



MNA Board of Directors Meeting 7:00- 9:00 pm, August 18, 2025 MINUTES

Location: [The Wil-Mar Neighborhood Center](#), 504 S. Breatly Street

Board Members Present:

Elle Grevstad
Eric Hamilton
Cailey Jamison
Courtney Lindl
Del Lorensen
Lindsay Marlovits
Claire Myers
Jen Plants
Kate Allen Rubin
Mike Tarby

Community members:

Katherine Davey (Festival Coordinator)
Officer James Dower (MPD)
Lt. Dave Meinert (MPD)
Liam Beran (Isthmus)
Chip Cruz
Nici Hawkins
Jeanne Lerum
Brent Pauba
Mike Sloan
Nancy Sloan
Katy Stanton

Board Members Absent:

Marlisa Kopenski Condon (planned)
Wynona Pyrtel (planned)

Call to Order: 7:00 pm

Welcome and introductions

Approval of July Minutes: Cailey moved to approve, 2nd: Elle. Motion passes.

MPD Update: James Dower

- The city and the Mayor's office is involved in addressing the issues at the SJC. Though MPD continues to respond to calls, the mayor (and the city attorney) are the ones that can take more serious action. The recent letter from the city to the SJC puts the property on notice that steps need to be taken to address the nuisance issues before more serious action from the city is taken.
- The central concerns for residents are overall quality of life, drug use, drug and sex trafficking, and fighting/assaults. For example, there was a recent assault that resulted in an arrest and a concussion inflicted on one of the victims.

Executive Committee Report: Eric Hamilton

- [Alder Mayer's 8/18/25 blog post](#) was shared with the board.
- The MNA Annual Meeting is scheduled for October 23.

Festival Committee Update: Elle Grevstad, Courtney Lindl, Jen Plants, Cailey Jamison, Katherine Davy

- Hot spots currently support wifi for card readers at Waterfront and Orton Park Festivals. MNA will continue to use hot spots for Orton Park Festival, but the card readers can be used without wifi (which other festivals—such as the 2025 La Fete—have done successfully). This option should be investigated for the 2026 festival season, and Eric Hamilton will take in the coordination of card readers for 2026.
- Card readers and related financials must be facilitated by the board (rather than the Festival Committee).
- Preparations for the Orton Park Festival auction on August 30 and nearly complete! All donations have been secured, and packages will be announced soon.
- Setup for the Orton Park Festival will begin at 12 pm on Friday, August 29. Due to the Labor Day holiday, some festival infrastructure may not be removed from the park until Tuesday, September 2.

Arts Committee Update: Lindsay Marlovits

- The next Orton Park Movie Night is scheduled for Friday, September 12, at 7 pm. The selected movie will be announced soon!

Treasurer's Report: Elle Grevstad

- MNA had activity flow through as festival sponsorships increased and festival expenses hit the books. We expect an increase in financial activity in August as we close the busy period with Orton and run up to our FY end in September.

Transportation and Safety Committee Update: Del Lorensen and Mike Tarby

- The city's Transportation Commission heard public comment from folks across Madison regarding Willy & Jenifer street safety. TC asked staff to develop plans for a Willy St rush hour lane closure including a more intensive process (with data collection, updated models, public outreach, temporary left turn lanes, and a \$100k price tag), and a more immediate lane closure trial (cover the signs, stop towing, adjust streets division schedule). TC will decide which—if any—of these plans they would ask the city to implement at their upcoming 8/27 meeting.
- **Motion to increase allocation within the approved budget of the Transportation and Safety Committee to \$1,000 from \$500 (provided those funds are available) towards permitting and associated costs of hosting the Park(ing) Day event, to be used by Madison Greenhouse.**

Mike moved to approve, 2nd: Cailey. Motion passes unanimously.

T&S has been helping to coordinate Park(ing) Day—a community event which isn't directly associated with MNA, but will be occurring on Willy St. The event requires a street use permit,

which will be submitted by the host, Madison Greenhouse. There are costs associated with that permit, which AARP WI has generously offered to cover.

- **Discussion re: issues related to the Social Justice Center**

The motions that follow were discussed at the most recent Transportation & Safety Committee Meeting. Of note is that the mayor's office and the office of the city attorney are now involved in addressing issues on and around the Social Justice Center property. Police calls are frequent in the area.

The T&S Committee Meeting is asking: How can MNA rely on existing services in the neighborhood to alleviate the stress on the SJC? The SJC has taken some steps to address neighborhood concerns by adding lighting, a trail cam, and signage, but enforcement and accountability have been issues. The city is advocating official No Trespassing signage on the property.

The board discussed the need for all of our neighbors to be and feel safe and how sometimes there can be conflicting needs within different communities.

The possibility of MNA advocating for desired outcomes, including the expansion of city services, was discussed in addition to asking for specific mitigation measures to be implemented by the SJC.

MPD noted that the SJC has activated the terrace space on Few Street, and that crime prevention includes looking at infrastructure, lighting, buildings, etc. MPD is on board to help address public safety issues. In addressing public safety issues, MPD has included outreach via their neighborhood officers, Catalyst for Change, and other city agencies. MPD sees no trespassing signage as another tool in their toolbox to address public safety issues.

As noted above, due to the fact that crime prevention includes looking at infrastructure, lighting, buildings, etc., a representative from The Beacon noted that they have looked MPD in the past for recommendations to improve public safety (in addition to their own "good neighbor" policies.) The Beacon wasn't built to be a shelter so there are access issues in terms of securing the property.

Community members and neighbors of the SJC articulated their concerns, which included the following:

- With school starting soon, there are many children walking to and from school down Willy and South Few Street during transport time—and there is frequent drug use sales in the area.
- Neighbors (some who have lived in the area for decades) noted that issues have only been increasing over time. They report having had things stolen, repeated break-ins, constant noise from conflicts and physical altercations, and frequently being approached to buy drugs.
- As a historical point, Willy Street Park posted no trespassing signs, and MNA has in the past asked local businesses to address nuisance issues.
- Local businesses are feeling the impacts as well (and it was noted that other businesses are expected to take responsibility for what occurs on their properties.)
- A question arose about the effectiveness of any letter from MNA to the SJC.

Board members noted larger contexts that included:

- Advocating for competing needs of neighbors—particularly when the needs of some of the most vulnerable neighbors are on the table—is a painful process.
- All of our neighbors deserve respect, dignity, and the space to live in peace.
- The overall support system for those experiencing homelessness, addiction, and/or mental health issues is sorely lacking and leaves communities with few good options to serve everyone's needs.
- Though no trespassing signs have been used successfully to address similar concerns at other locations, concerns were expressed that such signs will potentially invite more police activity into the neighborhood and will simply move the issues the neighborhood is experiencing to another location.

- **Motion to draft a letter asking SJC to remove the curbside food pantry and redirect clients to the existing pantry to other existing community resources.**

Del moved to approve, 2nd: Elle. Motion passes (6 in favor, 2 in opposition, 2 abstentions)

- **Motion to draft a letter asking SJC to move to post city ordinance no trespassing signs on their property**

Del moved to approve, 2nd: Elle. Motion passes (8 in favor, 1 in opposition, 1 abstention)

Report to CommComm on forthcoming newsworthy items

Review of Board Assigned Tasks (see below)

Adjourn: Jen moved to adjourn: Elle 2nd. Motion passes unanimously

Meeting Adjourned: 9:03 pm

Board Tasks for August

- Courtney: Contact Chrysalis about unclaimed grant funding.
- Eric: Contact Farmer's Market about unclaimed grant funding.
- Elle: Send spreadsheet to board to signup for a festival financial management shift.
- Jen: Set date for a merch organizing gathering.
- Jen and Cailey: Get Kate information about Orton Auction packages for promotion on social media.
- Kate: Continue to encourage neighbors to weigh in with the city Transportation Commission before their next meeting.
- Del: Draft letter to the SJC.
- All: Promote Orton Park Festival (and the auction!) within your networks.
- All: Review forthcoming email from Kath detailing additional ways (beyond volunteering for the MNA tent) to support the Orton Park Festival.