

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Tuesday, September 2, 2014

Committee Members Present:

Dean Johnston, Rick Theisen, William Weber, Robert Moeller, Sarah Hietpas, Anthony Taylor, Carrie Wasley

Committee Members Absent:

Barbara Schmidt, Wendy Wulff, Council Liaison

CALL TO ORDER

Following a tour of Keller Regional Park and with a quorum being present, Committee Chair Johnston called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 2, 2014.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Wasley, seconded by Weber to approve the agenda of the September 2, 2014 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Moeller, seconded by Hietpas to approve the minutes of the August 5, 2014 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. **Motion carried.**

PUBLIC INVITATION

Invitation to interested person(s) to address the Commission on matters not on the agenda.
None.

BUSINESS

Grant SG-2012-059 Scope Modification and Amendment to 2014 Park CIP Grant for Keller Regional Park as Local Match to Federal Grant for Rice Creek North Regional Trail Extension, Ramsey County – Arne Stefferud, Manager Regional Parks and Natural Resources

Stefferd presented the staff report regarding the request from Ramsey County to modify the scope of SG-2012-059 grant and amend the 2014 Park CIP grant for Keller Regional Park as local match to a Federal grant for Rice Creek North Regional Trail extension, as outlined in the materials provided.

Stefferd reviewed the proposed action and made a verbal correction to replace the word 'substitute' in the first recommendation with the word 'add'.

Theisen made the motion and it was seconded by Wasley to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve an amendment to grant agreement SG-2012-059 to change the scope (development project) to add "for professional design and engineering services, construction consultant fees and supplemental construction costs for the extension of Rice Creek North Regional Trail, from County Road H to Long Lake Regional Park, as a match to a \$1,100,000 Federal TAP grant." Also, amend the agreement end date to June 30, 2018 to match the Federal grant end date.
2. Approve an amendment to the 2014 Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program to change the \$555,000 grant to Ramsey County for Keller Regional Park to substitute "for the extension of Rice Creek North Regional Trail, from County Road H to Long Lake Regional Park, to match a \$1,100,000 Federal TAP grant."

Theisen asked, given the two projects, what is changing in total funding. Stefferud noted that all we're doing here is changing what project dollars will be used for.

Wasley asked if in the future the postponed project already be approved, because it was once approved. Stefferud explained that they will need approval for a new grant request.

Theisen clarified that additional funds would be needed in the future. Stefferud confirmed.

Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Chain of Lakes-Otter Lake Regional Trail Master Plan, Anoka County – Jan Youngquist, Planning Analyst

Youngquist gave a report regarding the request from Anoka County to approve the Chain of Lakes-Otter Lake Regional Trail Master Plan as outlined in the materials provided. She reviewed the many trail connections that would be made with the development of this regional trail.

Wasley asked if there would be adequate signage where the regional trail divides from local trails so that users know which trail they are on. Youngquist replied that the master plan does call for appropriate signage.

Taylor asked if there are any traffic counts currently for biking near this transit hub. Youngquist stated that she guesses that there aren't a lot of bikes used now as there is not good bike access. She feels this regional trail will enhance usage.

Weber noted that the master plan calls for an 8-10 foot wide path. He would prefer 10 feet as he feels it is much safer. Youngquist stated that there may be an issue of right of way in the narrower areas.

Moeller asked where the correctional facility is located. Jeff Perry, Anoka County, stated it is west near Hwy 35E on County Road 23 – about 1.5 miles away.

Weber made the motion and it was seconded by Hietpas to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Chain of Lakes-Otter Lake Regional Trail Master Plan.
2. Require that prior to initiating development of the Chain of Lakes-Otter Lake Regional Trail, preliminary plans should be sent to Metropolitan Council Environmental Services for review in order to assess the potential impacts to the regional interceptor system.

Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan Amendment and Grant Request, Minneapolis Park & Recreation Board - Jan Youngquist, Planning Analyst

Youngquist gave a presentation on the request from the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) for the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan amendment and grant request as outlined in the staff report provided.

Moeller asked if the estimated cost shown is in current dollars. Youngquist stated yes and noted that MPRB will be seeking many sources of funding, not just from the Met Council.

Weber asked about a disagreement the MPRB had with the DNR that he read about in the newspaper. Jennifer Ringold, Minneapolis Parks stated that they have state approval through the legislature to move forward on the re-creation of Halls Island and noted that they've had many discussions with the DNR.

Theisen asked why the island disappeared to begin with. Ringold responded that it was a different regulatory time and Scherer Bros. were able to fill the channel to extend their property.

Johnston asked what kind of success has there been in restoring wildlife habitats in urban environments. Adam Arvidson, Minneapolis Parks discussed the restoration process and diligent

management over time and especially in the beginning. He noted other areas where it has been done and stated that good design, engineering and management are key.

Theisen asked why this project is so important and noted that it is a lot of money. Ringold stated that MPRB looks at investments and sustaining what it currently has. She noted that there is a balance being provided. She discussed the natural resource base that this project will provide from which amenities will be built.

Theisen asked if there are other future reclamation plans along the river. Ringold stated that there are and discussed other areas and talked about a greater presentation that will be brought back to the Commission with the full Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan Update.

Moeller commented that this is pretty exciting and will provide a very nice area replacing the blight that previously existed.

Weber spoke to his approval of this project.

Taylor made the motion and it was seconded by Weber to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan Amendment.
2. Authorize a grant of \$100,000 to further the design, engineering and implementation for Hall's Island within the Above the Falls Regional Park Master Plan that is consistent with the amended 2014 Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program.
3. Inform the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board that Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funds are not eligible to be used for remediation of contaminated soils that may be exposed on the Scherer Park site as part of the creation of Hall's Island and the Mississippi River back channel.

Johnston called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

INFORMATION

None.

REPORTS

Staff: Stefferud stated the next meeting will be October 7, 2014 at Elm Creek Park Reserve with a tour at 3pm and a business meeting at 4:30pm at the Eastman Nature Center. Information will be sent out one week prior.

Youngquist noted that last Wednesday the full Council accepted the Draft Regional Parks Policy Plan and set the public hearing date.

Chair: None.

Commissioners: None.

ADJOURNMENT

5:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary