

Minutes of the

SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Wednesday, September 20, 2017

Committee Members Present:

Rodriguez, Schreiber, Munt, Elkins, Dorfman, Cunningham, Tchourumoff, Rummel, Melander, Kramer, Commers, Wulff

CALL TO ORDER

A quorum being present, Chair Tchourumoff called the special meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:21 on Wednesday, September 20, 2017.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES

It was moved by Rodriguez, seconded by Munt to approve the agenda. Motion carried.

It was moved by Rummel, seconded by Elkins to approve the minutes of the August 2, 2017 regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. Motion carried.

INFORMATION

Pressures and Threats to Manufactured Home Parks in the Region and Strategies for Their Presentation

Jonathan Stanley and Freya Thamman provided the introduction. The number of manufactured home parks (MHPs) has declined steadily in the region over the last 25 years, with the most recent park built in 1991. Ten parks have closed since then. MHPs are a valuable source of affordable housing. In locations where land prices are relatively high, redevelopment pressures often put MHPs out of business. Water and sewer systems are typically privately owned and require costly repairs. In the coming decade, water and sewer problems are likely to burden park owners. Road expansions can make MHPs vulnerable to closures since many tend to be located along major thoroughfares.

MHPs are important for the region's low-income residents. Income and poverty levels of residents show that these parks serve some of the most economically disadvantaged families in the region. The median income for owners of manufactured home units is \$40K, which is less than half the median income of the homeowners of the region (\$86K). Similarly, 44% of residents are below 185% of federal poverty level, compared to 22% of all residents. In a region where the affordable housing stock is far from meeting the demand, there is an especially acute shortage of housing units affordable to people with very low- and extremely low-incomes.

Closures of MHPs can have a disproportionate impact on residents of color. The region's MHPs are more racially and ethnically diverse than the region as a whole. MHPs provide convenient access to social services in suburban areas where service delivery is challenging. Residents of MHPs also have access to a number of opportunities such as high-performing schools.

The Pilot MHP Preservation Grant was for eligible MHPs that would soon be connecting to the regional wastewater system, and specifically involved Council policies and procedures related to the expense of connecting to the regional wastewater treatment system and affordable housing. There were three MHPs deemed eligible, with the award going to Maple Hill Estates in Corcoran. The MHP must continue to operate as an MHP and have no unreasonable lot rent increase to residents. Maple Hill Estates is the second largest MHP in Hennepin County where pressures on MHPs have been significant.

Council member Harry Melander facilitated a panel discussion. Panelists were Dave Anderson, Executive Director, All Parks Alliance for Change (APAC), Barbara Dacy, Executive Director, Washington County CDA, Sebastian Rivera, Organizational Leader, Asamblea de Derechos Civiles, and Kevin Walker, Acting Executive Director, Northcountry Cooperative Foundation (NCF). Panelists shared their thoughts on the importance of maintaining MHPs in the region.

ADJOURNMENT

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:50PM.

Emily Getty
Recording Secretary