

## Minutes of the Meeting of the

### METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Thursday, December 2, 2021

**Committee Members Present:** Assata Brown, Cecily Harris, Monica Dillenburg, Robert Moeller, Todd Kemery, Tony Yarusso, Cana Yang, Jeremy Peichel, and Susan Vento, liaison to the Council

**Committee Members Absent:** Anthony Taylor

#### CALL TO ORDER

The Recording Secretary did a roll call for a quorum.

Present – 8 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Kemery, Moeller, Peichel, Yang, Yarusso)

Absent – 1 (Taylor)

With a quorum being present via WebEx, Commission Chair Yarusso called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:04 p.m. on Thursday, December 2, 2021.

#### APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso asked for a consensus to approve the December 2, 2021, Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission agenda. The agenda was approved by consensus.

Next, Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the November 4, 2021, minutes. Moeller motioned, and it was seconded by Dillenburg to approve the November 4, 2021, minutes of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting.

The Recording Secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 8 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Kemery, Moeller, Peichel, Yang, Yarusso)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

**The motion was approved.**

#### PUBLIC INVITATION

Chair Yarusso stated that no one pre-registered to speak today. As a reminder, if you wish to offer public comment at a virtual meeting, please pre-register by emailing [public.info@metc.state.mn.us](mailto:public.info@metc.state.mn.us). You may also send us your comments by email.

#### BUSINESS

##### **2021-342 Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail (Fort Snelling State Park segment) Master Plan Amendment, Dakota County** – Colin Kelly, Planning Analyst and Chee Yang, Parks Planner

Kelly and Yang gave a presentation on the Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan submitted by Dakota County as outlined in the materials provided.

A motion was made by Dillenburg and seconded by Harris to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve Dakota County's Minnesota River Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan Amendment for the Fort Snelling State Park segment.
2. Require Dakota County to send preliminary plans to the Metropolitan Council's Environmental Services Interceptor Engineering Assistant Manager prior to initiating any new development of the regional trail corridor.

Moeller expressed support for the proposal and asked if there are any equity issues or concerns about indigenous artifacts that arose during the planning process. Kurt Chatfield, Dakota County responded that they have prepared an interpretive plan and are working with the Native American Leaders, so they are actively engaged with that community.

Moeller asked, are there any issues with construction, i.e., impacts to burial grounds, etc.? Chatfield stated they are aware of the presence of sacred sites in the vicinity of the planned trail and are actively planning to avoid any impacts with the proposed alignment.

Chair Yarusso asked if there is any concern about flooding? Chatfield responded that Dakota County is planning for this area to flood on occasion and are designing the trail and amenities accordingly.

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. The recording secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 8 (Brown, Harris, Dillenburg, Kemery, Moeller, Peichel, Yang, Yarusso)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

**The motion was approved.**

## **INFORMATION**

### **Regional Parks Bonding Program, Fiscal Year 2023 Projects and Equity Highlights, Part 1 of 2 -** Jessica Lee, Senior Parks Planner

Lee gave a presentation on the Regional Parks System Bonding Program as outlined in the materials provided. Five agencies presented their projects at this meeting and the remaining five will present in January.

Three Rivers Park District – Kelly Grissman presented the 7 projects listed in the presentation. She noted that they are focusing on taking care of existing infrastructure.

Dillenburg commented that she is particularly excited about the Mississippi Gateway Regional Park, as she uses this park and loves the work that has been done to date.

Kemery asked, are some things not ADA accessible, particularly at Lake Rebecca Park Reserve? For example, restrooms and picnic shelters? Grissman assured the Commission that all development and redevelopment will be ADA accessible.

Ramsey County Parks – Scott Yonke presented 2 projects listed in the presentation at Battle Creek and Long Lake Regional Parks. Both of these projects are to improve infrastructure – pavement upgrades.

Harris asked overall about equity measures and data behind them.

Chair Yarusso stated that the equity analysis is done at the project level and the park agencies make a general analysis based on who will benefit.

Lee stated that at this point, we are asking the agencies for highlights of their projects. There will be a more detailed equity analysis done when the actual applications are submitted.

Chair Yarusso discussed measuring the success of equity implications.

Mullin stated that the Council has developed a Parks and Trails Equity Tool, that helps agencies understand the demographic information of the populations surrounding the proposed projects.

City of St. Paul – Paul Sawyer introduced 2 projects on their bonding list outlined in the presentation provided.

Kemery stated that he appreciates Saint Paul's presentation and is excited to see the end results of this project, including improvements to park accessibility.

Anoka County – Karen Blaska introduced 4 projects outlined in the presentation provided.

There were no questions.

Washington County – Connor Schaefer introduced 3 projects outlined in the presentation provided. Kemery stated he is excited to see improvements to the play area making it more ADA accessible. Lee thanked all of the agencies for their presentations.

## REPORTS

**Chair:** Chair Yarusso noted that there is an open call for a selection committee for future members of the LCCMR on the Secretary of State’s website if anyone is interested.

**Commissioners:** None.

**Staff:** Mullin stated the Council will continue conducting our meetings virtually into the new year. He will update the Commission as decisions are made.

**Council Liaison:** Vento commended the agencies on their presentations tonight. She spoke to the wonderful assets our parks are to the Region. Also, she thanked staff and commissioners for their work.

## ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Sandi Dingle  
Recording Secretary