

February 2013 Meeting Minutes

**February 13, 2013
Conway Recreation Center**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Bishop, Dave Haley, Dan Marckel, John Mountain, Betsy Mowry, Emily Shively, and Andrew Trcka

MEMBERS ABSENT: Erick Goodlow, Salina Vang

STAFF PRESENT: Michael Hahm, Brenda Ullrich, D'Marie Weddington, Mark Granlund

GUESTS: Betsy Leach, Ebony Young

1. AGENDA, MINUTES, INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS

- a. The meeting was called to order by Chair Trcka at 6:31 p.m.
- b. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Commissioner Mountain and seconded by Commissioner Bishop. The vote was 5 to 0 in favor with four commissioners absent.
- c. Commissioner Shively moved to approve the January 2013 Meeting minutes. Commissioner Mowry seconded the motion. The vote was 5 to 0 in favor with four commissioners absent.

2. ACTION ITEMS

a. Adoption of Parks and Recreation Vision and Mission – Resolution 13-02

Director Hahm explained the vision and mission statements in front of the Commission are unchanged from what is currently part of the Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan. The purpose in bringing them before the Commission is to reaffirm they are still descriptive of the direction the Department is going.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bishop and seconded by Commissioner Shively to approve Resolution #13-02. The vote was 6 to 0 in favor with three commissioners absent.

b. Adoption of Community Garden Policy – Resolution 13-03

Mark Granlund, Arts and Gardens Coordinator for the Parks and Recreation Department, gave a brief overview of changes made to the Community Gardening Policy since its last review before the Commission in December of 2012. Parkland Diversion continues to be the overarching issue necessary to address in the policy.



Chapter 13 of the City Charter states that “Lands which may have been heretofore acquired by any means or which may hereafter be acquired by any means for park purposes shall not be diverted to other uses or disposed of by the city except in the following manner. While gardening is a recreational activity, the setting aside of a portion of public land for limited use by the public still has diversion implications. It is important that Parks identify areas where a community garden will provide a benefit to an area beyond the benefit to the specific users. That could be teaching gardens, beautification efforts, community building through tours, classes or events, or other legitimate reasons.

Saint Paul Administrative Code §86.03(b) provides requirements when park property will be leased, and will have implications for community gardens as well. While the leases with groups are usually a year in length, it is clear from the Code that long-term use of land for a private purpose is discouraged. Successive one year leases violate the intention of the Administrative Code and should be treated as renewals if they are with the same groups. Section 86.03(b)(3) treats any lease of five years or more where the property will no longer be exclusively for the use of the public to be a diversion. This is especially true if the plots are vegetable gardens with produce used by the lessees.

For these reasons, in determining locations of community gardens it is important to identify ways in which the gardens benefit the community, promote a recreational opportunity, and are not a diversion of public land to private use. Identifying in advance sites which Parks feels will have the capacity to benefit the neighborhood in some significant way will assist in avoiding diversion concerns, as will assuring that the garden plots for private users maintain some community outreach component.

A motion was made by Commissioner Mowry and seconded by Commissioner Marckel to approve Resolution #13-03. The vote was 7 to 0 in favor with two commissioners absent.

c. Adoption of 2013 Strategic Plan – Resolution 13-04

This is a routine matter before the Commission each February. It is a living document that will change as needed. It is a big picture overview of what the Parks and Recreation Department is working on and plans to accomplish in the coming five years. This will next come before the Commission again as a mid-year report.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bishop and seconded by Commissioner Haley to approve Resolution #13-04. The vote was 7 to 0 in favor with two commissioners absent.

d. Adoption of the Magnolia Blossom Charter Cruise License Agreement – Resolution 13-05

Magnolia Blossom Charter Cruises has operated out of the Watergate Marina since 2006. The current lease agreement is now expired. The Department of Parks and Recreation is recommending the Commission endorse the renewal of the agreement to allow Magnolia Blossom Charter Cruises to continue operations out of the Watergate Marina, believing it enhances the public's access to the riverfront and park.

A motion was made by Commissioner Haley and seconded by Commissioner Mountain to approve Resolution #13-05. The vote was 7 to 0 in favor with two commissioners absent.

3. DISCUSSION ITEM

a. 2013 Work Plan

The 2013 Parks and Recreation Commission Work Plan is a living document that will change throughout the year as the Commission and the Parks and Recreation Department determines the necessity of adding or subtracting issues to be brought before the Commission. It was decided to add Frogtown Park and Farm to the Work Plan for addition to the March meeting.

4. DIRECTOR'S REPORT

a. Repartnering Process at McDonough and Conway Recreation Centers

Director Hahm gave a brief recap of the meetings to date at both McDonough Recreation Center and Conway Recreation Center regarding the repartnering of those sites. Parks and Recreation staff have met with District Councils at Conway, Resident Councils at McDonough, as well as youth at the facilities to obtain input into the Requests for Proposals to obtain service partners for each site. The intent is to send out the Requests for Proposals for both sites simultaneously in an effort to take advantage of any community attention to attract the best partner organizations.

b. Budget Update

Director Hahm explained that the Governor's proposed budget for the State of Minnesota has been widely evaluated as generally friendly to Saint Paul, however there are still extensive discussions yet to happen before a budget is adopted and impacts to the City are known.

c. Legislative Update

Director Hahm discussed the variety of bonding proposals, Legacy funding, and Parks and Trails funding that are currently being discussed. He also spoke about the pending Parkland Dedication legislation. The Parkland Dedication legislation should allow what Saint Paul Parks and Recreation is already doing in accordance with local ordinance to continue.

d. Accreditation Update

The Accreditation Self-Assessment review was sent to the initial reviewers on February 7th. Once that review is complete, it goes to the site visit team for review before the site visit itself. The site visit team will be on site from April 7th through April 10th. There will be some events and tours organized for them, to which the Commissioners will be extended invitations.

5. SUBCOMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE REPORTS

a. Como Regional Park Committee – Commissioner Marckel

Commissioner Marckel explained the Committee was presented with a proposal for a new ride for Como Town. It is a sit down zip line that will run from one end of Como Town to the other. To see more information about the ride go to www.soaringeagle.com. There was also extensive discussion regarding the structure of the committee.

b. Blooming Saint Paul – Commissioner Mountain

The Blooming Saint Paul Awards took place on Monday, January 28th at Saint Thomas University's O'Shaughnessy Education Center Auditorium. Blooming Saint Paul Day is May 18th. Commissioner Mountain will be sending out information. They are looking for 150 volunteers to attend the event.

c. Transportation Committee of the Planning Commission – Commissioner Trcka

Chair Trcka spoke about a Visual Resource Protection Plan with an opportunity to submit photos of views to help protect.

d. Trees Advisory Committee – Commissioner Goodlow

Commissioner Goodlow absent.

e. Victoria Park – Commissioner Shively

Commissioner Shively their last meeting was January 22nd. They were able to obtain good input from the members. The next meeting is set for March 19th.

f. Community Engagement – District Councils

Commissioner Marckel said that he received good feedback from District Councils for the Commissioners to stay in contact as a means to communicate out to the communities.

Director Hahm announced the Great River Passage Public Hearing is now set for April 3rd.

g. Other Reports

6. ADJOURNMENT

A motion to adjourn was made by Commissioner Bishop and seconded by Commissioner Haley. The meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.