

Minutes of the

SPECIAL METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Thursday, October 3, 2019

Committee Members Present: Margie Andreason, Bob Moeller, Cecily Harris, Todd Kemery, Anthony Taylor, Rick Theisen, Tony Yarusso, and Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, liaison to the Council

Committee Members Absent: Catherine Fleming, Jeremy Peichel

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the meeting of the Council's Special Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:42 p.m. on Thursday, October 3, 2019.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the October 3, 2019 agenda. It was motioned by Andreason and seconded by Harris to approve the agenda. **The agenda was approved.**

Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the September 5, 2019 meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. It was motioned by Theisen and seconded by Taylor. **The minutes were approved.**

PUBLIC INVITATION

None.

BUSINESS

2019-266, Future reimbursement Consideration for Carver County, Highway 5 Regional Trail –
Jessica Lee, Grants Administrator

Lee gave a presentation on a future reimbursement consideration for Carver County Highway 5 Regional Trail, as outlined in the materials provided.

Kemery asked about the trail alignment and if the Highway 5 Regional Trail will connect to neighboring local trails. Lee stated it does connect with non-regional trails.

Moeller motioned, and it was seconded by Harris to recommend that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Consider reimbursing Carver County up to \$1,000,000 from its share of a future Regional Parks Bonding Program for costs it incurs for the development of a two-mile segment of the Highway 5 Regional Trial located between Lake Minnewashta Parkway and Century Boulevard in Chanhassen; and
2. Inform Carver County that the Council does not under any circumstances represent or guarantee that it will reimburse the County and that expenditure of local funds never entitles a park agency to reimburse.

Marty Walsh, Carver County detailed the trial alignment partnerships, linking trails, and costs involved.

Chair Yarusso called for a vote. **Motion carried.**

INFORMATION

Interim Check-in Pilot: Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan, Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board – Tracey Kinney, Planner and Adam Arvidson, MPRB

Tracey Kinney and Adam Arvidson gave an update on the Minnehaha Parkway Regional Trail Master Plan as outlined in the materials provided.

Arvidson discussed this test case and check-in on this master plan, as it is currently under development, and asked for feedback and refinements on the process. He discussed the community engagement sessions and outreach that has been done as shown in the presentation. He discussed the feedback received and shared concept modifications and next steps developed as a result.

Because of significance of the feedback received, Arvidson felt it necessary to have a check-in, recognizing that much of the feedback received was in the immediate neighborhood around the regional trail and not from the broader regional audience.

Chair Yarusso asked when cars came into the 'Grand Rounds', of which is included in this regional trail. Arvidson stated that it was a bike route in the 1930's. Cars were slowly introduced as more and more people had cars. He discussed the former parkway plans from the early 1960's, which modified the corridor to include a recreational driving route.

Mullin discussed how to move forward with respect to the community engagement that was done.

Arvidson discussed dominating emails from 'Save the Parkway' groups. He discussed engagement with youths of color and noted that 75% had never been to the Parkway.

Chair Yarusso asked what the most effective way to communicate all the types of engagement to the Board so that they can make a decision. Arvidson explained that the Citizen's Advisory Commission (CAC) makes a recommendation to the Board based on engagement as well as other materials provided by staff.

Harris asked about the social pinpoint tool and if it was the first time MPRB used it? Arvidson stated yes. Harris asked if we know who is commenting using this tool. Arvidson stated we do not.

Harris discussed a comparison of Grand Rounds in other parts of the country and referred to the Golden Gate Parkway that is closed to automobiles on weekends and suggested the Board think about something like this. Arvidson replied that this notion is worthy of further exploration, and shared variations of this idea that have been discussed throughout the process.

Theisen discussed the balance of demographics feedback. Arvidson discussed the diversity of the CAC. He also stated that other events are being done in other areas of the city. He discussed the trouble that some feel that if you don't live on the Parkway you should not have a say. He constantly has to remind folks that this is a regional facility. This does not always go over well.

Atlas-Ingebretson discussed the International Association for Public Participation that has a blog and great advice on how to deal with contentious meetings. She encouraged Arvidson to look at this resource.

Kemery discussed the Lebanon Hills controversy and said that this process also had a lot of push back. He asked Arvidson if he has majority support from the CAC going forward? He explained that with Lebanon Hills, the CAC played a critical role advising Dakota County throughout the process, and how the advisory group ultimately became a key contributor and big supporter of the broader master planning effort throughout 11 months of challenging meetings.

Andreason stated her appreciation for having this brought before this commission. She stated she felt it is important to allow folks to be heard or, in her experience, they will just get louder.

Taylor stated how much he appreciated this work. He discussed how to get the conversation back to the issue of safety and outreach to voices not currently at the table.

Kinney asked for feedback on this check-in process.

Chair Yarusso stated he is intrigued by the CAC process. He felt it would be helpful to compare this with other agencies and how they do this type of work and how CAC's are formed. Arvidson discussed recent MPRB revisions, and how CAC's are now constructed to be more diverse and representative of the broader community. He pointed out that half must be from neighborhoods that are not adjacent to the park or trail.

Atlas-Ingebretson talked about different types of parks – local, regional, and state and helping folks understand the differences as well as different funding sources. She feels there is value in aligning resources and raising understanding of the value of regional parks.

Kinney asked if this was helpful. Kemery responded that he felt it was a helpful step for the Commission and hoped it was useful for MPRB. Yarusso stated it was nice to hear what the conflicts are and felt that it was helpful. He appreciated being brought in on this challenging effort as a mid-point check-in, prior to when the Commission will see this plan as a formal recommendation.

Moeller asked if staff have considered using a facilitator during community engagement sessions so that it may be easier to listen and not feel 'beat up'. Arvidson stated that they have considered doing this.

Theisen discussed considering broader socioeconomic factors in the planning process.

REPORTS

Liaison: Atlas-Ingebretson referred to the 25-year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan and stated it will be discussed further at a future meeting.

Chair: Yarusso discussed the Regional Park System Equity Grant Program Review Committee and how the three appointments from the Commission will be Taylor, Kemery and himself.

Staff: Mullin thanked Scott County and Three Rivers Park District for hosting the meeting today and the Spring Lake Regional Park tour.

Mullin discussed last month's Blakely Bluff Park Reserve acquisition and land donation to Scott County that was at the MPOSC meeting. CM Wulff made a motion at the Community Development Committee to change the funding package slightly.

Commissioners: Moeller discussed the MN Valley Regional Trail connection and noted that Chaska is working with the highway department and the new bridge construction.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Sandi Dingle
Recording Secretary