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NEWS RELEASE

Seven new Directors join the 23-member Minneapolis Parks Foundation Board

Dorothy Bridges, Ryan Burnet, John Crosby, Caren Dewar, Tom Paul, Tom Pohlada and Liz Wielinski begin terms this month, as Sue Bennett and Sarah Harris are elected to key leadership positions

Minneapolis, Minn. – Seven Twin Cities business and community leaders assumed posts as Directors of the [Minneapolis Parks Foundation](http://minneapolis-parks.org) this month, charged with helping the independent 501c3 with fulfilling its mission to “help ensure the economic, environmental, civic and cultural health of Minneapolis and the region by creating the Next Generation of Parks™ that meet the demands and reflect the values of our generation and those to follow.”

Six of the seven new Directors, approved in November 2013 and starting three-years terms, are **Dorothy Bridges**, Senior Vice President, Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis; **Ryan Burnet**, Partner, Burnet & Birkeland Real Estate Group, and Vice President, Burnet Hospitality; **John Crosby**, Community Leader; **Caren Dewar**, Executive Director, Urban Land Institute Minnesota; **Tom Paul**, Chief Consumer Officer, UnitedHealthcare; **Thomas Pohlada**, General Manager, Porsche of Minneapolis. **Liz Wielinski** also started her term as an *ex officio* Director, in her role as President of the Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board of Commissioners.

At its January 2014 Annual Meeting, the Board approved **Sue Bennett** and **Sarah Harris** as Vice Chair and Secretary/Treasurer, respectively. **Dan Avchen**, CEO of HGA Architects and Engineers, continues as Chair of the Board.

Rounding out the full 23-member Parks Foundation [Board of Directors](http://minneapolis-parks.org) are: **Stuart Ackerberg**, CEO, Ackerberg Group (Chair-Governance); **Mark Addicks**, Chief Marketing Officer, General Mills; **Robert Bruininks**, President Emeritus, University of Minnesota; **Mary deLaitre**, Executive Director, Minneapolis Parks Foundation; **Andre Fischer**, President, BPM Show TV, LLC; **Tom Fisher**, Dean, University of Minnesota – College of Design, **Joseph Gibbons**, First Vice President, Boyd, Bencini, Gibbons & Associates – Merrill Lynch Global Wealth Management; **Shawntera Hardy**, Director, Fresh Energy; **John Herman**, Partner, Faegre Baker Daniels; **Wendy Holmes**, Senior Vice President, Artspace; **Mitch Kern**, Principal, Graylight Partners, LLC; **Mary McCarthy** (Chair-Events Committee); **Connie Remele**; **Paul Reyelts**, Retired CFO, Valspar Corp. (Chair-Development Committee); **Tene Wells**, Principal, Tene Wells Consulting; along with *ex officio* Director, **Jayne Miller**, Superintendent of Minneapolis Parks.

The Minneapolis Parks Foundation is known as the private-sector leader of the [RiverFirst](http://riverfirst.org) Initiative and [Water Works](http://waterworks.org), two design-based adaptive reuse parks projects on "America's fourth coast," the Mississippi River. Both projects are in partnership with the [Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board](http://minneapolis-park-recreation.org). “We are solely dedicated to enhancing the nation’s top-ranked park system, by building on our community’s tradition of civic engagement and public-private partnership,” says Mary

deLaittre. “With the addition of these six Directors, the Parks Foundation continues to strengthen our role as advocates, ambassadors and financial supporters for a legacy of world-class parks.”

Transformative Work

RiverFirst is a multi-year, multi-agency partnership to reconnect people to 5.5 miles of the Mississippi, where it flows through Minneapolis. Water Works is a RiverFirst Priority Project located on the Minneapolis Central Riverfront. This area draws 1.8 million visitors a year to experience St. Anthony Falls and explore built features such as the elegant Stone Arch Bridge, Mill Ruins Park, the Mill City Museum and Lock and Dam. Within this context, Water Works contains a world of possibility. As a year-round, multi-use park, Water Works will have programming and parks-supportive amenities that enhance the Central Mississippi Riverfront experience. Water Works will also establish a signature park destination for the whole family that exemplifies the city’s unique history and culture, as well as the value of “Next Generation” urban design.

The Parks Foundation also produces [Next Generation of Parks™ Lecture Series](#), which introduces the most innovative parks designers globally to the Twin Cities for free interactive presentations and engage in dialogue with stakeholders and communities. We also seek to empower the next generation of parks designers and citizen-planners through our [SiteSeeing urban design curriculum](#).

For more information or to support our work, please visit MplsParksFoundation.org.

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Water Works is Supported By:

Pentair Foundation | St. Anthony Falls Heritage Board
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