

Minutes

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting Date: May 4, 2023

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: 390 Robert Steet

Members Present:

Chair, Tony Yarusso,
at large

Monica Dillenburg, District A

Robert Moeller, District B

Cana Yang, District C

Tess Bouska, District D

Vacant, District E

Cecily Harris, District F

Anthony Taylor, District G

Vacant, District H

Susan Vento, Council Liaison

= present,

Call to Order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:04 p.m.

Agenda Approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. **Agenda was approved by consensus.**

Approval of Minutes

It was moved by Dillenburg, seconded by Bouska to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2023 regular meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. **Motion carried.**

Public Invitation

None.

Business

1. **2023-101:** Big Marine Park Reserve Long-Range Plan Amendment and Council Consent to Drainage Easement, Washington County (Tracey Kinney)

Kinney gave a presentation on the Big Marine Park Reserve Long-Range Amendment and Council consent for a drainage easement as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso asked about the impacts of the restrictive covenant on the park reserve. Sharon Price, Washington County stated that this area of the park is not yet open to the public. This is one of the reasons why Washington County and the Watershed District are doing this project now. The Watershed district will be monitoring the implementation of this practice.

Chair Yarusso noted that this area includes a private inholding. He clarified the price and noted that the Watershed is leading this project.

Mullin mentioned that this is a routine request, and it may be an excellent example of a candidate for our hopeful administrative approval process of minor plan amendments that the Commission discussed earlier this year.

It was moved by Harris, seconded by Bouska that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Big Marine Park Reserve long range plan amendment.
2. Consent to a drainage easement for 3.4 acres of land within Big Marine Park Reserve as illustrated in Figure 3]

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

Information

1. Equity Nudge: Regional Parks and Trails System Historical Cultural Study Update (Jessica Lee and Amanda Lovelee)

Lee and Lovelee gave a presentation on the Regional Parks and Trails System Historical Cultural Study update project as outlined in materials provided.

Bouska commented that she loves the website and is excited about the project.

Harris shared that Minnesotans of Jewish decent were subjected to similar redlining practices, noting that her family members experienced this treatment. She noted that racism comes in many forms.

Harris discussed community foundations that are looking for ways to give grants to overcome racism and social injustice. They may be a helpful future source of funding to continue these types of efforts.

Chair Yarusso expressed concern about the risk of our ability to cover the entire region, with our earlier history focusing more tightly on Saint Paul and Minneapolis. There are equity challenges across our region. We need to find ways to include these areas too.

Dillenburg discussed the desire to include current-day experiences of racism and celebration of our diverse region. She is very excited about this project.

Mullin discussed that the project team is creating a template that folks could use to tell their stories through our future historical cultural study website.

Harris discussed stories from our Hmong and Somali populations and their experiences with our park system.

Bouska expressed excitement for learning more about how people use our natural spaces today. She hoped this project could include some of these types of experiences.

Dillenburg discussed reaching out to different religions.

Reports

1. Chair

Chair Yarusso discussed reworking out agendas with consent items. More to come on this. He also noted that we have two openings on MPOSC, Districts E and H. Also, he mentioned the redistricting effort that is going on that will affect the boundaries of MPOSC.

2. Committee Members

None.

3. Council Liaison

None.

4. Staff

Mullin noted that they have a good lead on District E but still need someone for District H.

Mullin asked about moving the July 6, 2023 MPOSC meeting to July 13 due to the holiday. All members present stated that they could make the July 13, 2023 meeting. Absent members will be polled to confirm.



Mullin stated that they are hiring an associate outreach coordinator for the Parks Ambassador Program.

Mullin discussed the Phyllis Wheatly Camp in Carver County and stated that Commissioner Taylor is working to get the camp reopened. He will ask him to discuss at the next meeting.

Mullin gave a quick Legislative update.

Lee discussed the Regional Parks and Trails Equity Grant Program and stated that there will be a third round for this project with total funding available at over \$2 million.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting of May 4, 2023.

Approved this 1st day of June 2023.

Council Contact:

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