

River Place
A Future Arts, Culture and Event Center
Warroad, Minnesota

**WARROAD WILL BE HOME TO RIVER PLACE – A NEW ARTS, CULTURE AND EVENT CENTER
ANNOUNCES ITS FIRST EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
September 19, 2022**

Inspired by a purpose-driven mission, River Place will become a welcoming place for everyone and a way of life that will promote inspired living through creative expression, art education, human connectedness, and appreciation for beauty throughout the entire Warroad area community. The new River Place facility will be built in the greenspace lot along the banks of the Warroad River along Highway 11 and targeted for completion spring of 2024.

In October 2021, a strong and strategic Board of Directors was formed to guide and govern River Place, a 501C3 non-profit organization. The Board felt it was paramount to recruit an experienced Executive Director to see that this mission comes to life, to engage with the community and to establish a strong operational and programming plan.

It is with great pleasure for the River Place Board of Directors to announce that the organization's first ever Executive Director will be John Davis.



John is the founder and former Executive Director of Lanesboro Arts in Lanesboro, Minnesota. His work with the Lanesboro Arts Campus Initiative resulted in its selection as one of the Top 12 Small Town Artplaces in America and a Community Innovation Award from the Bush Foundation. Shortly after, the City Council of Lanesboro passed a unanimous resolution proclaiming

that “the entire community be designated as an Arts Campus”—becoming the first small town in the United States to make such a proclamation.

Prior to his work in Lanesboro, John founded and was the first Executive Director for New York Mills Arts (Minnesota) Retreat and Cultural Center. His innovative work in New York Mills has been recognized as a national model for rural economic development in the arts, and New York Mills was twice recognized as one of the top 100 small arts towns in America. At New York Mills, John also created the Great American Think-Off philosophy competition and the Kids Philosophy Slam program, both of which continue to this day.

John is passionate about small town America and has devoted his life to helping rural communities transform themselves into arts and culture champions. He has been a Bush Fellow as well as a Senior Policy Fellow with the Rural Policy Research Institute. Mr. Davis is also a

national Resource Team member with the National Endowment for the Arts' *Our Town Program*, helping rural communities use arts and creativity to solve local challenges and drive sustainable economic development. John is a national speaker on rural arts issues, and his work has been featured on National Public Radio and broadcast on C-SPAN. John has also been featured in USA Today, The New York Times, and the NBC Today Show.

The River Place Human Resources Committee was very impressed with John throughout the interview process. Board Chair, Paul Marvin said, "The Human Resources Committee exceeded expectations and identified a well-respected and seasoned Executive Director. John Davis brings a depth of experience that we never could have imagined. With John's expertise, River Place will be off to an excellent start and he is fully endorsed by our Board of Directors."

John will officially begin his role as Executive Director on September 19th. Upon learning about his appointment Davis said, "I am honored to have been selected as the first Executive Director of River Place in Warroad. I am very excited to be a part of this big vision for arts, culture, community engagement and growth."

For more information about River Place Contact:

Brenda Baumann, River Place Board President
brendab@marvin.com or 218.452.1153

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