

# Making Civics Real: A Workshop for Teachers

## SHOW 6: Civic Engagement

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:16 Annenberg/CPB Funding Logo (include :15 fades)

:06 SOTA Logo (includes :15 fades)

Open Sequence

Velazquez: If we're going to talk about citizenship, democratic participation, then we have to tailor our lessons to model that kind of behavior.

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*Student: May I please introduce the president of the United States...*

**Narrator: Engaged, reflective, concerned and collaborative – these are qualities we hope for in our citizens and in our classrooms. Constructivism is a theory of teaching and learning that helps teachers instill these qualities while also imparting real skills and knowledge.**

Borges: A constructivist teacher is someone who builds on students' previous knowledge and previous experience.

*Johnson: Petitioner will go first ...*

**Narrator: Constructivism incorporates a number of teaching strategies you are probably already familiar with like: simulations, debate, small group work, and socratic questioning.**

Chandler You prepare a lesson that will allow students to bring reality to what they are learning.

Johnson: Each child brings something different and has looked at the material in a different way.

Martin: But they also build on what other students are saying.

*Student: And here we have the lack of family which I think is the most important...*

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Velazquez: The most challenging thing is being comfortable with letting students find their own way

*Borges: If you make this decision, how will it affect high school students all around the country?*

**Narrator: This workshop profiles teachers who are effectively using constructivist strategies to address standards and cover diverse content areas. Cooperative learning appears throughout, but you will also see strategies like role playing, consensus building and service learning. The goal of this workshop is to give teachers new resources and ideas to reinvigorate civic education.**

### Show Title: Civic Engagement

EXTs of Anoka, the river, students, etc.

**Narrator: Anoka, Minnesota is a quiet suburb of Minneapolis that sits beside the picturesque Rum River. Though the schools are good and the crime rate is low, the community is struggling with many of the urgent issues facing America's rapidly growing suburban communities – pollution, traffic congestion and loss of historic identity.**

EXT of school

**Narrator: At Anoka High School, the social studies department recognizes these issues and has developed a curriculum that fosters civic engagement in all of its students. The school's service learning program is continuous from ninth to twelfth grade and teaches students to identify and address issues to affect their community positively. The ultimate goal of service learning in civics is to connect meaningful service in the school or community with academic learning and civic responsibility.**

### L3: Bill Mittlefehldt, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> Grade Human Geography

BM: The kids that are doing service in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade are often doing it in association with projects where they are feeling they're making a contribution. And that's quite frankly what we're after, and that's what I

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think Jefferson and Franklin had in mind, that in the American republic it's as if you need a new kind of citizen, which the world hadn't seen much of by 1776, that you need a citizen who can bridge the differences, come together with a sense for shared hope in a common group. And I see American kids really need that.

BM: *Then you are going to have 45 minutes...*

**NARR:** **Bill Mittlefehldt teaches Human Geography, a course that explores the relationship between people and the physical and cultural aspects of the places they live. As part of his course, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders identify a local problem related to human geography and work with community partners to propose solutions.**

BM: They're going to get service learning credit, and it's more than just doing what you're asked to serve your community. It's assuming some responsibility to initiate part of a solutions to some of your persistent community problems.

Joel: *I just got a question for tomorrow for the criteria*

**Narr:** **Their culminating activity is a presentation to the Anoka City Council.**

BM: *... you're going to have a max of ten minutes to make your presentation and then there's going to be three to five minutes of question and answer.*

Joel: *Okay.*

MS: *But you guys are doing emergency preparedness for Anoka, right?*

Joel: *Right, right.*

BM: *All right, Joel, you're on there. Your community partner in M Ramsey.*

BM: Part of the research for their projects is that they meet with their community partners, which half the ball game is finding your community partner, and that's an adult outside the school who has more information, resources and maps than your teacher does.

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**NARR:** Bill Mittlefehldt helps students locate and connect with community partners, and sometimes even sets up meetings.

*BM: She said if we could schedule it later, that would be 12:30, that would work better for him, because he doesn't want to break the law getting back to the meeting.*

*MS: The [unint.] said he's back there. You guys probably want to go get a camera.*

*BM: As we get deeper, now we're in the sixth week of the nine week term, more of the class time is devoted to getting ready for the projects, and we try and make sure that all the kids have a venue outside the school to demonstrate their services.*

*BM: Tell me what's new with your train project?*

*Rachel: Somebody said that you have an article or something that we're in the paper again?*

*BM: Didn't you see the article in the Anoka Union? There's a very nice picture of you with the mayor and the county commissioner.*

*Rachel: From last Saturday?*

*BM: Yeah, where you guys were building a sign with him.*

### L3 Rachel

*Rachel: Service learning is usually in the social studies departments. It doesn't matter if you take a regular class, an honors class, or an AP class, you do need to still complete service learning hours and we actually have a service learning office in the social studies resource center.*

*BM: Some of the kids who are absent today are out gathering resource material from their partners, and hopefully by the end of the hour, they will be back to share with us what they've learned from picking up new maps, new information, or new perspectives from their community partners. And that's hopefully what most of you have achieved by now, because you're going to get 45 minutes this hour to organize it into your presentation for the dress rehearsal tomorrow. And we're going to start with the kids who are going to present at the Anoka City Council, which, I just happen to have the rough draft of the program right here. For this class, we have Andy and John, that's second hour, Drew, Doug, Jeff, you*

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*guys are presenting about putting the river in Riverfest, Tom, and your team, that's Brian, Andy and Tim are presenting growing green businesses in the Anoka area. And Jenny, who is absent today, and Rachel are doing the North Star Rail Corridor.*

*Of course, all of your parents and friends are welcome, and that includes the free food. So, it should be fun, and it looks like the weather is going to be great for that. Rachel, why don't you go to the phone and call your partner, and see if she can go meet with the County Commissioner.*

*Anybody else have any trouble getting connected with your community partner, we're now at the beginning of the sixth week, you should be coming around the bend, you should have made connections, you should have received your information, whether it's print or graphic. You should have some maps of the site that you're trying to change or impact, and I just need to know those kids who are having the most difficulty. Doug!*

Doug: *Do you know what time each person will present, each group will present?*

BM: *No, I will know that roughly by the end of the class tomorrow.*

Doug: *Okay, because I just might have to leave work and go there for awhile, and go back to work, you know ...*

BM: *And I'd be glad to give your manager a call, because this is a much bigger event in your life than working. You're going to be working for 60 years. You'll have an opportunity to present once to the Anoka City Council. So, I've made calls for kids before, and the managers are generally understanding.*

## **ARCHIVAL PHOTOS**

BM: *When I was in college I was in preparation for the Peace Corp in 1967, and it was a tremendous eye opening experience for me. Cities were burning, and we were in the midst of Vietnam throws and civil rights, and I thought it would be hypocritical for me to go to another country to help them with their problems when my own country was so confused and conflicted.*

*And so I changed my major, I decided to go into education so I could get involved in a hands on way in my own country, and so I graduated in 68 with a degree in education Then I went to teach in the Chicago area, and my wife and I decided we would come to Minnesota and raise*

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Minnesotians, and the thing that keeps me going is my ability to learn from my students.

#### **Activity One: Discussion of Text Reading**

- BM: *Now we're moving into the end of ... units on population, population growth, and environmental impacts. So as you read chapter 11 this week, be looking for, how is it related to impacts on Albee [ph.] the air, the water, the land, bio-diversity and energy stuff that we've talked about. And then hopefully for your presentation, your team topic, one of these variables will be involved, because all of you I think have selected topics that are related to, how are we changing the quality of living in our own region, which is kind of where we want to end up in the course.*
- Because it's going to get more and more local as you look at the impacts that we are having on our immediate communities. So, as you're reading chapter 11, look for the links with your team's project, because the answer for that link is not in your textbook. You're going to have to, you know, be looking for it.*
- BM: In the human geography class, we start the class off very much coming out of the textbook, and gradually there's a transition where most of the times in the text beginning and by the end of the ninth week, more of the class time in the week is devoted to the project. And again, we're trying to match the content and the cognitive stuff in the textbook, with the affective character development to try and get the kids to initiate something, in this constructivist mode, where it's part of their service that they construct something that will be part of the heritage as an autonomous learner.
- BM: *But those more people are using more food, more fuel, more natural resources, and they're taking up more space on the planet. So we're going to look at the economic impacts first of all. Somebody tell me, for those of you who have looked at chapter 11, what are some of the energy resources that we're using, because we're way out here on the tip of the curve. You guys are living pretty large in terms of the whole history of humanity. Give me some energy resources that we're using in Anoka right now.*

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Jeff: Coal.  
BM: Coal, okay, we're burning coal at Becker, probably to generate this electricity.  
Yeah, Phil?  
Phil: Oil?  
BM: Yes.

### L3 Rachel

Rachel: The students in our class are not all one kind of student. There are people who are in the bottom half in their class. There are people in the top half of their class, juniors and seniors. And I think there are some really shy people who wouldn't get their ideas out without him calling on them and making them speak. So I think that, in those respects, he really makes us learn different things and different opinions from the people in our class.

BM: But you are probably riding on five or six very expensive energy streams. What do you think is going to be the first one that's going to have an impact on your lifestyle here in the global future on this shrinking planet?

Jeff: Oil?

BM: Oil. Explain that, Jeff, or pick on somebody who you want to explain it. What is that?

Jeff: Hubert's Peak, it's 2008 is when the oil around the world, that's when we, um, yeah, that's when our oil production peaks.

BM: Okay, when you say we, is it true that US oil production has already peaked?

Jeff: Yes.

BM: Yeah. We talked about that last week, that US oil production may have peaked right back here, and this expert at Princeton University says the world production will peak in 2008, roughly speaking, give or take a year. So, what energy will you guys use to keep up your lifestyle when you're riding this high on the world economy?

MS: Water power vehicles, the hydro things they're working on now [unint.] ...

BM: Okay, so you're thinking fuel cells, is that what you're thinking?

MS: Yeah, I guess so. And solar, solar powered cars.

BM: Okay, that may be possible. Photo-electric cells are becoming more efficient.

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- BM: When you involve the affective domain and you ask the kids to show you some motivation, it's kind of a surprise, because the answer is not in a book. You have to show them some of the issues that are shaping their community, and you invite them to change some of them.
- BM: *Tell me what would happen if the price of oil were to double in a few years. What would happen to your family's budget?*
- FS: *You could find alternate modes of transportation, like if the light rail goes in, that would be an alternate, a good alternate mode, and also the buses.*
- BM: *Great. You're thinking in case we started making an investment in public infrastructure like busses or trains, Rachel and Jenny's project, that we might have an alternative that might consume less oil.*
- FS: *Yes.*
- BM: *Now, we don't raise any natural gas. We don't have any oil wells. What can we get in Minnesota that might help us with this next stage?*
- Jeff: *Wind power.*
- BM: *Jeff, elaborate. What have you heard that the city of Anoka is thinking about?*
- Jeff: *Thinking about changing, instead of getting their energy from coal or something like that, just have wind power down in Southern Minnesota.*
- BM: *That's right. In order to maintain your high living lifestyle, in the economy that's based on technology, you have to have new kinds of energy sources to keep the technology rolling that yields your gross national product, your gross state product, and the gross world product. So I think we're going to end kind of the introduction to chapter 11 there, but I want you to be thinking, how is the economy tied to technology and running on which forms of energy right now, because you guys may be part of the next generation solution, and that's what we need from you.*
- BM: I've taught government, which tends to be a ninth grade class in this neck of the woods, and the stuff the kids get that's cognitive that's not tied to affective, deeper levels of motivation, and affect, that it will drop off their monitors after they're out of school for awhile.  
But when you pair it up with something they've been invited to display, to demonstrate, to care, to create, that's where you build literally bigger



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circuitry in their neural network, as if their brains, and the way their psyches work, matter to their community.

But it takes four years to change that psyche from the inherent immaturity of a ninth grader, who thinks it's all about them and their own mini-drama, to the 12<sup>th</sup> graders, who are ready to be global citizens and assume their responsibility for fixing the system if it's broken.

### Activity Two: Student Field Research

BM: *So you can go hook up with her and hopefully she will come with you to the county meeting this afternoon. I told the county meeting is on, so as of now, the commissioner is going to meet with you at 12:30 in his office, and Jeff....*

### Archival: Newsletter

Narr: **For their project, Rachel and her friend, Jennifer, are trying to revive the North Star Commuter Rail project which will ease traffic congestion and decrease gasoline consumption.**

Rachel: We were listening to a city council member talking about how the North Star Corridor Train was dead. And myself and Jenny ... we sit on different sides of the rooms, but we kind of were just amazed to hear that, because it was not what we wanted to hear.

BM: And the girls went and did some double checking and they found out, no, it's not dead, it's just bleeding tremendously, and it's going to be dead by May 20<sup>th</sup>, in a matter of days, if the legislature doesn't allocate the funding.

EXT sign on highway and Capitol building

NARR: **Rachel's group has already written letters to newspapers, circulated a petition, posted a sign next to a congested highway, and most importantly, gone to the state capitol to lobby for the North Star Commuter Rail.**

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Local News Clip

Mary: Good evening, I'm TPT's Mary Lahammer [ph.] at the Capitol. Some Anoka area teens are trying to save a commuter rail proposal at the Capitol.

Rachel: *It's slowly dying, but there is a chance, and that you can do something. And we all felt so passionately about this, and decided that it would be stupid not to do this.*

MS: *It's very difficult, but we certainly intend to continue to push. We think that this really does represent exactly what they said, that this represents a future, a direction that we need to be taking.*

**NARR: Today, Rachel is going to meet with one of her partners, County Commissioner Dan Earhart, who has been a long-time supporter of the North Star Commuter Rail project.**

Rachel: *Where I could I possibly find Dan Earhart?*

Receptionist: *He's on the 7<sup>th</sup> floor administration, the elevator is down there ...*

**NARR: Her discussions with him will inform her group's presentation to the City Council.**

Rachel: I'm going to meet with Commissioner Earhart to discuss some of the things that are going on in the community regarding the train. He's work on this for 18 years, so I figure that, in talking with him, I'll get very good information and opinions regarding the train and how ... what my partners and myself have done, can influence how this is going. I'm looking forward to it because he has a lot of the information regarding the legislative kind of aspects of it, and the money that goes into it, and the people that have been working on it for such a long time to get this passed.

Earhart: *Hi, Rachel, good to see you again. What brought you to bring that forward?*

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- Rachel: *In our class we had a presentation from one of the city council members, who had said that the issue was pretty much dead, and I think that that really touched a chord in me, because I see all the people that are on the road, and I just got my driver's license, and I don't want to be sitting, I want to be driving. I think that, just the fact that we thought that we could maybe help save it, really got us involved and got us kind of excited to be part of it.*
- Earhart: *And so, you decided to bring the message right to the people through a sign. Why did you do that?*
- Rachel: *I watched the news in the morning, and they were talking about 169 being closed, or down to one lane either way. And with how many people use that road, that I know, because my parents use that road, it was going to be horrible, and people were going to be stopped. And so what better way to reach more people, in a limited amount of time, than a big sign, right there, when they're sitting, and they're so bored, and they're so angry, that they're sitting there.*
- Earhart: *Did you feel that people down at the Capitol were interested in what you had to say?*

### **Archival: Newspaper Sequence #1**

- Rachel: *I know people think it's so daunting to go up there, because you've ... you're in front of people who have been there for years, and multiple terms, and they know ... have all this information at their beck and call, and have this powerful speaking presence and can argue it like at the drop of a hat, and you just have to sit there and remember, I will vote soon, I have the right to participate in my government, and throw out all your energy and passion with your numbers and your information out with it.*  
*And I think just seeing teenagers down there, got some attention, and seeing three teenage women down there, really got their attention.*
- Earhart: *And, as we know, I mean, we're talking about a rail line that will have an effect on 13,000 future jobs, because the economic development, and \$88 million in taxes, \$1.2 billion in infrastructure in being ... development and homes and businesses that are located on that rail line. And the rail is already there. It isn't like it's doing much to the environment.*
- Rachel: *Right, right.*

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Rachel: *They need to see the long run of it, and if I can see it as a teenager, then why can't they see it?*

BM: When you actually see what the kids do with the projects, it's trying to meld both the curriculum content and the affective goals of how are you going to make this character assume some responsibility for their community? And that goes back to ... we try and ground our learning success in the community, not in the school.

Rachel: *It's such a big thing with gas and resources and stuff like that, and it's all tied into everything that we're talking about in our geography class right now. And then there's support throughout the whole school, when we did our petition, and that was the day before we left to go to the Capitol, and the day after I got back, people were saying, well, how did the petition go? How did your lobbying go, how did it go down at the Capitol? And I was just amazed, because I didn't think that people cared that much. But it was fun to see how people wanted to know how I was doing, and were really getting excited for it.*

Earhart: *Good.*

Rachel: The input that he really gave, not only for this project, but also for life in general, and in the next few years, was to really find something that you are passionate about, and stick with it, and show people that you do care about things like that. We should present our passion in the best light to the council members, because as teenagers, they don't hear our opinions a lot, and to hear them from us, will be a great awakening to them in some respects.

**NARR: John and Andy have been researching soil contamination at a shredding recycling center, which is threatening to pollute the Rum River.**

### **L3: John**

John: I've known Andy most of my life. We've played basketball for ten years before. Basically why we chose this project is because we're really connected to the river, and the river has a lot to do with the whole city and ourselves, because there's a lot of activities you can do, such as fishing and

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swimming and boating down the river. We chose this, just because we wanted to keep it clean for future generations.

**NARR:** Today, Andy and John are meeting with their community partner, Jeff Connell, from the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to get more information on solutions they can present to the City Council.

#### **L3: Andy**

**Andy:** Service learning is a lot more hands on. For me, I know I learn a lot better hands on. It gives us an opportunity to go out there and meet with people in the community, let us know that we can make a difference and people do care what we think. And it just gives us an opportunity to get out of the classroom a little bit, and get away from the books, as traditional learning, and expand on that.

*Andy:* Well, we found out about this whole problem because we found some articles in the paper, that there was a problem with the [unint.] property that there was possibly some hazardous material on the site and beneath the site. And we got interested in that, because it was something located in our community, so we shot out to find who would be our best person to talk to, and we felt, you know, we called you up [unint.] because we saw the name in the paper.

**Andy:** I think they should include service learning because it's preparing us for the real world, and it allows us to say, to actually see what's going on in our community, to see the problems and see who deals with it, and how they're going to go about fixing the problems.

**Connell:** They pull out all the metal for recycling, what's left in the end is fluff. We just call it fluff cause it is all the parts of a car that aren't metal.

**Andy:** ... what's hazardous, what's the actual, thing that actually is hazardous?

**Connell:** Appliances are the likely source of PCBs. Cars generally don't have much for PCBs in them, so old cars, even if you shred a thousand a month like they do, wouldn't be the source. We're really more focusing on the appliance stream.

**John:** What would be the effects of the PCBs going into the river, and how harmful would that be to the community as a whole?

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- Connell: *For the people who normally like to enjoy the river and stuff, well, this is a neural toxin, I mean, this is bad, you don't want to be exposed to this stuff at any level. But really more importantly is, how ... what do you guys think would happen if there were warning signs on the side of the river that says, no swimming, no fishing, the fish aren't safe for consumption because of PCB contamination. It's a resource to the community that would be ruined. And it would have a stigma attached to it, which would be really hard to erase.*
- Andy: *For the results what we are looking at, if we don't do something about it, if we just say hey, it will be okay, as long as we don't make it worse, how important is it to, you know, go ahead and clean it up before it gets worse.*
- Connell: *I think that in this scenario, based on the testing we've done already, this is a pretty serious thing. You know, we talked about the fact that PCBs build up in the food chain, they're going to stay down there in the sludge of the river, they're slowly going to get eaten by bacteria, those bacteria work their way into the fish. And you know, this kind of persistence to the pollutant makes it more serious.*
- Andy: *Does that mean taking them to court or ... I mean, what ... I mean, what does that mean?*
- Connell: *In terms of ... yeah, but taking them to court is more of a long term kind of fix, and we also have the ability to go onsite and do some emergency work. And we would have to do that. The site needs some work right away.*
- Andy: *Do you think the MCPA would pay for that, or, how would that be ... the cost ...*
- Connell: *It would get paid for under our emergency cleanup fund.*

#### **L3: Jeff Connell, Compliance Coordinator, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency**

- Connell: *Most of the time we work with other government officials, businesses, community groups, this kind of thing. It's not every day we get the kind of interest, involvement and access to the people who live, work, play there. And so, their opinion counts a lot for us.*
- Connell: *What do you guys think of the site, now that you've seen it, and you've talked to me and ...*
- John: *Personally I think it's a mess. It's just a nasty place to drive by. It's kind of an embarrassment to the county and the city, and just to the river, it's going to start polluting it, and wreck our beautiful river that we have.*

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- Andy: *It's ridiculous that it got this out of control. I wish something would have been done earlier, but I mean, at least we're making the steps, taking the proper steps now to say hey, we got a problem, let's do something about it, and I'd like to see that if they did it wrong knowingly, that they deserve to pay for it, so, hopefully that does happen.*
- Connell: *It seems interesting to me that you guys came here from a geography class, and you were interested in the environment cleanup, but I mean, I gotta say you seem to have had more of a lesson in environment regulatory actions. And no, I think that's good, and I think you guys have grasped it very well. But we've talked as much about legal maneuverings and settlement and criminal and civil investigations, and I mean, that's all a part of how we get the site cleaned up, and who pays obviously is when the rubber meets the road. I mean, that's really where it all happens.*  
*But I think that you kind of ... in some ways, you got more than you bargained for, but also, I think you benefited, because really, that's ... this is how environment regulation works.*
- Connell: *It's important for citizens to have this level of government involvement in what they do, and I wanted to give them a feel for what was really going on.*
- Connell: *That sounds really good. I think the thing you're going to add to that, by bringing it up, because like you said, they already know. They've probably driven by it, and you know, I spoke and Schwartzman spoke in front of them. But I think the part to remember is that, what you saw and how you feel about it is important to them, just as it was important to me when you guys came in to talk to me.*  
*So don't be afraid to say how you feel about it, you know, how you've used it in the past, and how you want to use it in the future, and you know, sometimes people are kind of more tight-lipped about things. People care, but they don't go get in front of City Council meetings and kind of put themselves on local TV and say how they really feel about it, so I think that's really cool.*
- John: *We're involved in our community and we care about our community, which some people don't think about younger, our generation, that we don't really care about the community and we don't ... it doesn't really matter to us, because it doesn't*

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*affect us. But in turn, it does affect us, because the long-term effect as we're talking here could effect us immediately.*

BM: We need the community to affirm the positives in their character development, and that's what our whole service program is about. You see in some of the juniors we've met that these kids are taking hold and they're saying, this is my community, this is my river, this is my land, I'm going to make a difference. And it's very powerful.

BM: *Let's see, Rachel was on the spot yesterday, because Jessica decided that she had to go take a chemistry test, and so she couldn't go down to the county. So it was Rachel without you. And you're going to have a little time to talk to her about it today before we get rolling on this. So go talk to her.*

Doug: *I can come tonight. I was going to let you know I got off work.*

BM: *Great. You are all going to do a quick dress rehearsal presentation, and this is the rehearsal but it matters because you're going to be receiving constructive feedback from me and your classmates.*

NARR: **The day of the City Council meeting is the students' final chance to help each other prepare for their presentations. Bill Mittlefehldt has designed an assessment rubric, which he and his student will fill out during class. The rubric will also be distributed at the City Council meeting for feedback from the community.**

BM: *And it's designed to help your team tighten things up so that your presentation looks very good. Now ...*

BM: In giving the kids an opportunity to go through it and receive some feedback in school before they actually do it at the City Council on the same day, it lends some power to their game. We kind of affirm the fact that they've made a contribution, they understand it, and all they need to do is kind of weave it together with a little better orchestration. And especially the closure piece, because over the last ten years I've listened to the City Council, and they're saying, so, that was interesting information, now what did you want us to do? They want to know



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specifically what would the kids like them to do, based on the research, the design, and the recommendations.

- BM: *So we're going to go back and ask John and Andy, because they presented last hour to another class. John and Andy, how did you guys feel about the feedback? Give me an example of one thing that you picked up on the assessment.*
- Andy: *That they wanted to know the [unint.] proposal would cost, like how much, like actual dollars it would cost to clean up the our problem, but that's something we were not exactly aware of at the time. It's going to take some time to figure out. But they thought our information was good, and they liked that. We found our research and we worked with somebody on the state level. They thought that was pretty cool.*
- BM: *Good. And so tonight you guys are going to take that feedback and maybe tighten that portion of your presentation up so that the assessment changes your behavior and makes it a little more effective in how you guys work as a team, and how you answer the questions that the City Council is going to ask you. Now all of you are going to get these today if you present, and you can evaluate your colleagues, because we want the constructive stuff. Say substantive things that will help people improve their teamwork, okay? So I'm going to pass these out, and you're going to use these this morning on each other. Any questions about the assessment rubric? It's pretty simple, and these are very similar to the ones that I'm going to use for you for the final deal on your project at the end of the term.*

### **Activity Three: Small Group Project Work**

- BM: *Okay, here's the deal. Go sit with your partners. You've got until lunch, 11:00, to get organized. When you come back, we're rolling with your presentations.*
- BM: *Assessment is a big challenge in this domain, because traditionally social studies has been oriented towards a cognitive domain. This gets into the affective domain, which is a more complex area to evaluate, because you have to have gradations of achievement. And so, what we look for in social studies at Anoka High School is, how are the kids actually applying and demonstrating those skills in action?*

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And it begins with the projects back in ninth grade government, but it works all the way through some of those juniors taking initiatives like the North Star Rail girls are.

Jenny: *Okay, what happened yesterday?*  
Rachel: *Basically I just went down to meet Dan Earhart, the guy who helped us with the sign, who brought all the material and stuff ...*

BM: So the deal is, we expect them to demonstrate, in some public manner, either in class or in the community environment. Then we have assessment rubrics, and what's really exciting about our program is we involve the community side – the mayor, the County Commissioner, people at the state level – in assessing the progress of our kids. And our responsibility partly as a social studies person is to broker those kids. We always find them a more challenging venue so that they can get stronger and more autonomous as American citizens.

Jenny: *We should talk about the sign, the petition, and meeting with the county, when we were down at the Capitol, who helped us, who we need to work on too.*  
Rachel: *And maybe talk just about how this has influenced us or something like that, like how exciting it was to go on the floor of the ... to get recognized on the floor of the House.*  
Jenny: *Yeah.*  
Rachel: *There's so much to talk about, because we did a lot.*  
Rachel: *We signed the petition.*  
Jenny: *Should we talk about how the legislature only has a week left?*  
Rachel: *And we'll kind of maybe end with that, because that will like ... a plea to action, and stuff like that.*  
Jenny: *Yeah, to help them. Should we give them some ideas of what they could do to help?*  
Rachel: *Yeah, that's when we kind of ask them to do stuff and help us and get involved.*

### **Activity Four: Presentations Rehearsal**

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BM: *Okay, so everybody have their assessment forms? If you would, we're interested in constructive feedback that will help these guys tighten up their presentation for tonight's delivery live on cable to the entire community, in front of their parents, their grandparents, their few friends, and the Mayor, okay? So go for it.*

#### L3: Riverfest Project

Joel: *For our project we are trying to bring the historic sense of Anoka back to the river. Because Anoka is based upon the Rum River and the Mississippi River and the mouth of the Rum where it meets the Mississippi is located in Anoka, so that's a unique positive attribute for Anoka's history. And um, recently, in the past five years, Anoka has held a Riverfest event, but it's not something totally new. One of our ideas is a canoe race, which actually dates back to about the 1930s or 40s.*

BM: *What's neat about our curriculum here is we challenge them. We say, hey, these are some of the issues changing your community. Which one do you care about? And then we stop, and that's a critical juncture, because the curriculum doesn't move forward until they start to show us what they care about. The kids elected these once they understood that the whole community needed their help. And so, a lot of our culture is gearing these kids to be passive consumers. Our program is gearing them to be civically [ph.] engaged, and we expect them to show us the creative courage that America actually needs to deal with some of these huge environmental health and economic issues.*

BM: *Okay, we've got the Rail Team, ready to rock. They've been very busy, very successful.*

#### L3: Commuter Rail Project

Jenny: *Okay, the North Star Corridor is the commuter rail that would run for 82 miles, and it would start in Rice [ph.] and then stop in St. Cloud, and then stop in Minneapolis again. And they decided to put the commuter rail in this area because this is one of the fastest growing areas in our state, and it's also would run on already existing tracks.*

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*Rachel: Basically what our project was, was to go around the community and kind of get people involved, to get this passed. Congress has another week to decide whether to appropriate money for this, in either the bonding bill, or in a transportation bill and hopefully we'll get money in both of these. Basically what we did as a group, we went down to the Capitol one Thursday a couple weeks ago, and lobbied. We lobbied with ...*

*Rachel: I was talking about this kind of thing with my grandparents about how if you don't get involved, you really can't complain about anything. And it kind of ties back into that where if you don't have positive passion and positive influences on your community, then nothing good will ever come of it. So, I really feel that what we've been doing is kind of ... kind of influencing our community in a better way, and just showing people that there are options, even if you don't like what's going on. So to be able to influence people that way is really exciting, and I like it. I get kind of a warm fuzzy feeling inside.*

### **Archival: Newspaper Sequence #2 starting with group photo and going to headline**

*Rachel: I think, I don't know if we made quite a difference when we went down there. At the least we came, we kinda saw and got involved with the government. Another, thing that we did was we built a big billboard in Highway 10, and what we said was, with 169 being down to one lane each way, we really should just put it there, because people are stopped there from three to six thirty in the evening and getting angry at sitting there. So, if we can get to them, and have them kind of have some solutions to get rid of their anger and give them phone numbers to call. And basically what we want in presenting to all of you guys is to get involved so that we can get the \$147 million in federal money for the North Star Corridor, and just think it, because it's really important.*

*Jenny: Yeah, we only have about a week left, or a little less than a week, before our legislature decides on whether or not this is going to be funded. They'd have to*

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*compromise on the bonding bill and whether or not this will be in it. So all the support that we can get right now is really important.*

BM: *Of the day that you guys spent at the State Capitol, you set up headquarters in the Senate Majority's Office, I know. Did you get treated well and respectfully by the people who you were specifically trained to target for your lobbying?*

Jenny: *Well actually, I don't know if we were respected, because they seemed to treat us kind of like maybe we were their grandchildren. They were really nice and polite, but I don't know how much they listened to us, because a lot of it was kind of talking over us, and just smiling at us and just kind of, like I said, treating us kind of like kids.*

*But you know what? I think that we made our point by just going down and showing that we cared about the situation, and that we were young people caring about the situation, so they were probably pretty surprised, just that we showed up.*

BM: *So in one nine week period, actually this will be the sixth week on this project, they have worked with state legislative leaders, county chair of the commission, and the Anoka City Mayor. So that's just awesome. Okay, let's give them a hand. Okay. Now, on your assessment, give them some constructive feedback. Now, don't tell them they looked good, tell them something that will make it better for tonight's delivery, and then hand it directly to somebody on the team so that they could do something about it before five o'clock tonight. Okay.*

*John and Andy, go for it. Keep in mind the presentations are a max of 10 minutes, with maybe three to five minutes of questions and answers from the City Council.*

### **L3 River Clean-Up Project**

John: *Okay basically our project is the Schwartzman company site that's located on highway 47 adjacent to the Rum River. Why we chose to do this because the Rum River is a great asset to our community, and we're hoping that we can do something to help keep it in good condition that it is. The origin of the pollution can basically be traced back to 1999 when a metal shredder was installed there.*

John: *He's more the speaking type. He can kind of rattle off stuff, and I'm more of the researcher kind of guy. And I know the facts a little bit. And that*

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works really well because we both can use our strengths. He can fill in where I'm not as good, and I can fill in where he's not as good.

*John: We just want to make sure the PCBs that are there in the fluff get removed and shipped off somewhere else, because we don't want them running into our river with the rainfall.*

*Andy: Do you have a map of the site and we have extras of these we'll hand out, this is kind of a site here. This is the Rum, you know, if you look at it here, you've got the Rum River here. They have a burm, a fluff, you know, a burm is just basically you just ... the fluff piled up. It's piled up halfway around the site, and this material has tested hazardous, meaning it has over 50 parts per million. And, so I mean, it is a hazardous material, and as well as beneath the surface it also has hazardous material in the ground.*

*The immediate danger is the surface pollution, because if the PCB gets into the river, it's going to be a real big mess, because the Rum River is connected to the Mississippi River, and that can cause problems for basically the whole habitat of both rivers. And the habitat can affect humans as well, because if we eat the fish out of the rivers, that's going to affect humans.*

*So this could be a very large problem if we let it get out of hand. So, that's our reaction is to act as soon as we can, and take care of this problem before it gets too late, and we basically wreck our river, so ...*

*John: Another thing is that our goal isn't to put Schwartzman out of business, it's just to save our river and make sure that it can be used for future generations down the line.*

*Mittlefehlt: If I'm on the city council I'm thinking, what do you want the city to do? Where's the closure piece for why are you presenting to the city council tonight?*

*Andy: What we're looking for the city to do is kind of work with the state as well, to have Schwartzman act, to have basically the ... if he's not willing to do it on his own, to force him to act and clean this up, clean this mess up before it does affect us personally and the river.*

*The money should come from Schwartzman. If he's ... if that company is the one that put it there, then they're the ones that are held liable to put it there, or to take it away. We're not attacking him as we said, but if he made the mistake, then we feel it's his duty to ... the duty to us as a community and everybody along the river that uses the river to remove this before it does become a huge problem.*

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*John: If Schwartzman doesn't have the money to do it, there is an emergency cleanup fund that the Pollution Control Agency has available to them, so if that doesn't work out, we have some money available, so there is a way to get it cleaned up so we can preserve our river and not make Anoka look like the, you know, that we're polluting the river for everyone else in the state.*

*Andy: We're kind of speaking on behalf of us and future generations, because our generation as well as our sons and daughters and down the line as well, they want to be able to use the river, and you know, both rivers, we want to be able to use it as a resource, you know, fun, fishing and what not, what we can do in there. So we want to preserve it and keep it for future generations.*

*BM: Good. Give them a hand. Nice job. That was good. All right. I like that. That's the most forceful part of your message, is you guys are speaking on behalf of the future generations who want to enjoy that beautiful river. So that will be a great conclusion. I like the way you did that Andy. That was super.*  
*Okay, why don't you guys finish filling out the assessments, and hand them to those kids whose team you evaluated. All right, see you tonight. If you're presenting, be there by 4:45. If you have any technology you better be there by 4:30.*

*FS: Is there anywhere I could go get my pictures blown up? That's what all the reactions were basically show the maps more, and show them so we can see them.*

*BM: Your black and whites I saw, I can turn those into transparencies. Do you want.*

*John: Hopefully tonight the City Council will be receptive to our idea. I'm expecting that they fire a lot of questions at us, but hopefully we can answer those with ease, and look like we know what we're talking about, and we really know the problem, and we know how to solve it.*

### **Activity Five: Presentations to the Community**

*BM: When our kids present tonight at the Anoka City Council, what you're going to see is like free consulting, from fresh brains that haven't been colored by cynicism, and it's uplifting, quite frankly.*

*Skogquist: Ready for your presentations tonight?*

*Andy: Definitely.*

*Skogquist: What are you presenting on in particular?*

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*John: On the Schwartzman site, next to the rum river.*  
*Skogquist: Making recommendations to us or ...*  
*BM: You can say [unint.] like the air, water, land [unint.] ...*  
*Rachel: I've got three more buttons.*  
*Skogquist: Welcome this May 14<sup>th</sup> special meeting of the Anoka City Council held at 5 o'clock p.m.*

### L3: Bjorn Skogquist Mayor of Anoka

*Bjorn: I'm a very young mayor. I'm only 23 years old, and so I graduated from high school about six years ago in 1996. And when I was a junior I presented a project about prairie restoration. When I was a senior I presented a project about restoring an amphitheater that's about two blocks from the City Hall here. It's been one of the things that has shaped who I am.*

*Bjorn: ... and we'll get started with the presentations. Mr. Mittlefehldt?*  
*BM: Thank you Mayor Skoquist [ph.]. And thank you especially to the City Council who have taken time out of your busy agenda to have a special meeting for this occasion. I'm excited because as the mayor said, this is our 12<sup>th</sup> year of assembling a lot of civic talent, and I think especially this year, there's a lot of interest in America. How do you get today's kids involved in the community? How do you involve them in the civic process?*  
*And I'm really delighted that the City Council and the community partners and parents have taken the time to nurture these really talented kids. And there's an old story about Thomas Jefferson and Ben Franklin. Right after completing the Constitution, it was Franklin who was leaving the Governor's Hall, and somebody asked him from the street as he was walking down the steps, what kind of government did you give us, Mr. Franklin? And he turned and Raleigh said, we gave you a republic, if you can keep it.*

*And I think the idea he had in mind was, this was a new invention, an American republic where everybody assumes responsibility for making the government work, and everybody assumes responsibility for being informed. And that's what*



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*I think you're going to see tonight, and I know all of you have help some of the teams that are here, so ahead of time, I'd like to thank you very much for that. One of the things that we do at Anoka High School and in the state of Minnesota is we involve community partners in assessing the learning progress of our students. So we have here a rubric for monitoring how well our kids are doing in terms of civic development.*

*And in the course of the evening, whenever you are moved, we ask you to fill out one of these student assessments. And then I ask that you either give it back to me, or hand them to the students when we break to our informal time, okay? And this seriously is going to be part of the assessment we use on the kids learning about civic and public processes.*

Andy: *How you doing, I'm Andy Crowchalk [ph.] ...*

John: *And I am John Trickstead [ph.].*

John: *Our project basically focused on the Schwartzman site that's adjacent to the Rum River, off of highway 47. Um, what we found is that it's really polluted and on the ground and in the ground, so our focus is getting rid of some of that stuff before runoff takes it into the river, pollutes the Rum River, and gets to the Mississippi. Um, the origin of the pollution was basically in 1999 when a metal shredder was installed and what that produces is ...*

Skogquist: *It's meaningful to me, because I was part of the process about five years ago. I actually believe in it. I think that it's something that's valuable. I think it gives students a sense of ownership of their community. Not too many people would conceive of an idea, work through the potential problems and the potential benefits, and then actually find somebody who can do something about it.*

*And I think it's encouraging both to the community and the students to say hey, come and tell the City Council about it, somebody that can do something, someone that might actually implement your idea for you, and make the community a better place.*

Andy: *I guess our main goal is, we're not here to point fingers and say, you know, Schwartzman, you did bad. You know, we're not here to say that. We're here to say, we have a problem, let's do something about it, before, you know, before we hurt our rivers.*

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*And that's kind of what we're here to propose, is we've been working with MCPA and a gentleman down there, and our plan is to first remove the fluff from the surface, and the estimated cost is \$2 million.*

*I think we speak for our generation as well as future generations. We have memories of the river, and that's something that's important to our community. Our river is beautiful and we have an awesome dam, and you know, lights, looks real good at night when it's all lit up, and we have excellent fishing on there, and we have ... I mean, have memories when I was a kid, I'm sure if you have memories of being there too as well. I mean, we have to do something before we get PCBs in there. I mean, that's a big problem. If we get the fish infested with PCB, you know, [unint.] right up the chain here.*

*And I would like to have my children and their children be able to enjoy the river. And other groups are talking about bringing restaurants in and using a trail to bring people here. I mean, honestly, who is going to want to come here if we have, you know, PCBs in the water, you know? This is going to be a big problem. And basically our goal is to say it's ... let's get in gear and do something about this. Let's remove it before it does become a problem. And that's what we're kind of asking you is to help work with MCPA and the Schwartzman company to remove the stuff before it is a big problem.*

Skogquist: *If the PCBs are in the soil, what is the action that would need to be taken to remove those chemicals from the earth?*

John: *We asked Jeff Connell [ph.] that, and his description that it's virtually impossible to get all of it out. Basically the only way to do it is dig it up and ship it off, you know, that's really the only way to get it ... all of it out of there.*

Weaver: *It's going to be a very costly operation. Who will pay for that remedy?*

John: *If Schwartzman can't cover all of it, the MCPA said there was an emergency cleanup fund that could fund a little bit of that, to clean up the site initially, that's in immediate danger. After that, it would either be the city or the county or the state that would be held accountable for that, if Schwartzman can't cover it.*

Skogquist: *Council members, and further questions you have? Thank you very much for bringing this to our attention. [Applause]*

Jenny: *The North Star Corridor is a commuter rail that would run for a stretch of 82 miles, and it would run around 80 miles an hour, and it would have stops between like 45 seconds and a minute for people to get on and off, so it would be a lot quicker to get to work, you wouldn't have to deal with stop lights, stop and go traffic, and it would help to relieve some of the congestion on our areas ... our*

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*area roads right now, which are ... it's becoming worse by the day, because we're supposed to ... we're predicted to be one of the best scoring communities in the state of Minnesota.*

*And to get started, we decided to do a petition at school. And we sat outside our lunch area for about an hour and a half, and we got over 400 signatures. And we thought this would be good to get it rolling, because we were going to go down to the Capitol the next day and lobby it. And Rachel will tell you a little bit about that.*

Rachel: *We had a pretty exciting day that Thursday lobbying down with Jeff Dealer [ph.]. We went down there, armed with our information that we had gotten from the county and just kind of discussed and maybe argued a little bit about why we need this, and why Anoka needs this.*

Rachel: *We presented our petition to Steve Sweetum on the floor of the House, in front of everybody. And basically the situation in the House and Senate right now is the Senate has already appropriated money for it, um, the North Star Corridor, and all we're stuck on is the House. We need to convince some of the House members that money is needed for this, for transit. We have the governor on our side. We have the Senate on our side. We just need some of the House members to come and see a little bit of reason.*

*Besides the petition and going down and lobbying at the Capitol, we've also done editorials to St. Paul Pioneer Press and also to the Star Tribune.*

Jenny: *One other thing that we did, when we decided we would make kind of a billboard, and we actually built it. And Paul Pierce [ph.] said that we could put it on his property. So we went out there eight o'clock on a Saturday morning, and we got all of our stuff, and it was cold and we built it.*

*But it turned out really nice, thanks to Paul Pierce, and the mayor showed up and helped us. And we put it up, and hopefully a lot of people are seeing that because of the situation on the Champlin Bridge [ph.].*

Rachel: *Basically what we're asking for you and for all the people sitting here or listening at home, is to get involved and contact the governor or Representative Navlack [ph.] or also Steve Sweetum, just because we do need numbers, and numbers just saying that they support this. With over 80% of the people up and down the corridor, in support of this, I don't understand why people haven't gotten involved already.*

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*And so we're just trying to get a little push in that direction. And if we don't do something soon, we're going to lose \$147 million in federal money to go towards the commuter rail. So, we're just looking for everybody's support.*

Skogquist: *Rachel, you don't mind if I ask you a couple of questions about the North Star just to test your knowledge, do you?*

Rachel: *No, I'm perfectly fine with that.*

Skogquist: *Okay, Bill is shaking his head yes, that's a good thing. Would you characterize the rail as a subsidy or as an investment?*

Rachel: *I actually think it's quite an investment, because it will be running along the rails that are already there, so it won't disrupt anymore houses than normal trains do ...*

Skogquist: *And I think it's very important for the students to take their project and gauge it to a real world response. What are our responses to their projects? And it's a non-threatening way for them to hear what, you know, responses are to some of their proposals and ideas, so that they know what the government is all about.*

Sko: *For 80 miles of roadway investment, did you remember what the number was that was thrown out?*

Rachel: *Some of the opposition wants to put in such things as kind of private bus ways, which means a road along the highways that we currently have, which would just have for busses. And that cost is actually \$10 million per mile.*

Skogquist: *So the private bus line is about \$800 million. The highway improvements are about \$500 million, and the North Star Rail is about \$120 million.*

Rachel: *One hundred and twenty million, correct.*

Skogquist: *Thank you, you really know your stuff. Great. Congratulations. Council members, any comments or questions you have?*

Wiesel: *All one has to do is look at Highway 10 and 169 today, and you can draw your own conclusions. So I commend you, good work.*

Rachel: *And the Minneapolis corridor here is actually the second most congested area in the whole country, next to Atlanta. So that's not saying very good stuff, but we do have this great opportunity to get \$147 million from the government to help this. So I really think that we need to take it up on it.*

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- MS: *If you can give out those numbers for as pleas for Steve Sweetum [ph.] and Mr. Navlack [ph.] that would be really helpful.*
- Skogquist: *Way to put them on the spot.*
- MS: *Uh huh.*
- Rachel: *That's okay. The more people that can get involved, the better. The website for it is www. ...*
- Skogquist: *We've gotten away from civics in education. Students don't necessarily have an opportunity to be involved, and I think it's very important to give them that in their education. Otherwise they walk through the adolescent years of their life, not knowing what civics is, or why they're important, and why they need to be involved.*  
*And I think these presentations give the students a chance to see there is a need for my opinion, there is a need for my helping hand, there is a need for my ideas.*
- Rachel: *And so, the more people that can get involved, and the more people that we can influence by getting out into the community, and kind of getting down and just showing that we do care about what happens here. And it's just too practical not to do.*
- Skogquist: *Council members, do you have any questions or comments? Thanks ladies.*  
*[applause]*
- BM: *Well, we're wrapping things up tonight, but I hope you can see all the possibilities, because if you weave each one of these student presentations to the next one, you see a new Anoka emerging. The city staff has been great, the City Council has been wonderful, and I think it takes a team of elders to raise another crop of caring, committed citizens. So thanks so much.*  
*You have your evaluation forms, your rubrics. Either hand those directly to the kids, or somebody on the team, or get them back to me, and then, we'll break for the treats. And we're even on schedule tonight. So, this is better than average. Thank you, Mr. Mayor.*
- Andy: *It gave us an opportunity to come to the Council and tell what we felt, and you know, they listened to us, and it kind of makes you feel like you have a little more power in the community.*

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Jenny: I think it was really good, because it shows that anybody can get involved, if they just take the time, and if they want to put forth the effort, and they can change things. And it shows that we actually do have the power to change some things, that not everything is run by people that we elect, that we really don't know anything about, that we can meet them, and they're just like us.

BM: So it's really rewarding for me, because I've been around for so long, to see what these kids do, when you give them a chance. And it's that giving a chance that I think is part of that American Republic idea, that we can do a lot more together if we pause and listen to each other, if we construct something together. And I'm going to remember it with pride and civic feeling for a long time.

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