

**Fulton Neighborhood Association Board of Directors
Minutes of Wednesday, March 11, 2026, 6:30 pm
FNA Meeting held in Pershing Park Rec Center & Google Meet**

Board Members Present: Sophie Su, Kristen Ingle, John Bender, Seth Salenger, Jill Lock, Melanie Heu-Kanow, Mike Youngblood, Blake Ward (in person). Tawnya Artisst-Anderson, Blaine Miller-McFeeley (online)

Guests: Lily Taylor (online), Melissa Mendez (online), Maya Sheikh, Allison Bell (city staff), Ryan Ackerman (city staff), Steve Young, CM Linea Palmisano, Darren Carroll, Ray Klahr, John Hoff, Jason Benjamin (presenter), Amy Goodman, Cathy Abene (Park Board)

FNA Board Meeting called to order at 6:30p.m.

West Fulton Neighborhood Improvement Project:

The West Fulton Neighborhood Improvement Project meeting covered updates on the project, which focuses on the west side of the Fulton neighborhood. The project aims to improve pavement conditions, reduce flooding, and enhance safety through traffic calming measures. Over \$20 million will be invested over five years, with resurfacing starting in 2026 for light blue streets identified on the map and full reconstruction for pink streets identified on the map. The project will also include the installation of bike boulevards and the reduction of rain gardens. Residents were encouraged to report potholes via 311 and were informed about the timeline and impact on street parking. The meeting concluded with a Q&A session addressing various concerns and providing additional details on project phases and community engagement.

Discussed input on the construction timeline and concerns about the proposed rain gardens on Ewing Street. The reconstruction will involve extensive work, with a minor reclamation phase lasting only a day or two. The France Business Association opposed the rain gardens between 51st and 52nd Street on Ewing, as well as the one on 51st Street between Ewing and France, due to heavy employee parking needs. The proposed rain gardens would significantly impact parking availability, making it difficult for businesses to succeed. When asked about how closely located public parking lots were to Ewing, the city identified 1 surface lot and 3 large parking garages available for free parking within walking distance.

Jill suggested additional community educational engagement on bike boulevards. Perhaps FNA hosts a summer bike ride for an informational ride.

Extra materials were left at the park for residents.

Board Decisions

Minutes from the February Board Meeting:

Ian submitted additions to the board minutes to reflect that Board Member Jane Kohnen was present at the start of the meeting, but chose to leave after learning one of her initiatives was not considered for discussion. Additional suggestions to include conversations around budget items not reflected in the slide deck will be added to the minutes. The board postponed

approving the minutes until these additions are reflected. An e-vote will allow for review of additions and discussion before approval.

Approval of 990-EZ and AG Reports

The board agreed that they had reviewed these filings and that, to the best of our knowledge, they are accurate and ready for submission. Seth, the FNA treasurer, reported that he has reviewed the reports and everything looks sound. Sophie made the motion, and Seth seconded the motion. The board unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report - Seth

Minimal revenue was reported this month as FNA's bookkeeper submits for reimbursement quarterly. The budget will be updated quarterly as a result. Seth confirmed some outstanding items from the last meeting. He checked in with the bank to review the implications of not letting the CD mature. The bank reported FNA would lose the interest from the CD, which would be somewhere between \$1,500-\$2,000. We are halfway through the six-month certificate of deposit. As the CD becomes mature, the board will need to make a decision about how to invest the money moving forward.

Reviewed the budget that was passed last month with an update on the total deficit, which increased by \$3,000. Some of this deficit will be adjusted lower as cost savings will occur with sponsors and fundraising efforts, as well as reduced staffing costs as a result of the coordinator transition. Kristen added that some of the deficit can also be looked through the lens of a spenddown of city funds.

Seth and Sophie have been meeting with our bookkeeper and have streamlined some of the financial processes. In addition, they've received some support from city staff to strategize on the spenddown of city NCR funds. They worked to get a 10% admin line item in our city grants to capture some administrative spending.

Further discussion will occur about Plan Modification, when and which buckets at the next board meeting. The Finance Committee will be meeting with Dennis, the bookkeeper, this Friday. Kristen has asked to join the finance committee.

Tawnya raised an interest in having a discussion on strategic fundraising efforts.

Melanie reports that she and Mike met with Aryca from the City, who has been walking them through board finances and responsibilities. The next virtual training will occur on Friday, March 20th.

Program Updates & Key Initiatives - Team

Lunar New Year Recap

It was a well-attended event with 179 people in attendance. 43 kids participated in the scavenger hunt. The flow of the event space was better this year. Food and vendors were great, and they were satisfied with the turnout. The event impact snapshot shared 4.5X leverage ratio

for the funds invested and it was noted as a positive event. Sponsors like Northstar Art Club have received some new students as a result of their participation at Lunar New Year.

Additional notes: Melanie reported that she appreciated having a layout of the event that Tawnya created. It was easy to direct volunteers and jump in where needed. Next year, make exclusive merch for the event.

Venmo

The Board has agreed to keep the FNA Venmo account active under Ray's ownership due to current platform transfer limitations and limited board capacity to create a new account. We will implement monthly statements, transaction oversight, and quarterly reconciliation, and revisit the structure once a new FNA coordinator is hired.

TRUST Inc Storytelling (2025 Small Grants Winner)

TRUST Inc. will host a storytelling workshop series for older adults in our community, helping participants write and share their personal memories. The series will culminate in a public senior story slam for the broader community.

Linden Hills Monarch Butterfly Project

Linden Hills Council reached out to collaborate and we worked on social media / eNews promotions to help support the project.

This Toast is For You (Podcast)

No update provided as the board is waiting on Sasha's update.

Program Updates and Key Initiatives

Housing and Rental Support

Kristen presented the following information that \$10,000 was transferred to Harvest from the Heart Rent Relief Fund on February 21st. Over 300 families have been served in February totaling \$400k with an average rent of \$1,400. March rent fundraising is slower, but demand for funds is high. An additional 80k coming in from the Minneapolis Foundation and 50k coming from MIRAC will help keep relief flowing. Grant inquiries out to the Women's Foundation, and others. Other large rent relief community efforts are also struggling to keep pace with need. Some are moving to a lottery-like system. Others are opening and closing assistance forms within minutes, as demand is outpacing funds.

Snow Angels Grant

Sophie presented the information that snow angel training has wrapped up but the assistance form remains open. The program is going very smoothly and we are planning the Snow Angel volunteer appreciation party called the Great Winter Sendoff Celebration in May. She is going to reach out to Southwest Highschool to discuss venue options.

Metro E Line Grant

Sophie presented materials shared by Sasha on the completed Metro E line grant and a positive

quote shared from a neighbor about enjoying the event.

FNA Coordinator Position

Sophie shared the position pipeline is going well. We had a number of people apply, go through the case study and now Sophie, Tawnya and Kristen are actively interviewing candidates. Our rough time is to have a new coordinator by May's board meeting.

Block Captain Engagement Program

Kristen shared that she facilitated 2 open calls for block captains and neighborhood leaders, gathered more interest and contacts, started a signal chat to maintain ongoing communication, and coordinated s'more kit gathering opportunities for 10 neighborhood blocks. Kits were donated by Linden Hills Council.

Bulletin Boards

Sophie shared that boards are delayed until May 2026.

New FNA Email

Sophie shared the new "board only" internal email and that team is taking time to streamline email / communication processes.

There was no pending tasks at this time

Upcoming Items

Communication Committee

We discussed that the communication committee will meet at the end of March and we are evaluating doing 2 printed newsletters due to capacity constraints.

Earth Day

Amanda, Seth and Mike have been working on a plan for the event. This event could produce larger participation due to the electronic recycling program. Last year, there was an issue with a school group coming out the day before FNA's event to clean up the park. Amanda has communicated with principals of the three surrounding MPS schools about plans for the event to avoid duplication of trash removal service. A flyer was drafted, and it will be updated to include the appropriate FNA, Park, and Free Geek Logos.

Small Grant Program

John is taking the lead on the committee. Needs logistical information: access to the rubric and Google Form response submissions. Melanie and Sophie offered to share the materials and to tag Jane in the conversation. Kristen joined the committee and asked about the recusal process in the event she knows an applicant. The committee will determine if she will recuse from all votes or from just the grants where there is a conflict.

History of Eliza Winston - Jason Benjamin

Jason presented the history of an enslaved person, Eliza Winston, who was rescued from a boarding house in the Fulton Neighborhood in 1860. He asked for FNA's support in efforts to recognize and honor Eliza Winston with a marker, signage, or a public display of art. In addition, the old signage near St. Anthony will need to be updated with more humanizing language. Cathy Abene, District 6 Park Director, said this has her support, and there is an avenue through the park board to move this project forward. Sophie directed this to a committee and asked for board engagement. Kristen, Mike, and Blake would like to work to support this effort.

Jason presented the board with a signed copy of the book about Elia Winston's quest for freedom called, *It Took Courage* by Christopher P. Lehman. Inscribed with, "To the Fulton Neighborhood Association, thank you for considering the honor for Eliza Winston!"

Board adjourned at 9:00pm

Minutes submitted by Kristen Ingle, FNA Secretary.