

AUGUST 2011 MEETING MINUTES

August 10, 2011

Location: Martin Luther King Community Center

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Bishop, Jonathan Carter, Erick Goodlow, Dave Haley, Dan Marckel, John Mountain, Betsy Mowry and Andrew Trcka

MEMBERS ABSENT:

STAFF PRESENT: Mike Hahm, Meghan O'Hare, Kathy Korum and Michelle Furrer

GUESTS: Pete Bolstad, Tom Dimond

1. AGENDA, MINUTES, INTRODUCTION, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Chair Carter.
- b. Commissioner Marckel moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Goodlow seconded the motion. The vote was 8 to 0 in favor with no Commissioners absent.
- c. Commissioner Mowry moved to approve the July 2011 minutes. Commissioner Mountain seconded the motion. The vote was 8 to 0 in favor with no Commissioners absent.
- d. Director Hahm talked about the Parks and Recreation Commission vacancy.

2. PUBLIC HEARING AND COMMENT

- a. Chair Carter read an email comment from Benita Warns, who was not able to make the meeting, regarding the City providing a roller skating facility in St. Paul.
- b. Pete Bolstad, District 10 and Como resident, addressed the Commission offering his comments to encourage signage improvements in Como Park and the surrounding area.

3. ACTION ITEMS

- a. **Resolution #11-11 Como Park Regional Committee/RFP for Signage and Wayfinding**
Director Hahm summarized the resolution stating that the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Como Park Regional Committee will work with the vendor to develop a plan and are committed to including the community throughout the process.

Commissioner Marckel indicated that the Committee considers discussions with the Community to be a very important part of the process. Individuals from the Community interested in participating in the process will have opportunities through meetings, open houses, etc.

Kathy Korum added that this process is supported by grant funds which needs to be spent by 2012. It is also important to the Parks and Recreation System Plan.



CAPRA Accreditation

An Affirmative Action Equal
Opportunity Employer



National Gold Medal Award

Commissioner Bishop motioned to approve Resolution #11-11 Como Park Regional Committee/RFP for Signage and Wayfinding; Commissioner Marckel seconded the motion. The vote was 8 to 0 in favor of support with no commissioners absent.

3. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

a. Gorilla Forest and Japanese Garden Experience Update

Michelle Furrer, Como Park Zoo and Conservatory Manager, presented the future plans for the Gorilla Forest and the Japanese Garden Experience. Handouts were distributed.

The plans for the Gorilla Forest will be to expand the existing facility indoors and out. The expansion will allow for an immersion experience for visitors and provide a more spacious, realistic habitat for the gorillas. Start of the construction is expected to be September 2011 with a completion date estimated to be March 2013. After completion, Como Zoo will be looking to acquire more gorillas.

The Japanese Garden Experience is a new facility connecting the Como Conservatory to the Japanese Gardens which is located outside of the North Garden. The purpose of this expansion is to give views year-round. The construction start is expected to begin this fall with a 14-month construction cycle and an anticipated grand opening late 2012.

b. Land Use Evaluation Criteria

Director Hahm suggested that standard criteria be developed for a land use evaluation. Staff is committed to participating and leading the process. He recommends an adhoc committee be formed with Commission participation and input from stakeholders and the public.

Commissioner Bishop motioned to support proceeding with Parks and Recreation Commission involvement to participate. Commissioner Goodlow seconded the motion. The vote was 8 to 0 in favor with no commissioners absent.

c. Networking Event

Director Hahm talked about the upcoming Networking Event. It is scheduled for Wednesday, September 14 on the Anson Northrup river boat which is docked at Harriet Island. Departure time will be approximately 6:00 pm. Local officials, district councils and business partners will be invited. He encouraged the Commissioners to reach out to those on the invitation list to join the event.

4. **DIRECTOR'S REPORTS**

a. Department Monthly Highlights

Director Hahm stated that the summer meals that the Department provides to St. Paul youth is serving at a greater rate than ever before; and the Summer Blast and the Youth Job Corp programs are coming to a season end following a successful year.

He also indicated that construction has finally begun at the Oxford Community Center athletic fields after 18-months of no activity. Approximately \$350,000 still needs to be raised by the Saint Paul Conservancy to complete the project. Installation of the light standards will be put on hold until fundraising is complete.



B Budget Updates

Director Hahm discussed the budget impacts resulting from the State budget resolution. The Mayor will be announcing the City budget at his Budget Address on Monday, August 15.

6. SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

a. Como Regional Park Committee – Commissioner Marckel

Commissioner Marckel indicated the Committee met on August 9. The Committee focused on wayfinding signage and the design of the new play area at the East Picnic Grounds. He also mentioned a website is being created for the Como Regional Park Committee which continues to be improved upon and will be going live on-line in the near future.

b. Blooming St. Paul - Commissioner Mountain

Commissioner Mountain indicated the next meeting is September 12 – updates next month.

c. Transportation Advisory Board – Commissioner Trcka

Commissioner Trcka indicated the committee name is incorrect as indicated above. Should read: Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission not Transportation Advisory Board. He will provide updates in November.

d. Tree Advisory Committee – Commissioner Goodlow

Commissioner Goodlow indicated Tree Advisory Committee is changing meeting days.

e. Other Reports

None.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Haley motioned to adjourn; Commissioner Mountain 2nd the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:45 pm.

