



April 17, 2020

Adrian Barr
Managing Attorney
Prairie State Legal Services
201 W. Olive St.
Bloomington, IL 6170

Dear Mr. Barr;

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this letter of recommendation for Emily Petri. The West Bloomington Revitalization Project (WBRP) is a small grassroots nonprofit serving the Westside neighborhood of Bloomington. Ours is a working Board that requires everyone to offer their talents, time, and treasure. Emily joined the Board of Directors this year and has already made substantive contributions to our mission:

Reviewing the Tool Library membership form and the waiver to use the in-house workshop. Loaning large power tools to strangers has risk and Emily provided excellent guidance to the board. Her legal expertise is a voice of reason. She has found a way to help the board consider the right balance of serving the community and protecting the organization. Important changes were made based on her input.

Providing referrals for Westside families facing housing insecurity. Through our programs we interface with individuals that present with one need (buy a low-cost bike from the co-op) and then we find that there is a deeper need (can't afford car repairs because of rent increase). Emily's experience serving low-income and high-need families makes her a wealth of knowledge. She also has deep compassion for the families we serve and understands the multifaceted social issues they face.

Support during COVID-19. Our board has met regularly since the shelter-in-place order was instituted. We know families are facing concerns over unemployment, stimulus checks, and food insecurity. Because of her work at Prairie State, she is truly on the frontline of the epidemic and knows much more than others on the board. Emily is going to host a Facebook Live event for our neighborhood so our neighbors can ask questions and get answers.

Emily has elevated the board. She asks important questions, reframes strategic questions about our services, and has helped to establish a foundation under our programs while positioning us for the future. We are grateful for her service and her leadership.

Sincerely yours,
Deborah Halperin
President, WBRP Board of Directors
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