

June 21, 1977

Mr. John Boland, Chairman  
Metropolitan Council  
300 Metro Square  
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101

Dear Mr. Boland:

The Metropolitan Council's difficulties this year -- and again this week -- with appointments to the Metropolitan Transit Commission point up dramatically the need for a basic change in the way the Council goes about selecting members of the major metropolitan commissions.

The Metropolitan Council has taken the lead in some of the changes in the appointments process which the Citizens League concluded, after a study in 1975, were urgently needed. The broader solicitation of interested applicants has been a good and useful step. But in its own review of the applicants, and in its own decision-making, the Council still does not have what our report described as "an election-like process" . . . which requires candidates to stand up before the appointing authority in anything like the way the candidates for office are obliged to do during a campaign, and demonstrate their competence.

As the process has evolved, these appointments have been delegated to the two Metropolitan Council members from the precinct involved. In some cases, these members 'take turns,' so that in practice only one person's judgment is involved in the nomination. Whatever interview takes place is only by that Council member or members; and is a private discussion. Council members in one district frequently do not know even the names of the persons being considered in other districts. And in many, if not most cases, the vote is taken without the Council as a whole ever having talked with the persons being appointed.

The system of metropolitan organization in the Twin Cities area, in which such large responsibilities are delegated to the operating metropolitan commissions, requires a stronger process for these appointments.

This decentralized system has worked well. It has permitted the Council to concentrate on the really strategic issues of policy. It does depend heavily, however, on the kind of persons who serve as members of these commissions. They must know the issues, programs, and policies; and they should understand the organizational arrangement in which they work. They should be responsive to the metropolitan policy plans; yet independent enough to stand for the needs of the system they oversee, directly.

So the process by which these appointment decisions is made, therefore, is critical. Sound people and sound procedures are likely to go together.

**Officers**

**President**  
Rollin H. Crawford  
**Vice Presidents**  
Arthur Nafelkin  
Joan King  
Ray H. Harris  
Roger Palmer  
Francis M. Boddy  
**Secretary**  
James L. Weaver  
**Treasurer**

**Directors**

Dale E. Behoffer  
W. Andrew Boss  
Barbara Bouiger  
Allan Boyce  
Lloyd Brandt  
Fred C. Cady  
John Cairns  
Eleanor Colborn  
Gerald R. Dillon  
Joseph L. Easley  
Jan Foley

**Virginia Greenman**

Mary Ellen Grika  
Verna C. Johnson  
Paul Magnuson  
Harry Nermeyer  
Martha Norton  
Mildora Perlman  
Wayne G. Popham  
Rosemary Rockenbach  
John Rollwagen  
A. Kent Shamblin  
Marcia Townley

**Esther Wattenberg**

Mary Lou Williams  
John Yunow

**Past Presidents**

Charles H. Bellows  
Francis M. Boddy  
Charles H. Clay  
Walter D. Durlen  
John F. Finn  
Richard J. FitzGerald  
Walter S. Harris, Jr.  
Peter A. Heegaard  
James L. Hetland, Jr.  
Verna C. Johnson  
Stuart W. Lock, Sr.

**John W. Mooty**

Arthur Nafelkin  
Norman L. Newhall, Jr.  
Wayne H. Olson  
Leslie C. Park  
Malcolm G. Pfunder  
James R. Pratt  
Leonard F. Ramberg  
Charles T. Silvarson  
Archibald Spencer  
Frank Walters  
John W. Windhorst

**Staff**

**Executive Director**  
Ted Kolderie  
**Associate Director**  
Paul A. Grijp  
**Membership Director**  
Calvin W. Clark  
**Research Associates**  
Jon Schroeder  
Margo Stark  
Berry Richards  
William Blazar

June 21, 1977

The Council could do much better than it does at present, with this process.

The Council could do far more to explain to persons interested in submitting their names what kinds of issues are coming before the commission in the next six to 18 months, and what will be required of them.

The Council could do far more to get from potential nominees some indication of their background, interests and qualifications for that particular task.

And on a matter so fundamental to its continuing relations with the commission, the Council would certainly be justified in taking for its interview with the 'finalists' the same full evening of discussion you would normally give to the adoption of a report from a major committee.

This kind of improved procedure would be important for any metropolitan commission. It is particularly important in the complex area of transportation, where the Council names members both to the MTC and to the Transportation Advisory Board.

I'm sure you understand that our concern about this problem is a reflection of our sense of the importance the Metropolitan Council has come to have, as a mechanism for dealing with critical urban problems. We believe the continuation of this success is important, not only for the Twin Cities area but also for the nation.

For the moment, with the members of the Council themselves not elected by the people, but appointed, this success depends heavily on the credibility the Council maintains with the community. This credibility would be significantly enhanced, we believe, if the Council were now -- as a Council, and beginning with these appointments to the Metropolitan Transit Commission -- to do a much fuller and more open job of screening the applicants for membership on its major commissions.

Sincerely,



Rollin H. Crawford  
President

RHC:VS