualified and outstanding Ward 2 residents, I have decided to appoint KJ Starr as the new Ward 2 Public Health Advisory Committee (PHAC) member. KJ lives in the Seward neighborhood and has a master's degree in public health and a law degree. She has worked in a variety of public health capacities including as a researcher on public health policy for the Minnesota State House Research division, and most recently as a program evaluator working in the Office of the Legislative Auditor. This was a very difficult decision for me and I want to thank all the wonderful Second Ward people who applied to serve on this committee.
- 8) Visit the City's website, <http://www.minneapolismn.gov/boards/openings/index.htm> for a full list of appointment opportunities and position descriptions for City boards and commissions.