

NCEC Recommendations to the City of Minneapolis, adopted by NCEC Feb. 23, 2016:

1. NCEC asks the City of Minneapolis (“City”) to conduct an annual satisfaction survey of neighborhood and cultural organizations on what trainings and support they need to do their work and to better meet City funding objectives e.g. Community Participation Program (CPP). Then, using existing resources,
 - a. The City will publish the full results of the survey in a timely, transparent, and consistent manner.
 - b. The City will respond to the survey by putting in place a comprehensive menu of trainings and resources offered by credible, qualified providers as defined by neighborhood and cultural organizations. To a large extent this will be an exercise in researching, bundling, and in some cases partnering with existing resources offered by 3rd party providers. In some cases the City may be the provider. Including but not limited to:
 - i. Best practices in neighborhood organizing
 - ii. Fundraising skills and upcoming opportunities
 - iii. Encourage partnerships, merger explorations, and “sister” neighborhoods
 - iv. Encourage peer groups based on geography (e.g. northeast Mpls staff) or issue (e.g. citywide renters coalition)
 - v. Intranet or other tool to communicate between neighborhoods
 - vi. Board member onboarding and orientation guidelines
 - vii. Minimum qualifications for neighborhood staff, and examples of job descriptions and work plans, e.g. Executive Director
 - viii. Example job descriptions for board members, e.g. Treasurer, Secretary roles
 - ix. Boards & Commissions Leadership Institute; also offer to new neighborhood organization board/other leaders
 - x. Clarify role of City support staff, how they interact with neighborhoods and NCEC
 - c. The City will put in place a credible, neighborhood and cultural organization-driven system (similar to Angie’s List) for rating the quality of providers and resources so that over time, the City is offering the best possible resources (“best practices”) as defined by the neighborhood and cultural organizations it supports.
 - d. The City will train its neighborhood support staff to be qualified to respond to requests for assistance by recommending and connecting neighborhood and cultural organizations to best practice resources.
 - e. The above system must meet the needs of organizations of varying size, capacity, and context, e.g. areas with concentrated poverty or housing decline vs. affluent areas.
 - f. The above resources should be easy to find.

2. NCEC asks the City to allow spending on Food for meetings and community-building events (use general fund / other as needed) and to work with neighborhood organizations (NHOs) to explore any additional restrictions on use of CPP/City funding that comprise obstacles to NHO work.
3. NCEC asks the City to require stronger outcomes related to representative engagement and participation, and stronger enforcement especially around board eligibility, voting rights, exclusion, violations of CPP requirements; and to more effectively incentivize best practices related to same.

For example:

- a. Standard expectations for boards of directors and related policies, such as:
 - i. Term limits
 - ii. Size of the board (especially minimum)
 - iii. Clear time commitment to serve on board. May vary by individual and circumstance.
 - iv. Onboarding process for new board members
 - v. Avoid “closely held” boards
 - vi. Bylaw standards
 - vii. Grievance policies
 - viii. Transparency-related policies, when / how to publish minutes, etc.
4. NCEC will work with City leadership to further explore CPP Purpose #2 related to influencing City decisions, priorities, plans, policies, programs, and services. Specifically,
 - a. what strategies does the City want NHOs to use?, and
 - b. address whether the City has any conflict of interest (COI) related to this Purpose of the program, and whether any COIs are being addressed in an appropriate manner.
5. NCEC will work with City leadership to immediately explore and seek out funds to support and sustain neighborhood programming.