

## MINNESOTA CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN SOCIETY OF LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, August 4, 4:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Gina Bonsignore's Home, St. Paul, MN

### **EXCOM MEMBERS PRESENT**

Gina Bonsignore, President  
Carmen Simonet, President-Elect  
Andrew Montgomery, Awards and Banquet Co-Director  
Jodi Refsland, Awards and Banquet Co-Director  
Ann Rexine, Director of Communications  
Graham Sones, Director of Education  
Liz Hixson, Director of Public Relations

### **EXCOM MEMBERS ABSENT**

Matt Rentsch, Past President  
Ellen Stewart, Trustee  
Nicole Peterson, Secretary  
Chris Behringer, Treasurer  
Todd Wichman, Fellows Representative  
Jody Rader, Student Chapter Liaison  
Michael McGarvey, Advocacy Committee Chair

### **CALL TO ORDER**

President Gina Bonsignore called the meeting to order at approximately 4:00 p.m.

### **MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of the July 7, 2016 meeting were reviewed. Several corrections were noted: The date of the next Executive Committee meeting is Thursday, August 4, 2016 from 4:00 - 5:00 p.m. at Gina's house prior to the Member and Sponsor Appreciation Picnic; Todd Wichman's name was misspelled; Todd Wichman is the current Fellows Representative; and Matt Rentsch was in attendance at the meeting. A motion was properly made to approve the minutes with these corrections. The motion was seconded and passed.

### **PRESIDENT, Gina Bonsignore**

Gina reported that the ASLA-MN/APA-MN DNR tour was a success. Over 20 people attended and diverse organizations were represented including USGBC and MnDot. It rained which cut short the outdoor tour but Gina had prepared a PowerPoint outlining the DNR's efforts at introducing environmental issues to underserved communities. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion among attendees about issues such as how to evaluate the program's success and strategies for increasing awareness and participation. The program may be worth holding again next year.

Planning meetings for PARK(ing) Day and chapter advocacy initiatives were recently held.

### **PRESIDENT ELECT, Carmen Simonet**

Carmen asked for ideas for the upcoming year's theme. One idea that was popular among those in attendance was to focus on the ways in which landscape architecture can improve equity.

She discussed the possibility of holding tours for state leaders as a way of demonstrating how landscape architecture positively impacts communities. Selecting a tour destination in the 5th District might be a good idea. Representative Keith Ellison may have interest in attending. Time will be needed to formulate details and extend invitations. Late August might be a good time. The tours would also be valuable to emerging professionals.

Members who might be interested in participating include Leslie Johnson, Andrew Montgomery, Maria Grina, Gina Bonsignore, and Jake Coryell. Several ASLA-MN members have helpful connections for specific places such as Heritage Park (Adam Arvidson), Weber Park (Joni Giese), Broadway Park (Kristine Miller), and Mississippi Watershed (???). Weber Park features wetland swimming pool. Gina added that these kinds of tours might make for good \_SCAPE articles. Leslie Johnson is a natural writer and may be interested in helping. Jodi Refsland shared that WHR maintains Heritage Park.

This could feed into the chapter 2017 theme somehow. Other considerations for a theme might be to build it around a hot keynote speaker.

**PAST PRESIDENT, Matt Rentsch**

Not present; no report.

**SECRETARY, Nicole Peterson**

Not present; no report.

**TREASURER, Chris Behringer**

Not present. Kathy Aro shared the current bank balance. All is in order. She did not print financial statements because of the picnic following tonight's meeting.

**TRUSTEE, Ellen Stewart**

Not present; no report.

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, Kathryn Aro**

Kathy shared that doing online voting at tonight's picnic will not work. The information in the online voting platform was loaded in a way that made running a report with necessary voter information impossible. Kathy shared that she called Nicole to discuss the situation to confirm her understanding. Golf is scheduled for September 13. The annual Fellows Reception is scheduled for August 16.

**AWARDS AND BANQUET, Andrew Montgomery and Jodi Refsland**

Andrew and Jodi reported that they visited two additional locations as possible venues for the conference and awards banquet: the Heritage Center and the new CHS Field. The rental fee at the Heritage Center is \$1,000, and the rental fee at CHS is \$2500. CHS provides a discount for non-profit organizations, but as a 501(c)(6) business league rather than a 501(c)(3) charitable organization ASLA-MN may not be eligible. The awards directors will explore this further. It was agreed that even if the discount isn't available to ASLA-MN, CHS is the preferred venue for 2017 and that Heritage Park may work well for future years. Ann motioned to approve securing CHS Field for April 21, 2017, Carmen seconded the motion, and the motion passed. Ann also discussed the need to hire a professional photographer to secure quality images for \_SCAPE. With assistance from Matt Rentsch, the Awards Directors are locking in juries for both 2017 (likely Colorado) and 2018 (likely New York).

**EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Graham Sones**

Graham reported that he is working with USGBC on developing a SITES event. The event will be hosted by USGBC; ASLA-MN will be positioned as an event supporter and assist in guiding content development. ASLA-MN will help promote the event as well. Carmen shared that Regina Flanagan may have interest in helping with education next year.

**COMMUNICATIONS, Ann Rexine**

\_SCAPE is mailing shortly. Kathy will work with Gina and Ann as needed to send copies to the civil engineer mailing list. Ann asked if her spreadsheet outlining information needs from the awards directors was helpful. The directors indicated that it was.

**PROGRAMS DIRECTORS, Jake Coryell**

Jake was not able to attend tonight's meeting but he sent a report to share: Gina shared that he is planning a social for emerging professionals on August 18 at Inbound Brew Co. Jake is working on fun activities golfers can participate in. Gina suggested making foot golf a mixer. Jake continues to work on coordinating an event at the Minnesota Zoo. There may be an opportunity to be involved in Elementary STEM Exhibit Design Challenges (ZOOMS) on March 21 and/or March 23 of 2017.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS, Liz Hixson**

Liz reported that September 16 is PARK(ing) Day. For the past few years, WILA-MN has worked with local schools to design a space for PARK(ing) Day. They are looking at working with Edison High School this year which has a good design curriculum. Ally Czechowicz and Madeline Peck are assisting. Liz will be securing booth space at both AIA-MN and Northern Green Expo trade shows.

**STUDENT CHAPTER LIAISON, Jody Rader**

Jody was not able to attend tonight's meeting but she sent a report to share: Joe Favor is coordinating a fall BBQ. The UMN Department of Landscape Architecture has generously agreed to donate \$300 per student up to \$3600 to support students interested in attending the conference. It will also work with studio instructors on scheduling. A number of students will be working with Ally Czechowicz and WILA-MN on PARK(ing) Day. The student group will be hosting booth for incoming freshman at College Day on campus. Jody may need material from ASLA and/or ASLA-MN.

**NEXT MEETING**

Discussion took place about timing for the next meeting. September 8 was considered, but Gina wouldn't be in attendance. It was agreed to retain the pattern of the first Thursday of the month. Accordingly, the next meeting of the ASLA-MN Executive Committee is September 1, 2016 at AIA-MN from 4:00 - 6:00 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Andrew motioned to adjourn the meeting at approximately 5:00 p.m. Graham seconded the motion, and the motion passed.