

METROPOLITAN COUNCIL
390 N. Robert Street, St. Paul, MN 55101

MEETING OF
METROPOLITAN PARKS AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION

April 5, 2011

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Chuck Haas, Barb Schmidt, Bob Moeller, Jeff Lee, Daniel Shlaferman, Richard Jabs, Wendy Wulff, Metropolitan Council Liaison to the Commission

ABSENT: Doug Baines, Tom Gamec

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Haas called the meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:04p.m. on Tuesday, April 5, 2011.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA/MINUTES

Commissioner Jabs motioned and Commissioner Schmidt seconded to approve the April 5, 2011 Agenda and the March 1, 2011 Minutes. Chair Haas called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

PUBLIC INVITATION:

None.

BUSINESS

Annual Use Estimate of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System for 2010 - Jan Youngquist, Planning Analyst—Parks

Youngquist gave an overview of the 2010 Annual Use Estimates and discussed the following:

- Purpose of the use estimates.
- How estimates are made.
- Overall estimates for 2010 – noting that we've passed the 40 million visitor mark; which is a 7.4% increase from last year's numbers.
- Where visitors are coming from.
- Top five most visited regional parks and trails.
- Top MN attractions and how their visit numbers compare.

Members requested a copy of the comparison of top MN attractions to park visits.

2012-17 Metro Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program Policy Review - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferud gave an overview/review of the Metro Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Policy.

Stefferud discussed prioritizing projects and allocating funds among park agencies and noted that 70% is based on park agency population and 30% is based on non-local visits of each park agency's regional parks and trails. Park agencies then prioritize projects within their share of the Parks CIP.

Stefferud discussed leveraging Met Council bonds with state bonds and allocating half of the Council bonds for land acquisition and half for facility renovation and development.

Stefferd discussed the application of Council's park bonding policies to requests for state bond appropriations.

Stefferd discussed the 2012-2017 Parks CIP preparation timelines, as well as the affects of these policies.

The Commission asked representatives of regional park agencies about their opinion on the formula for determining each park agencies share of the State bond financed Parks CIP. Mark Themig from Scott County spoke in support of the formula. No other agency representatives provided comment.

Commissioner Moeller made a motion to recommend, and it was seconded by Commissioner Jobs that the Metropolitan Council reaffirms the following policy positions for Metro Regional Parks capital spending:

1. Issue \$7 million of short term bonds annually to provide a \$2 match to \$3 of State appropriations for the Council's Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund grants and to State bonds appropriated for the Regional Parks Capital Improvement Program (Parks CIP). Half of the Council bonds are allocated to each program each year.
2. Request \$10.5 million of State bonds in June 2011 as the preliminary State bonding request for the 2012 Legislative session to finance 60% of the 2012-13 Regional Parks CIP.
3. Continue to determine the amount each of the 10 regional park agencies receive from the 2012-13 Regional Parks CIP based on the following formula:
 - 70% based on each park agency's share of the region's population, and
 - 30% based on each park agency's share of non-local visits it hosted. ("non-local visits" are visits by persons that do not live in the park agency's jurisdiction).
 - Data for each part of the formula should come from the same year.

With no further discussion, Chair Haas called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan and Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Grants, Scott and Carver County - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks

Stefferd gave an overview on a request from Scott and Carver Counties for a master plan for the extension of the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail and the Scott County Connection.

Stefferd also discussed a request from Scott and Carver Counties for Park Acquisition Opportunity Grants to help finance the acquisition of each county's portion of the Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor.

Jabs asked if there have ever been any requests similar to this one. Stefferud stated that this is the first 'dual agency' request to come before the Commission.

Commissioner Moeller stated that this is an exciting opportunity and made a motion to recommend, and it was seconded by Shlaferman, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Minnesota River Bluffs Extension & Scott County Connection Regional Trail Master Plan (Referral No. 50005-1).

2. Authorize a grant of \$579,268 from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Scott County to partially finance the acquisition of 1.76 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. The grant should be financed with:
 - \$347,561 from the FY 2011 Parks and Trails Fund appropriation
 - \$231,707 Metropolitan Council bonds

3. Authorize a grant of \$506,185 from the Parks and Trails Fund Acquisition Account in the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Carver County to partially finance the acquisition of 1.56 miles of the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Chaska Industrial Lead Corridor. The grant should be financed with:
 - \$303,711 from the FY 2011 Parks and Trails Fund appropriation
 - \$202,474 Metropolitan Council bonds

With no further discussion, Chair Haas called for a vote. **The motion carried.**

MPOSC 2011 Off-Site Meetings and Tours - Arne Stefferud, Planning Analyst-Parks
Stefferud presented the tour recommendations for 2011. The Commission discussed alternative dates (Thursday, rather than Tuesday after holiday and National Night Out) as well as starting earlier. The consensus of the Commission was for 3pm start times on June 7, July 5, and August 2.

REPORTS

- **Chair** – None.

- **Commissioners** – None.

- **Staff** – Beckman reported that reappointment notifications have been sent out.

NEXT MEETING

May 3, 2011 at 4:00pm in Robert Room LLA.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 4:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandi Dingle
Executive Assistant
Community Development