

Minutes of the Meeting of the

METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

Thursday, June 3, 2021

Committee Members Present: Assata Brown, Monica Dillenburg, Cecily Harris, Todd Kemery, Robert Moeller, Jeremy Peichel, Tony Yarusso, Cana Yang, and Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson, liaison to the Council.

Committee Members Absent: Anthony Taylor

CALL TO ORDER

The Recording Secretary did a roll call for a quorum.

With a quorum being present via WebEx, Commission Chair Yarusso called the meeting of the Council's Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:02 p.m. on Thursday, June 3, 2021.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

Chair Yarusso motioned to approve the agenda and asked for a consensus to approve the June 3, 2021 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission agenda.

With a quorum present, Chair Yarusso asked for a motion to approve the May 6, 2021 minutes. Peichel motioned, and it was seconded by Harris to approve the May 6, 2021 minutes of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting. The Recording Secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 7 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Moeller, Peichel, Yang, Yarusso)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

The May 6, 2021 minutes were approved.

PUBLIC INVITATION

Chair Yarusso noted that the posted Agenda included a public invitation and asked that anyone wishing to address the Commission should please email the Chair at mposc@tonyyarusso.org. He noted that he did not receive a request to address the Commission at today's meeting.

[Click here to view the June 3, 2021 Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting video](#)

BUSINESS

2021-126, Gale Woods Farm Special Recreation Feature, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund (Olson), Three Rivers Park District

Jessica Lee, Senior Planner, presented the staff report to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission at its meeting on June 3, 2021.

Yarusso asked for the current balance of funds. Lee said there is approximately \$663,00 in the Parks and Trails Legacy Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund account. This includes FY2021 as well as previous years balances. After this acquisition, there will be approximately \$204,000 left in the account. This number does fluctuate as existing grants are closed and small balances are returned to the fund. Peichel asked for a brief overview of park acquisition funds. Mullin let members know that an information item can be brought to the committee if desired and he added that this program secures land in perpetuity. Moeller asked if there was any expected action from this year's legislature. Mullin said there are two appropriations being recommended in the current process from the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) and the FY 22-23 Parks and Trails Legacy Funds, which dedicate 10% of the total each year to this program. Harris asked if funds roll over or if they are lost if not used by the end of the fiscal year. Mullin said the Legacy funds will be

released when the legislature comes to a decision this biennium. He said if there is not a budget agreement by June 30, 2021, the FY2020 LCCMR appropriation will return to the corpus. Clapp added that the funds that are currently in the account are available for multiple years.

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

1. Approve a grant of up to \$459,375 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire the vacant rural residential 27.87-acre Olson property adjacent to Gale Woods Farm, just west of Woodedge Road in Minnetrista, for Gale Woods Farm Special Recreation Feature.
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Yarusso moved to amend the motion to include the phrase, "from the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund."

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

1. Approve a grant from the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund of up to \$459,375 to Three Rivers Park District to acquire the vacant rural residential 27.87-acre Olson property adjacent to Gale Woods Farm, just west of Woodedge Road in Minnetrista, for Gale Woods Farm Special Recreation Feature.
2. Authorize the Community Development Director to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

With no further discussion, Chair Yarusso called for a vote. The recording secretary issued a roll call vote.

Aye – 8 (Brown, Dillenburg, Harris, Kemery, Moeller, Peichel, Yang, Yarusso)

Nay – 0

Abstention – 0

The motion was approved.

INFORMATION

Equity Nudge: Establishing a shared space for Equity Resources - Demonstration

Amanda Lovelee, Senior Outreach Coordinator, presented the staff report to the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission at its meeting on May 6, 2021.

Atlas-Ingebretson encouraged members to find the tools that work best for them as they share progress on encouraging greater access to the Regional Parks System. Peichel thanked the Council Member for enduring the challenging and ongoing equity conversations. Kemery seconded this notion and commented that it is critical to remain steadfast in our commitment to civil rights around ADA access and racial equity. Yarusso asked about the accessibility of the Teams site. Lovelee said it is a work in progress yet believes that all Commissioners have necessary rights to use the site.

REPORTS

Chair: Chair Yarusso reported that there will be a ribbon cutting in Washington County on June 8, at Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park.

Commissioners: Kemery reported that he will be starting up monthly meetings with Dakota County as they had pre-COVID.

Staff: Mullin reported that the Regional Parks System Equity Grant Program recommendations are moving forward and will be shared with MPOSC at their July 1 meeting. Mullin added that the legislative session ended without passing the critical budget bills and are currently working to avoid a shutdown. Mullin also said that a Bdote' Tour, also known as the Sacred Sites tour, is being hosted by the Council's Parks unit on September 17, 2021 at 8:30 a.m., meeting at Fort Snelling State Park.

Council Liaison: Atlas-Ingebretson reported that the Equity Grants Review Committee Meeting went well and voiced appreciation for work well done.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed the meeting adjourned at 4:53 p.m.

Jenna Ernst
Recording Secretary