

**Minutes of the
REGULAR MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Wednesday, May 15, 2013

Committee Members Present: Brimeyer, Van Eyll, Kramer, Elkins, Smith, Wulff, Rummel, Schreiber, Commers, Đoàn, Chávez, Haigh

Committee Members Absent: Munt, Cunningham, Duininck, Reynoso, Melander

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Haigh called the regular meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:00PM on Wednesday, May 15, 2013.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Rummel, seconded by Đoàn to approve the agenda. **Motion carried.**

It was moved by Schreiber, seconded by Smith to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2013 regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried.**

THRIVE MSP 2040

Overview of Rural and Agricultural Policy Issues—Dan Marckel

Dan presented a map that illustrated the agricultural, rural residential, diversified rural parts of the region. About half of the 3,000 square miles of the Metropolitan region is considered rural and is largely not served by sewer. Between 2000 and 2010 about 40,000 acres were converted from active agricultural use to development and parkland, however, current trends show that agricultural uses are strong and prices are rising for ag land. During that same time, rural households increased from 48,505 to 59,504 and half were in Rural Growth Centers.

Current policy direction require agricultural preserves land to be zoned for 1 unit in 40 acres, 1 unit in 10 acres for diversified rural land, and 1 unit in 2.5 acres for rural residential is discouraged. Agricultural preserves are intended for long term ag use.

Discussion: Direction for Rural and Agricultural Policy for Thrive MSP 2040

Council members discussed whether the long-term preservation of prime agricultural land should be a regional or local responsibility. The group favored the idea of shared responsibility. Local governments may not always realize how land in their area affects regional infrastructure such as sewer. Scott County is the only county that has land use planning authority over their townships. Their comprehensive plan is a unique one. They also discussed small-scale farming and whether there are any issues that rise to a regional level. Council members discussed the increasing interest in having access to farmland and homegrown food, and agreed there may be a role for the Council to play, but currently we do not have a policy that addresses small-scale farming. They discussed the possible need for the Council to play a role in food security and how small-scale farming and access to farmland will be something to consider during RCAP discussions.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:44PM.

Emily Getty

Recording Secretary