

Minutes of the

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Tuesday, September 12, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Tony Yarusso, Rick Theisen, Anthony Taylor Todd Kemery, Margie Andreason, Bob Moeller, Wendy Wulff, and Sarah Hietpas

Committee Members Absent:

Mike Kopp

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the special meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:30 p.m. on Tuesday, September 12, 2017.

WELCOME

Janye Miller, MPRB Superintendent welcomed the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission and thanked them for their time. She discussed the criticalness of finishing the Above the Falls Regional Park and how this addresses equity within the region.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the September 12, 2017 Agenda. Theisen motioned and it was seconded by Andreason to approve the agenda. The **Agenda was approved.**

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the August 8, 2017 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. It was motioned by Moeller and seconded by Kemery. The **Minutes were approved.**

PUBLIC INVITATION

None.

BUSINESS

Central Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan, Washington County – Michael Peterka, Planner

Peterka gave a presentation on the master plan submitted by Washington County for the Central Greenway Regional Trail as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso asked about requiring Washington County to submit detailed parcel information. Peterka discussed the dependence on feasible engineering for right of way.

Chair Yarusso asked, with two alignments, is only one eligible for funding – does that need to be a part of the motion. Youngquist explained that when Washington County comes in for funding the trail alignment would need to be identified at that time.

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

1. Approve the Central Greenway Regional Trail Master Plan.

2. Require Washington County to submit detailed parcel information for Metropolitan Council review and approval prior to seeking future grants for acquisition.
3. Require that prior to initiating development, Washington County send preliminary plans to Scott Dentz, Interceptor Engineer Manager at Metropolitan Council Environmental Services, so he may assess the potential impacts to the regional interceptor system.

Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Consent to Easements, Carver and Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserves, Three Rivers Park District
– Jan Youngquist, Planning Analyst

Youngquist gave a presentation on the request from Three Rivers Park District for a couple of easements at Carver and Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserves as detailed in the materials provided.

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

1. Consent to Three Rivers Park District granting an easement to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for groundwater monitoring at Carver Park Reserve as shown in Attachment 1.
2. Consent to Three Rivers Park District granting an easement to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources for groundwater monitoring at Murphy Hanrehan Park Reserve as shown in Attachment 2.
3. Require Three Rivers Park District to ensure that a Consent to Easement document executed by the Council's Regional Administrator is recorded for each easement.

Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Metropolitan Regional Parks System 2018 Capital Improvement Program – Final Review – Deb Jensen, Senior Planner Finance

Jensen gave a presentation on the final review of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System 2018 CIP as outlined in the materials provided. She noted that each implementing agency would recap their requests.

Connor Schaefer, Washington County reviewed the projects for Washington County as presented at the August 8, 2017 MPOSC Meeting.

Andreason asked is this normal to approve grants for 2020. Jensen responded it is, and noted it is a three-year grant term.

Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District asked if there were any questions regarding the four projects covered at the last meeting.

Taylor stated he feels there are programs or efforts that are ongoing that highlight equity that are not reflected in the CIP. Vlaming discussed work at Silverwood and reimbursements to essentially maintain what they have. He discussed Shingle Creek Regional Trail and bike program and working to get everyone on bikes. Regarding play area, he envisions an inclusive design. Vlaming added that Lake Minnetonka is about completing a system and will result in a connective network that benefits everybody.

Moeller stated that as the population is more diverse, the ability to swim may be more challenging. He asked what is being done to give all an opportunity to learn to swim. Vlaming discussed a program in Hennepin County that is teaching children to swim in apartment complexes. He added that they are working with them but the County is taking the lead.

Patti Freeman, Scott County reviewed their (2) project requests that were presented at the last meeting.

Paul Sawyer, City of St. Paul reviewed their projects presented at the last meeting.

Taylor discussed equity implementation at Phalen as it has very diverse usage. Sawyer agreed and discussed the diverse usage of their parks.

Taylor asked if there are other initiatives around biking and walking to the parks. Sawyer discussed wayfinding signs they are hoping to put in and around their regional parks.

Taylor asked about the Harriet Island project and connection that will be made. Sawyer discussed the alignment of the trail and its connections as well as areas outside of the regional park.

Moeller asked if it would be prudent to add wayfinding signs to the CIP requests. Sawyer stated this is a good point and stated that starting next year the northern half of the Grand Rounds project will be happening and this is a big part of that project.

Jon Oyanagi, Ramsey County reviewed their (1) project.

Chair Yarusso noted that this park sees heavy use.

Taylor stated that he would like to hear more about accessibility at Long Lake. Oyanagi stated it is very accessible and asked Kemery if he would like to add input. Kemery discussed the work he has done with this park district on accessibility.

Wulff stated that she feels the nature play area near the ballfield is very helpful for parents and really appreciates it.

Adam Ardvison, Minneapolis Park and Recreation discussed their three requests that were presented at the last meeting.

Jeff Bransford, Dakota County reviewed their two projects.

Kemery commented that he met with Steve Sullivan and Jeff and talked about their plans. He noted that he is excited about the work that they are doing.

Moeller applauded the communication efforts being done in their parks with multi-lingual initiatives.

Marty Walsh, Carver County Parks discussed their request.

Bloomington – no one was in attendance. There were no questions regarding Bloomington's request.

Karen Blaska, Anoka County reviewed their (8) projects – 4 are reimbursement and 4 are reconstruction.

Jensen stated that if all the projects cannot be funded through the Legislature, we will be back to the agencies.

Jensen noted that this is the first time that a list of projects will be brought to the Community Development Committee and the Council prior to being brought to the Legislature.

Andreason motioned and it was seconded by Theisen to recommend that the Metropolitan Council approve for submittal to Minnesota Management and Budget the list of capital projects in Attachment 1 for the state fiscal year 2019 Regional Parks System Capital Improvement Program; the projects total \$25 million, of which \$15 million would be state bonds matched by \$10 million in Council bonds.

Taylor asked if staff feel we have delivered on our commitment to equity and opened for discussion.

Jensen discussed the questions supplied at today's meeting and noted that they came directly from the Regional Parks Policy Plan (RPPP).

Mullin felt that we've come a long way in talking about equity and also broader thinking around investments that reflect equity.

Wulff felt that there's been a great job done by the group and noted that when doing the RPPP update there will be further discussion on how the discussions will work going forward.

Chair Yarusso discussed 'checking boxes' and stated this doesn't necessarily show how we're addressing equity but the discussions are happening.

Taylor felt that we are creating new stewards by increasing new users. He discussed getting more into the RPPP that gets to what we are trying to achieve. He discussed 'bridging facilities' and asked if anyone has done this. Vlaming discussed two facilities that they are working on that they hope to be bridging facilities.

Moeller discussed the last RPPP update and stated that it was a difficult task and feels that we have an opportunity to make a big difference. He felt the agencies have worked with us and embraced it. He looks forward to research to see how we are doing with communication, accessibility, etc.

Theisen feels that we've made progress in the sense that it is out there and being discussed and noted that it's still evolving.

Kemery stated that he struggles and questions when it comes to acquisitions and being reimbursed – is there a way to apply the equity toolkit.

Jensen stated that as we move forward with the update – this is where the discussion will happen.

Wulff stated that she has thought about this – some agencies have no back logs and some, younger agencies, how more acquisitions and large back logs. She discussed Miesville Regional Park that has only a gravel parking lot.

Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

INFORMATION

None.

REPORTS

Chair: Chair Yarusso discussed open houses going in, i.e., in Ramsey County. He stated that the DNR is looking for input on State Trails – information can be found on their website.

Commissioners: Andreason discussed signage found in Rocky Mountain National Park that said “If you’re facing discrimination, here’s what you can do”. She thought that was very interesting. Taylor stated this is an intuitive being done by the National Parks.

Staff: Mullin thanked MPRB for hosting and all the agencies and commissioners for their cooperative efforts on this CIP process.

Mullin stated that the new Regional Parks Maps are in and being distributed!

Mullin introduced Mary Robinson, the new Budget Manager.

Mullin noted that interviews for District G are complete and a new Commissioner will be joining us at the October 3, 2017 Meeting.

Taylor asked for an update on the Ambassador Program at a future meeting.

Moeller felt that a discussion on best practices for equity in our system – what are agencies doing, etc. He feels it would be informative for the Commission.

Connor Schaefer, Washington County added, regarding the Greenway, that he wanted to acknowledge staff for their help. He felt the more robust engagement has helped them with equity awareness.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 6:40 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary