

Minutes

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting date: August 7, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Baylor Park Reserve, Carver County

Members present:

- ☒ Chair, Tony Yarusso, at large
- ☒ Monica Dillenburg, District A
- ☒ Robert Moeller, District B

- ☐ Tess Bouska, District C
- ☒ David Yakes, District D
- ☐ Chris Suerig, District E
- ☒ Cecily Harris, District F

- ☐ Anthony Taylor, District G
- ☐ Amanda Duerr, District H
- ☒ Wendy Wulff, Council Liaison
- ☐ = present, E = excused

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Metropolitan Council acknowledges that the land we currently call Minnesota and specifically the seven-county region is the ancestral homeland of the Dakota Oyate who are present and active contributors to our thriving region. As part of the Metropolitan Council's commitment to address the unresolved legacy of genocide, dispossession, and settler colonialism and the fact that government institutions, including the Metropolitan Council, benefitted economically, politically, and institutionally after the forceable removal of the Dakota Oyate, the Metropolitan Council is dedicated to instilling Land, Water, and People Commitments in regional policy. These commitments support the Dakota Oyate, the eleven federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota, Ho-Chunk Nation, and the American Indian Communities representing over 150 diverse Tribal Nations that call the seven-county region home.

Call to order

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the Special meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:03pm.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment was noted by Chair Yarusso.

Agenda approved

Committee members did not have any comments or changes to the agenda. Agenda approved.

Approval of minutes

It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Harris to approve the minutes of the July 1, 2025, Special meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. **Motion carried.**

Public invitation

None.

Business

1. **2025-195**, West Mississippi River Regional Trail, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Award (Steinke), Three Rivers Park District (Jessica Lee, 651-602-1621)

Lee gave a presentation on a request from Three Rivers Park District for an Acquisition Opportunity Fund Award for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail (Steinke property)

outlined in the materials provided.

It was moved by Dillenburg, seconded by Yakes, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$546,445 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Three Rivers Park District to reimburse for the acquisition of a 2.17-acre parcel located at 17020 Dayton River Road in Dayton, MN, for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail.
2. Authorize the Executive Director of Community Development to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Harris asked a few clarifying questions including what the status of future acquisitions are. Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District, noted that they only work with willing sellers, so it would be premature to answer that question at this time.

Harris asked why is the trail right along the road and not along the river? Vlaming stated it's conceptual, but the intent will be to have parts near the river.

Harris asked if the trail is contiguous with the Federal Mississippi River Trail. Vlaming stated that it is, but it is run by Three Rivers.

Motion carried.

2. **2025-196**, West Mississippi River Regional Trail, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Award (Lennander), Three Rivers Park District (Jessica Lee, 651-602-1621)

Lee gave a presentation on a request from Three Rivers Park District for an acquisition Opportunity Fund Award for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail (Lennander property) outlined in the materials provided.

It was moved by Dillenburg, seconded by Moeller, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$405,155 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Three Rivers Park District to acquire a 1.14-acre parcel located at 17060 Dayton River Road in Dayton, MN, for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail.
2. Authorize the Executive Director of Community Development to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Motion carried.

Information

1. Baylor Regional Park Long-Range Planning Process, Carver County (Marty Walsh and Sam Pertz, Carver County Staff)

Marty Walsh welcomed the Commission and Sam Pertz, Carver County and Candice Amberg, WSB, gave a presentation on the long-range plan process for Baylor Regional Park as outlined in the materials provided.

The Commission discussed dark skies and the potential for light ordinances to protect night sky viewing and the observatory given that the area is seeing an uptick in development.

Wulff asked about stocking the lake and asked if a fish inventory has been completed. Ambers stated that an inventory has not been completed. She noted that some visitors believe, as the fish are stocked, it isn't long before they're fished out of the lake.

Reports

1. Chair
None.
2. Committee Members



None.

3. Council Liaison

None.

4. Staff

Colin Kelly noted that the Kenilworth LRT Tunnel tour and Midtown Greenway/Cedar Lake Regional Trail ride has been rescheduled for Friday, September 12, 2:00 - 5:00 PM. Kelly noted a brief survey would be shared with the Commission after the meeting.

Thony Thao noted that Ramsey County's Tuj Lub Grand Opening has been rescheduled for Saturday, September 20, 2025, 10:00 AM -2:00 PM at Keller Regional Park. Thao said this is a great event for all, especially the Hmong community, and that he'd follow up with an email outlining the event.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:10p.m.

Tour of Baylor Regional Park

- Visit the Minnesota Astronomical Society [Eagle Lake Observatory - Minnesota Astronomical Society](#) within the park
- Visit beach facility within the park
- Visit the campground within the park

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 August 7, 2025.

Approved this 4th day of September 2025.

Council contact:

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