MINNESOTA
NEWSPAPER
ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the MNA Board of Directors

Thursday, August20, 2027 **Email Vote**

Present: MNA President Tara Brandl, Tracy; First Vice President Kelly Boldan, Willmar; Second Vice President Crystal Miller, Albert Lea; Third Vice President Ted Almen, Kerkhoven; Directors Bill Albrecht, Coon Rapids; Rachel Miller, Henderson; Treasurer Andrew Meuleners, Howard Lake; Immediate Past President Justin Lessman, Jackson; MNA Executive Director Lisa Hills and Lisa Schwarz Director, Development & Communications

Absent*:* Director Tim Douglass, Glenwood

Email votes:

Original request: While centrally focused on records of the Minneapolis Police Department, and its use of the "coaching" as a form of discipline that is then memorialized on forms kept in employee personnel records as part of its progressive discipline model, the case is also about what constitutes "any disciplinary action" under the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act, Section 13.43 (the personnel data provision). As news organizations with a vested interest in the MGDPA and the ability to access public data through it, we wanted to alert you of the fact that review was granted.

Mark Anfinson was recommended to serve as counsel in this request. It was likely MNA would have funded the effort so other media organizations did not respond to the request.

Anfinson had two concerns:

(1) he would be unable to craft a brief without duplicating points already made in an existing brief and (2) related to the cost to the MNA to do so.

Motion by Lessman to not participate in this particular request to support MNA signing on to the Brief amicus brief for MNCOGI vs. City of Minneapolis.

SECOND: Kelly Boldan seconded the Motion.

The Motion was approved with 8 votes in favor of not signing on to support this request.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Hills
MNA Executive Director

DRAFT

August 24, 2026 email to the MNA board of directors

MNA Board~
As is typical with the legal process, the situation regarding the amicus effort in MNCOGI v. City of Minneapolis has changed since our discussion and vote last week. Last week's decision to not sign on to the proposed amicus brief was in accordance with Mark's recommendation based on his twofold concern that (1) he would be unable to craft a brief without duplicating points already made in an existing brief and (2) related to the cost to the MNA to do so. Since then, another organization, the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, has agreed to lead a different amicus effort. Mark's recommendation at this point is to sign on to a request for leave related to the RCFP amicus brief and also the RCFP amicus brief itself, as the focus of this particular amicus brief appears to be on public access to records and not on the definition of discipline/coaching. This would cost the MNA nothing. As the deadline to sign on to the request for leave and brief was imminent, the MNA board president and MNA legislative committee chair consented to do so. Please let me know of any questions.
Thanks!

Tara Brandl
Publisher

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