

## Minutes of the

### SPECIAL MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Wednesday, August 10, 2016

#### Committee Members Present:

Dean Johnston, Robert Moeller, Sarah Hietpas, Bill Weber, Rachel Gillespie, and Michael Kopp

**Committee Members Absent:** Todd Kemery, Rick Theisen, Anthony Taylor, and Wendy Wulff, Council Liaison

#### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Johnston called the special meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:15 p.m. on Wednesday, August 10, 2016.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Johnston requested an amendment to the August 10, 2016 Agenda moving the Public Invitation to be heard after the Business portion of the meeting so that the Commission ensures a quorum to conduct business. Moeller motioned and it was seconded by Weber to approve the amended August 10, 2016 agenda. **Motion carried.**

Chair Johnston asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the June 7, 2016 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Weber motioned and it was seconded by Hietpas to approve the minutes. **Motion carried.**

Chair Johnston asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the July 5, 2016 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. Kopp motioned and it was seconded by Moeller to approve the minutes. **Motion carried.**

#### BUSINESS

**2016-157, Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment, Carver County** - Michael Peterka, Parks Planner

Peterka presented the request from Carver County to amend the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan as outlined in the materials provided.

It was motioned by Moeller and it was seconded by Weber to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Southwest Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment to extend the eastern trail terminus by 0.75 miles as shown in Appendix A.
2. Require that Carver County submit a wayfinding signage plan for the entire Southwest Regional Trail Corridor in a forthcoming master plan amendment for the regional trail.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

**2016-158, Grant Agreement, Lebanon Hills Regional Park, Dakota County**, - Tori Dupre, Senior Parks Planner

Dupre gave a presentation on the request from Dakota County for a grant for Lebanon Hills Regional Park for the proposed project outlined in the staff report provided.

Hietpas asked about Attachment 2, the McDonough Lake Trail map, and whether it showed the three alignments discussed.

Steve Sullivan, Dakota County Parks confirmed and stated that the three options for trail construction were brought to the Dakota County Board and they chose the one with the least impacts to the natural resources.

Hietpas clarified that a portion of the trail will be paved and a portion will be boardwalk. Sullivan confirmed.

Weber asked if this is the project where a special Citizen's Advisory Committee was appointed to review the proposed options. Sullivan stated yes and noted that they established the priorities.

Weber asked if this recommendation is consistent with the Board (noting the emails/letters provided prior to the meeting). Sullivan stated that yes, this is consistent with the Dakota County Board.

Weber asked if salt will be used to clean the trails in the winter. Sullivan responded that this is not their preferred method, but could not say it would never be used. He described salt as a 'last measure'.

Catherine Zimmer, Women Observing Wildlife Minnesota discussed the comments that she submitted. She appreciated the clarification that a portion of the trail would be a boardwalk instead of paved trails. She discussed issues around salt and noted that she has visited the park in the winter and feels that salt is used copiously and generously. She clarified that the information she provided in her written comments regarding salt came from the MPCA. She requested that comments from commissioners and staff be foot-noted to show where their information comes from.

Chair Johnston asked Dupre to read aloud the letter from Maryann Passe, Wilderness in the City as Ms. Passe was not present.

Chair Johnston then asked Dupre to read Todd Kemery's emailed comments aloud. Mr. Kemery was unable to attend the Committee Meeting.

It was motion by Weber and seconded by Kopp to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant in the amount of \$51,000 to Dakota County to complete an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)compliant paved loop trail and site improvements around McDonough Lake and natural resource improvements associated with the project, at Lebanon Hills Regional Park; and
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant on behalf of the Council.

Chair Johnston noted that it is not clear where maintenance falls within a Master Plan. Sullivan stated that there are certain requirements for the Master Plan but it typically does not outline maintenance practices specifically. He discussed their practices used. He noted that while the Metropolitan Council is an overseeing body, Dakota County oversees operations.

Dupre discussed the requirements within the 2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan and requirements of the Master Plan. She discussed funding available for maintenance projects.

Moeller stated he is sympathetic to the environmental issues/concerns but has never know this body to oversee maintenance procedures.

Jan Youngquist stated that we require the Master Plan to estimate maintenance costs but do not oversee the fine details of how it is conducted. She stated this is the role of the implementing agencies.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

### **2016-159, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Rush Creek Regional Trail (Becklin), Three Rivers Park District - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Finance Planner**

Jensen gave a presentation on the request from Three Rivers Park District for an acquisition opportunity fund grant for Rush Creek Regional Trail (Becklin) outlined in the materials provided.

It was motioned by Hietpas and seconded by Gillespie to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$50,947 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire the Becklin parcel at 10510 Holly Lane North in Maple Grove for the Rush Creek Regional Trail;
2. Advise Three Rivers Park District that demolition costs may not be paid from Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund dollars and that it may not close on the property until after the Council awards the grant;
3. Consider reimbursing Three Rivers Park District up to \$16,982 from its share of a future Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program for its 25% local match for this acquisition;
4. Inform Three Rivers Park District that the Council does not under circumstances represent or guarantee that reimbursement will be granted, and expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimbursement; and
5. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

**2016-160, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Rush Creek Regional Trail (Enclave/Segal), Three Rivers Park District** - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Finance Planner

Jensen gave a presentation on the request from Three Rivers Park District for an acquisition opportunity fund grant for Rush Creek Regional Trail (Enclave/Segal) outlined in the materials provided.

It was motioned by Weber and seconded by Moeller to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$286,578 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire the Enclave/Segal parcel at 15406 Territorial Road in Maple Grove ("Outlot B") for the Rush Creek Regional Trail;
2. Advise Three Rivers Park District that it may not close on the property until after the Council has awarded the grant; and
3. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

**2016-161, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail (Edina Manor), Three Rivers Park District** - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Finance Planner

Jensen gave a presentation on the request from Three Rivers Park District for an acquisition opportunity fund grant for Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail (Edina Manor) outlined in the materials provided.

Kopp clarified easement was acquired through eminent domain. Jensen confirmed.

It was motion by Gillespie and seconded by Weber to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$176,734 to reimburse Three Rivers Park District for their acquisition via condemnation of a permanent 4,919-square foot easement at 5400 70<sup>th</sup> Street West for the Nine Mile Creek Regional Trail; and
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Weber commented on the condemnation process and noted that it was important to recognize that this action is one of last resort.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

**2016-162, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grant for Big Marine Regional Park (Frogner), Washington County - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Finance Planner**

Jensen gave a presentation on the request from Washington County for an acquisition opportunity fund grant for Big Marine Regional Park (Frogner) outlined in the materials provided.

Moeller asked whether or not houses could be moved to be used elsewhere.

Sharon Price, Washington County stated that in this case the house would not be re-purposed as it is in disrepair.

Mullin appreciated the comment however noted that the Council is not in the business of moving houses.

Hietpas suggested that the County could offer it up for free and the person taking the home could pay to have it moved. Jensen noted that our Regional Parks Policy Plan does not have any language regarding moving houses.

Moeller stated that he feels we have an obligation to ask if repurposing is a viable option.

Johnston agreed with the intention but disagrees with it being a role of this body.

Youngquist noted that the Regional Parks Policy Plan lists eligible expenses and this is not an eligible expense.

Weber suggested that we add it to the comments.

Gillespie appreciated the concern but discussed how at times costs to move a house often exceed the value of the structure.

Moeller reiterated that he feels it is worth asking the County to consider. Johnston stated that it appears that Washington County has already done this.

It was motioned by Hietpas and seconded by Kopp to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$237,892 to Washington County to acquire the Frogner parcel at 15770 May Avenue North for Big Marine Park Reserve;
2. Advise Washington County that it may not close on the property until after the Council awards the grant; and
3. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Moeller asked if it is appropriate to add an amendment to ask Washington County to use the amount of money appropriated for demolition to be used towards having the house repurposed. Johnston stated he did not feel it was necessary.

Mullin stated that the money for demolition could not be re-applied to another use. Moeller withdrew his suggestion.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

**2016-136, Final Annual Metropolitan Regional Parks Operations and Maintenance Allocation to the Regional Park Implementing Agencies - Deb Jensen, Senior Parks Finance Planner**

Jensen gave a presentation with the final numbers for the Final Annual Metro Regional Parks Operations and Maintenance allocation to the Regional Park Implementing Agencies as outlined in the materials provided.

Moeller pointed out an error in the report with Scott County's numbers, as it was reversed with Three Rivers numbers. Jensen stated a correction would be made before it was presented to the Community Development Committee and the Council.

It was motioned by Moeller, with the correction made as noted, and seconded by Hietpas to recommend that the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission report to the Metropolitan Council the distribution of state fiscal year 2017 operation and maintenance funds for the regional parks system.

Chair Johnston called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

## **PUBLIC INVITATION**

Chair Johnston asked if there was anyone in the audience that would like to speak on matters not on the agenda. No one came forward.

## **INFORMATION**

**Annual Use Estimate of the Regional Parks System for 2015** (Raintry Salk, Parks Research Analyst

Salk shared the results of the annual use estimates and gave background on how/why the estimates are done. She noted there were 47,328,887 visits last year.

Weber asked if future counts will give us a better understanding of equity considerations. Salk stated the will not, these are just 'body' counts. She noted that the Visitor Use Survey would provide this information.

## **REPORTS**

**Chair** – Chair Johnston announced that his second great grandchild was recently born and he brought it to this Commission's attention because his name is Emmett.

**Commissioners** – None.

**Staff** – Mullin thanked members for agreeing to change the meeting date.

Mullin discussed how today's acquisition requests that used Environment and Natural Resource Fund dollars was significant, and recognized the good work done by staff.

Next meeting will be in Carver County. More info to follow.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

5:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle  
Recording Secretary