

# **Minutes of the SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

Wednesday, May 29, 2013

**Committee Members Present:** Van Eyll, Kramer, Elkins, Smith, Wulff, Rummel, Schreiber, Doan, Chávez, Haigh, Munt, Reynoso, Melander

**Committee Members Absent:** Cunningham, Duininck, Brimeyer, Commers

## **CALL TO ORDER**

A quorum being present, Chair Haigh called the special meeting of the Council's Committee of the Whole to order at 4:05PM on Wednesday, May 29, 2013.

## **APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND MINUTES**

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

It was moved by Smith, seconded by Van Eyll to approve the minutes of the May 15, 2013 regular meeting of the Committee of the Whole. **Motion carried.**

## **THRIVE MSP 2040**

Overview of Natural Resources and Aggregate Policy Issues—Denise Engen

Denise presented a map of the terrestrial and aquatic ecological assessment of the region. The region is rich in natural resources, including lakes, streams, wetlands, forests, bluffs, minerals, and aquifers. Natural resources can increase the local tax base by providing amenities that raise property values. The region is 1.9 million acres, which includes 124,674 acres (4.3%) of open water and 177,782 acres (9.3%) is held in parks, recreation, or preserves. In 2012, there were 56,000 acres in regional parks and by 2030 we believe that number will increase to 70,000. According to the MN Dept. of Natural Resources, there are 315,647 acres of Regionally Significant Ecological Areas (RSEAs), 41% of which were protected in park, recreation, or preserve lands in 2010. There are 214,543 acres of outstanding RSEAs, 48.1% of which are protected. Development on or near aggregate deposits has closed off access to 45% of the aggregate originally available in the metro area.

Discussion: Direction for Natural Resources and Aggregate Policy for Thrive MSP 2040

There are several challenges the Council needs to think about in relation to this topic. The Council discussed how to best preserve and/or use the natural resources in the region. Existing policy strategies encourage integration of natural resource conservation in regional and local land use planning decisions; the Council ensures that communities have addressed natural resources (when present in a community) in their comprehensive plans. The group discussed whether some of the work on this issue has already been done by the DNR and there are some overlaps between their work and the Council's. Duplicating efforts already in practice was a concern. The group agreed there should be regulations for the preservation of natural resources and what we will do to protect natural resources will be included in the Council's system plans. They also agreed that if we provide the technical assistance communities need, we will be more successful, but it would require additional resources if the help is coming from the Council. Protecting natural resources may or may not trump various types of development; because each situation is unique, this is addressed on a case-by-case basis.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Business completed, the meeting adjourned at 5:37PM.

Emily Getty, Recording Secretary