

## Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) Candidates for the Board of Directors - 2022

In February, the Seward Neighborhood Group (SNG) adopted new bylaws that call for nine elected Directors, elected for staggered three-year terms. To make the transition to the new bylaws, there are nine board seats up for election this year:

- 3 seats with a 1-year term, ending in 2023.
- 3 seats with a 2-year term, ending in 2024.
- 3 seats with a 3-year term, ending in 2025.

By the posted deadline of Tuesday, April 26, SNG had received 9 nominations for the 9 seats up for election this year. Therefore, the slate of candidates will be elected by proclamation at the **SNG Annual Meeting - 6:00pm, Wednesday, May 18.**

**Here are the candidates:**

*Candidates for a 1-year term, ending in 2023:*

- Diann Anders
- Peter D'Ascoli
- Casey Mock

*Candidates for a 2-year term, ending in 2024:*

- Terry Barnes
- Ryan Morgan
- Tami Trager

*Candidates for a 3-year term, ending in 2025:*

- Lisa Boehlke
- Korla Masters
- Ron Schlatter

**Profiles of the all of the candidates, in the order listed above, are on the following pages.**

## **Diann Anders**

*Candidate for a 1-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

Building community has been a lifetime passion for me. SNG has the potential for being a vital player in weaving together the diverse and vibrant threads of the Seward neighborhood.

### **My experience:**

I have served previously on the SNG board of directors, sometimes as an officer. I would bring institutional memory of both SNG's successes and failures to the table as SNG continues to recreate itself as an engine for building an inclusive and equitable community.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

When my husband Rudi and I came to Minneapolis for graduate school at the University of Minnesota in 1971, we lived in an apartment in Seward. As the years passed, we moved from apartment to apartment, but always in Seward. When we bought our first house, it was in Seward. We have lived in Seward for over fifty years, and between us we have served on the boards of SNG, Seward West PAC, Redesign, and the Seward Towers Corporation.

## **Peter D'Ascoli**

*Candidate for 1-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

I am at a point in my life that I have more time and I feel that contributing where I live is important. There is a need for a measured, thoughtful engagement with our community and with others, something missing from national as well as state wide politics. One-to-one interaction that is available at a neighborhood level is where I feel most comfortable. My understanding is that the current SNG Board is a grounded, well-meaning group, which is appealing.

### **My experience:**

I developed managerial skills and personal interaction skills as a medical professional who managed, taught, and practiced in the field. I have previously served on the SNG board of directors and chaired the SNG Community Development Committee. I am currently involved with the Community Development Committee of Seward Redesign, so I could add to the coordination between Redesign and the SNG.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

I moved to Seward about a decade ago. Part of the reason has been the economic diversity of the neighborhood, as well as the history and activism present here. I have lived in the Twin Cities long enough, and raised kids here, that it has now been home for almost 30 years. I have been involved with the Northern Clay Center here in Seward for about 15 years. My children were raised in this urban environment and understand the value of that. I am a retired physician and most of my medical practice was here in the Twin Cities.

## **Casey Mock**

*Candidate for a 1-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

SNG remains a valuable institution despite having been through some tough times, and I am grateful to the folks who have provided leadership on the board during such a challenging period. In my experience, institutions like SNG do their best work when new voices and fresh perspectives circulate into leadership. I'm interested in serving the neighborhood because I believe that I have skills and experience that can help SNG complete its transition to a new era.

### **My experience:**

I've had a diverse career that has spanned the fields of foreign aid, economic development, and state public policy. I have served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in the Republic of Moldova; worked for international NGOs, including on field assignment in countries like Ethiopia and Pakistan; led a small state agency in Vermont; and done stints in public accounting and at a large tech company. Currently, I lead a team at Minnesota Management and Budget. By virtue of my experience, I'm knowledgeable about public policy issues that impact residents of Seward: transportation/transit, public safety, economic development, and the environment. I am an attorney by training, and am licensed in Washington, DC.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

My wife and I moved to Seward from Washington, DC, in June 2020. We were drawn to the neighborhood by its welcoming, diverse, and inclusive vibe, as well as its walkable charm, both of which reminded us of what we loved about our previous neighborhoods in D.C. and in Burlington, Vermont. My wife and I are both runners, so you've probably seen us enjoying the trails and parks that make Seward such a great place to live.

## **Terry Barnes**

*Candidate for 2-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

I think the neighborhood has suffered a great deal over the past two years from the COVID epidemic, the social unrest due to MPD misconduct and violence, the destruction of Lake Street businesses, the incursion into our city by outside agitators, and the horrible rise of assaults, car jacking, and vandalism. SNG as an organization also suffered in all this chaos. In July of last year, I began serving as an SNG Board Member. The work has been deeply fulfilling. Serving on the SNG board of directors has enabled me to meet and start effectively working with talented, empathetic and committed neighbors. I want SNG to be built into a strong, thriving organization that is in-tune with the people who live in Seward. I want everyone to feel they belong and want to participate in making this a community where they can live well and find joy.

### **My experience:**

Nothing is more meaningful to me than when I get the opportunity to organize community to meet people's needs. I have led numerous grassroots efforts that organize people to solve problems. My career started as a block organizer for community crime prevention. Next, I organized neighborhood energy workshops in an effort to reduce residential energy consumption in Minneapolis. After that I directed an emergency fund to help families and the elderly who were unable to afford heat and electricity. The Red River Valley floods called upon me to provide leadership in the logistical support for flood recovery. When the 2004 tsunami decimated Southeast Asia, I joined with Sri Lankan neighbors to feed and build permanent housing. My 21-year career at Habitat for Humanity found many ways for me to support the "magic" of regular people who go out and build homes so more families can have decent affordable housing. And now I am retired, so I have the capacity to be an active part SNG.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

My family moved to Seward in 2010. I am a block captain for our three blocks area. Until last year, I was not familiar with the work of SNG. In June 2021, I was asked to run for the SNG board of directors, and have served on the board since July. My focus has been in revision of SNG Bylaws and hiring staff. My future interests are in the Community Development Committee and the Community Engagement Committee. I want to support SNG's collaboration with Longfellow, particularly in spearheading a public art project that would rejuvenate the bridge at 36<sup>th</sup> and the Midtown Greenway.

## **Ryan Morgan**

*Candidate for 2-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

The Seward neighborhood is one of the best Minneapolis neighborhoods. I have a great love for the eclectic nature of Seward from its historical immigrant roots to its current diversity of people, cultures, and businesses. There is a strong sense of community in the neighborhood. I would be honored to help continue neighborhood improvements and ensure that improvements benefit all in the community.

### **My experience:**

Growing up, my family owned a small business and that has helped me understand the hard work and passion that goes into having a successful neighborhood business. I am a former civil engineer with a personal passion in urban planning that prioritizes walkability and people-first design that promotes community. This expertise will serve well with any future neighborhood infrastructure projects. In the past I spent many years as a performing musician and love the fact that Seward has so many passionate artists, musicians, and creators. I would look for ways to improve and continue to support arts in our community. Above all, I love this neighborhood and want to help serve the needs of this community and be an advocate for the neighborhood.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

I am a resident of the Seward neighborhood and enjoy all that the neighborhood has to offer: hiking along the Winchell trail, grocery shopping at our Seward Co-Op, watching the juggling club at Matthew's park, grabbing a bite at the Seward Cafe, reading about the neighborhood's history (love that there are people passionate enough to write a book on its history, *A People's History of the Seward Neighborhood*), and so many other wonderful things.

## **Tami Traeger**

*Candidate for 2-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

I am interested in seeing the SNG board of directors and SNG programs reflect the interests of a wider variety of Seward residents. I have experience with creating more diverse and inclusive spaces. I hope to help integrate the needs of renters, our Somali neighbors, and the other BIPOC folks that call Seward home. I enjoyed participating in the hiring of our Community Organizer. I would like to continue supporting SNG's work to engage those in our community whose voices may not have been allowed to guide neighborhood actions in the past. I hope someone among these neighbors will replace me on the board.

### **My experience:**

I have worked in the non-profit world for the last decade. Most of that work has been focused on BIPOC communities, lowering health disparities, and creating access to resources. I have experience with creating inclusive safer spaces. I served on the SNG board of directors in 2015, and have served again from September 2021 to the present.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

I worked in Seward for 2 years before buying my home here. I love my little 1-bedroom home. I love the easy access to the Midtown Greenway, the Seward Co-op, Brackett Park, and the paths along the river. I appreciate having all that I need within walking and biking distance. I have enjoyed getting to know my neighbors and working together for change.

## **Lisa Boehlke**

*Candidate for 3-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

I love the Seward neighborhood and would not want to live anywhere else. The civil unrest in 2020 and COVID stretched our resilience and damaged this community. It is time we change the narrative that Seward is an unsafe place where there was destruction and show our resilience by inviting others into our neighborhood for music, food, and art. This is why I am organizing a Celebrate Seward Festival for September 2022. I believe we must make Seward a place where renters and home-owners, new residents, and long-time residents can become one community. We need to heal and listen to each other. We need to hear each other's stories and create activities together. I am hopeful about our future. I come with love and patience and celebrate diversity because it creates richer lives for all of us.

### **My experience:**

I am the current President of Seward Neighborhood Group and a member of our executive committee. I am proud of our successful efforts to bring stability and integrity back to our community organization. As a team, we have reestablished our financial relationship with the City of Minneapolis, received funding for our Equitable Engagement Plan, and unlocked Neighborhood Revitalization Project (NRP) funds. We have written new Bylaws (the first complete rewrite in decades), hired a new community organizer, and are hard at work on other projects. I served on the SNG board from January 2018 through December 2020. Part of that time, I was a member of the executive committee. I also served on the Executive Director Search, Community Building, Community Development, and History committees. As a teacher in St. Paul Public Schools, I was active in my union and served as a union steward advocating for student and teacher rights.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

I have lived in Seward since October 1986. I have been involved in numerous community activities, including promoting the arts, a particular love of mine. I am a photographer who enjoys documenting the surroundings of people's lives. I served on the Seward Winter Frolic committee for three years before joining the SNG board of directors. Also, I have volunteered with the Sewing Circle in the Seward Towers.

## **Korla Masters**

Candidate for 3-year term

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

I grew up in Seward and in May 2021 moved back to the neighborhood. I am excited by many of the ways the neighborhood has changed and grown over the years. I am also a renter (and intend to stay a renter), so I am especially focused on making/keeping Seward an affordable place to live, for both homeowners and renters. There are many pieces to nurturing a healthy community, and neighborhood groups are one of those vital elements. I am drawn to serving on the SNG board of directors because I believe SNG can foster cross-generational community connections throughout the neighborhood. SNG has a unique opportunity to meet people in the wholeness of their lives, respond to some of their needs, celebrate their joys, and nurture our shared dreams for this place. For me, this is exciting stuff.

### **My experience:**

I am a parish pastor in my professional life. There is a lot in that experience that lends itself to the work of a neighborhood organization. Parish ministry requires leaders to be generalists who nurture healthy community systems and develop leaders who can bring collective vision to life. I bring the ability to work well across difference in the midst of tension, while holding clarity about what is negotiable and what isn't.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

I love this place. I used to run around (and sometimes cause trouble) with my friends here as a child. I chose to move back here after living elsewhere in Minneapolis because place matters to me very much. My heart comes alive the closer I get to Franklin Avenue. I know there are many people who feel similarly about Seward and I want to intentionally build community with them. I also know that there are many people who live here for whom this is mostly where they could find a place to live. I have moved an absurd number of times in my 20s and early 30s. I want to be part of making Seward a place where people can also be invested in the ways that are life-giving for them no matter how long they stay here.

## **Ron Schlatter**

*Candidate for 3-year term*

### **Why I am interested in serving on the SNG Board of Directors:**

I joined the SNG board of directors because I became aware that SNG leadership was faltering at the beginning of 2021. I am proud of the work the Board has done since July 2021 to realign the organization and put it on a path to reestablish its significance in our changing neighborhood and world. I have chosen to run for a 3-year term to help provide some stability, and follow through on our commitment to make SNG a more welcoming, inclusive organization that encourages growth and supports communication and equity among neighbors.

### **My experience:**

I have served on the board of directors since July 2021 and am currently serving as Treasurer. I am also the SNG representative on the Seward Towers Corporation board of directors. I was on the parent team that worked with architects and contractors during the Phase I and II renovations of Seward Childcare Center. I am a retired middle and high school science teacher.

### **My connection to the Seward neighborhood:**

We have lived in Seward since 1985, and raised our two children here, both of whom attended Seward Childcare, Anne Sullivan, and South High. My spouse and I were both theatre artists when we first arrived in Minnesota, and were drawn to the neighborhood by the Playwright's Center. Once here, we've benefitted from many local institutions like the Seward Co-op and Northern Clay Center, and proximity to great healthcare and educational opportunities at the University of Minnesota.