



## **President's Report**

**Board of Governor's Meeting March 29, 2023**

### **Staffing and Operations**

Since the last board meeting, we have hired two staff. Shira Zisook is our new Operations Manager. Shira started with us in January and will support COO Greg Gurley with human resources, finance and IT work. Shira has over ten years of experience in operations, project management, human resources and administrative support. We have also hired Rogelio Steven Quispe as our new donor relations manager. In this position, Steven will support fundraising efforts through corporate and individual donor management. In his prior positions, Steven was Director of Marketing and Communications, and a Stewardship Manager at Concordia Place. He also worked as a development coordinator at Year Up and the University of Chicago.

### **Programmatic Work**

An update on the status of our initiatives in the Board packet. Highlights include: Director Audrey Wennink testified this month at the Joint Transportation and Public Safety / Infrastructure Appropriations Subject Matter Committee Hearing. The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the successes and challenges of public transit in the Regional Transit Authority service area as it relates to funding, safety, accessibility, affordability, livability, environmental impact, economic impact, and equity.

In partnership with the Chicago Community Trust, we hosted the second session of Advancing Equity: Closing the Homeownership Gap—which brings together community-based organizations, bank representatives and other foundation partners to discuss barriers and solutions to homeownership.

In the last month, the Drinking Water 123 program delivered two water affordability plans to officials in Broadview and Harvey. Related to this work, we have also had a lot of success working with Illinois EPA to make sure its federal funding for Lead Service Line Replacement (LSLR) will prioritize low-income and communities of color. A recent proposed rule for LSLR funding reflects this prioritization.

We hosted an event sponsored by ComEd – “Beating the Heat – Energy Equity in the Age of Climate Change” this month. Panelists included staff from ComEd, Elevate and Far South Community Development Corporation. We had robust turn out with approximately 70 people in attendance in person and virtually.

We have been active in the mayoral campaign. We developed and circulated a briefing book for the mayoral candidates that outlined built environment policy issues and recommendations. We also offered our services for transition planning to both campaigns. We co-sponsored a candidate debate, submitted an Op-ed piece to the Chicago Tribune and Sun-Times and are in the process of developing Alderman 101 webinars for the incoming class of aldermen. The staff has connected with outgoing Alderman Harry Osterman (48<sup>th</sup> ward) to help craft the content and potentially moderate the webinar. The goal of the webinars is to provide new alderman with an orientation to major policy issues facing Chicago, provide them with an orientation to MPC and build strategic relationships.

### **Strategic Planning Update**

Core components of the strategic plan include reprioritizing our work and how we communicate about it; investing in advocacy work by increasing staff in this area, and exploring an MPC Institute for Education and Training. To date, and as will be shared with the board at the meeting, we have worked on our branding to include the focus, goals and language outlined in the strategic plan. We have refined how we talk about our work so that it is more inclusive and accessible to current and potential stakeholders. We are working with a consultant to update the website accordingly. Regarding advocacy staff, I have drafted a job description for a VP of Advocacy role that will be vetted with the senior leadership team and program staff. Pending funding, the goal is to post the position in the early summer. Finally, we received a grant from the Field Foundation to support scoping and designing the Institute. I have developed a request for proposals and scheduled four meetings with potential consultants. I anticipate an engagement to start at by the end of April.

### **Finances/Development**

Investment and Audit and Finance committee reports are included in the board packet. The first quarter is typically slow regarding revenue generation. To date, we have \$1,070,500 in pledged funding from foundations, individuals and corporations, \$596,000 of which has been received. We have submitted an additional \$815,000 in funding requests. Foundation giving is already at 44% of the goal.

We have held and are planning several cultivation and engagement events. First, board member Frank Pellicori invited me to speak about MPC's work to a group of civic leaders at the Chicago Club. Attendees included leaders in finance, law and education. Second, Board Chair Paul Carlisle will host a round-table discussion with business leaders that will take place at the Chicago Club in April. Finally, we will host an "Intro to MPC" event in May at the McDonald's headquarters in the West Loop. Through this event, we will be able to engage many of the people identified by the board through our 1:1 board engagement meetings. It will be a great opportunity to broaden our network with the ultimate goal of increasing financial support for the organization.

Finally, we have started planning for the annual event! The date is September 20, 2023 at [the Geraghty](#). We are working with the board to secure a Champion of Change awardee and will also have a Community Impact award. Stay tuned for save the date information.

### **Board Engagement**

The staff conducted a board orientation for new member Polly Eldringhoff, VP, Operational Performance at Peoples Gas.

Thank you to everyone who completed the (lengthy!) board self-assessment survey. We achieved a 66% response rate, which is sufficient to get broad feedback. The board packet includes a summary of the responses, and we will have a presentation at the meeting.

Board members identified several opportunities for improved engagement and efficiency. The top 3 areas for follow up included:

- Board roles and responsibilities, particularly in fundraising, advocacy/ambassadorship, programs/content areas (committees), strategy implementation and performance evaluation
- Board culture including revisiting values, communications, and interactions
- Board composition, specifically a need to right-size the Board to meet current organizational priorities

To date, we have completed 27 board member 1:1 meetings. We have had great conversations on expanding our network, the role and importance of board giving, individuals and organizations who might be interested in supporting MPC and potential events. The development team is planning follow up action steps based on these conversations. Unfortunately, eleven board members, or 24% of the board have not responded to several requests to meet.