



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2016

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 West 1st St



I. Call Meeting to Order

President Hall called the meeting to order at 5:05pm.

II. Roll Call

Present: Ed Hall, John Schmidt, Amanda Crosby, Tiersa Wodash, Jodi Tervo Roberts, Erik Torch, Dean Vogtman, Tjaard Breeuwer

Not Present: Jon Welles, Michael Schreapfer

III. Approval of Previous Meetings' Minutes

President Hall motioned for approval of November 9, 2016 meetings minutes; second by Commissioner Torch. Unanimously approved.

IV. Presentations

A. St. Louis River Water Trail Plan – Lisa Luokkala, Parks and Recreation (action requested)

Ms. Luokkala, Parks and Recreation Project Coordinator, City of Duluth presented the St. Louis River Water Trail Plan.

Luokkala: Summarized the changes made to the St. Louis River Water Trail Plan, confirming the final version is now available online. Indicated there were still many questions and comments regarding participation groups and dollar amounts after last months' presentation from Hansi Johnson with Minnesota Land Trust. Another issue was phasing, which is more clearly defined in the Phase 1 roles in relation to work of the River Management Team. Further explained that development of a river management policy was added, including primary and secondary tiers for water access as they relate to access points. Noted the uniqueness of this joint master plan that encompasses both sides of the river (Minnesota and Wisconsin), driving the decision to refrain from defining access points as "primary" until both states are involved. Also refraining from calling out specifics on Lower Spirit water access.

Hall: Questioned if any other specific changes have been made.

Luokkala: Confirmed that some semantics and continuity were fixed.

Hall: Questioned if the structure of the Water Trail Committee would be addressed down the road.

Luokkala: Informed group that the leadership team will reconvene in late January to become the River Management Team, and the City of Duluth will play an active role with other partners.

Hall: Discussed that page 62 of the Water Trail Plan has general language about the Water Trail



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2016

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 West 1st St



Committee and questioned if after the January meeting an update could be provided to the Parks Commission about how that committee has formed so Commission members better understand the role of the Water Trail Committee.

Breeuwer: Shared that the Trails Committee has not yet discussed the Water Trails Committee, however there may be interest to serve as the Committee serves the Commission's "advance recon".

Hall: Requested comments from the Public after commending group for their hard work on this plan which is both a realistic and aggressive plan for the future. Expressed support of working closely with Superior.

Breeuwer: Commented on the dedication and commitment of Parks staff and thanked Judy Gibbs for all her hard work.

MOTION/Second: Hall/Torch to approve the St. Louis River Estuary Master plan and approve the city's filing of a National Park Service application for National Water Trail designation. **VOTE:** 7-0 in favor

B. St. Louis River Corridor Trails Plan – Andrew Slade, Assistant Manager (action requested)

Andrew Slade gave his final updates on the St. Louis River Corridor and Trails plan. A history was given on the progress of the plan.

- Parks staff worked with HKGi.
- Stakeholder meetings began in April 2016 and a public meeting was held in May 2016.
- The plan was first presented to the Commission as an informational presentation at the July 2016 meeting.
- Staff met with at least ten different stakeholder groups in July.
- Two-week public comment period in August.
- The Commission's Trails committee reviewed public comments and helped advance a near-final version in October.
- Parks management made some formatting changes and minor map corrections in November.

Slade: Informed group that nothing substantial has changed with the plan, just some moving of language and internal formatting changes at the end of the document. The following map changes were shown to group:

- The mystery trails by Mission Creek area originally made it into the plan but have been dropped on the final draft.
- A new unleashed dog trail was added to Sergeant Creek.
- Priorities on Pg. 40 of what we have done in 2016 were added with a sense of what will be done in 2017.

Slade: Confirmed this is the update to the 2011 Duluth Trail and Bikeway Plan and is meant to memorialize many disparate trail development and policy documents, while providing a path forward for the next ten years of trail development and maintenance in the St. Louis River Corridor.



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2016

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 West 1st St



Further explained that the final version is now before the Commission with intent to get City Council approval at their January 9 meeting. Requested the Commission's action to formally support the plan.

Commissioners: Discussed the plan.

Schmidt: Requested clarification about language regarding closed trails and trail maintenance.

Slade: Pointed out the relevant language in the plan.

Tervo-Roberts: Requested to see page 21's east side overall trail map and asked if there was a legend noted.

Slade: Clarified that it was a two-page spread and the legend is noted.

Hall: Questioned why on page 6, "rainy day fund for repairs" was deleted from the original document.

Slade: Clarified that the decision was made not to make specific promises in the plan.

Hall: Discussed the desire for language about trail restoration back to its original condition after trails were changed or abandoned to be included.

Slade: Identified this language and referred group to page 12.

Breeuwer: Noted language on page 5 which too addresses this concern.

Hall: Called attention to page 46, noting that the previous version stated "commitment" and ten specific "to do" items that are not listed anymore.

Slade: Clarified that the metrics were moved into the priority section in more of a logical model and were in the body of the document. Also noted that the Cross City Trail is getting paved and shared opinion that the document is to the right scale.

Torch: Called attention to page 40's "priorities" section and noted that 2017 shows an intensive planning period. Requested information about how the group would approach the greatest priorities with the stakeholders.

Slade: Replied that moving forward in a realistic fashion is important, noting that some priorities are based on deadlines being pushed on a timeline with valuable partners. Further noted that there are plans that address most of the priorities. The following example was provided:

- We may not get to #9 (may not be funded) and the ATV concept plan may shift.

Torch: Shared hopes for a healthy relationship and collaborative discussion between stakeholders and user groups moving forward.



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2016

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 West 1st St



Mike Casey (Public-representing Friends of West Duluth Parks and Trails): Expressed concern about how the plan pulls parks from the 2011 plan, leaving two plans that overlap. Suggested changing 2011 plan available online to reference the changes found in the 2016 plan.

Joel Sipress (City Councilor): Mentioned that there were a lot of plans listed for 2017 completion, and asked if it was still possible to accomplish them.

Slade: Noted there has been a hard look at setting priorities and assured that this is about the scale and functioning that the parks department has been working at the last couple of years.

Sipress: Questioned if park staff are prepared to move the timeline back if needed.

Slade: Confirmed yes.

MOTION/Second: Breeuwer/Vogtman to approve the St. Louis River Corridor trails plan. **VOTE:** 7-0 in favor

V. Commission Committees

- A. Parks and Facilities – meeting date: TBA
Chair - Michael Schraepfer – Jon Welles, Ed Hall, John Schmidt [Dale Sellner]
- B. Administrative (E-Board) – meeting date: 12/15 at 12:00pm in the Parks office
Chair – Ed Hall – John Schmidt, Amanda Crosby [Lindsay Dean]
- C. Trails and Bikeways – meeting date: 11/1 at 5:30
Chair – Tjaard Breeuwer– Tiersa Wodash, Jodi Tervo Roberts, Art Johnston, Mike Casey, Eric Viken, Shawna Mullen [Judy Gibbs]
- D. Recreation Programming (youth and adult) – meeting date: TBA
Chair - Jon Welles – Jodi Tervo Roberts, Erik Torch, Amanda Crosby [Pamela Page]

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

No Reports

VII. New Business

- A. 2016 Mini-Master Plans in Progress & 2017 Mini-Master Plans: Andrew Slade submitted a proposed schedule of 2017 planning projects, which included projects nearing completion, projects to be begun and ended in 2017, and projects to be started in 2017 and completed in 2018. Nine Mini-Master Plans may be completed in 2017.
- B. Nominating Committee for Officers: President Hall described the process to be followed for nominating officers in advance of a vote at the January 2017 Commission Meeting. Hall will meet with the other Commission member whose board term expires in 2017 JC Welles and they will nominate a slate of officers.
- C. Parks Fund Grant Selection Committee Members for 2017: On behalf of Lindsay Dean, Andrew Slade reported, “We’re looking for two commissioners to join the Selection Committee to help the Parks Fund Grants decision process. The Selection Committee is made of Park Commissioners, a City Councilor, Duluth Superior Area Community Foundation staff, City staff,



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2016

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 West 1st St



and Legacy Endowment Fund Board Members. The group meets twice a year in April and October". If interested, please contact Lindsay Dean.

VIII. Old Business

- A. Update on Grant Awards and Applications: Andrew Slade explained the City sent a press release on December 9th about grant recipients. \$39,100 in grants for 8 projects.
- B. Update on St. Louis River Corridor & Neighborhood Park Plans: Andrew Slade reported that all relevant material had been covered under other topics.

IX. Division Manager's Report

On behalf of Lindsay Dean, Parks & Recreation Manager, Andrew Slade reported:

"In addition to looking for commissions to join the Parks Fund Grant Selection Committee we are also looking for commissioners to join the Chester Creek Concert Series Selection Committee. In 2015, we created a more objective process for choosing bands for Chester Creek Summer Concerts. A committee was formed, an application created and a deadline set. Over 30 musical acts applied to fill 10 available vacancies in 2015. The Committee, plus representatives from Chester Bowl Improvement Club, reviewed the applications in the spring, including web-links to sample applicants' music. On selection day, the Committee met, discussed the objectives and voted. We received positive feedback from the public about the new selection process. If you have any questions about the role, JC Welles is the outgoing commissioner. If you're interested in joining, please let me know. Thanks! Lindsay".

Slade: Reported on the Chester Bowl cross-country trail, explaining that this winter will be the last of three trial years to see if both hikers and skiers could share use of the ski trails. Signs have been installed at most trail junctions explaining the trial and the fact that the Parks Commission will review results of the trial this spring. Parks staff will also survey trail users to help inform the decision.

Councilor Sipress: Shared enthusiasm in seeing the results of the report and reaching a conclusion to the Chester Bowl trail process.

Hall: Commented that Chester had been a "vibrant, evolutionary process."

X. Public Comment

Denette Lynch: Commented on 2017 Memorial Park Plan and questioned why if there was a 2012 and 2014 plan would there need to be more money spent on consultant fees to re-do the plan.

Breeuwer: Expressed appreciation for the updated planning process for the Commission, including the stakeholder and public meetings.

Mike Casey: Shared appreciation for Judy Gibbs and her commitment and communication with the public, noting it will be hard to fill her boots. Discussed the four stakeholder meetings from 3-6pm and noted the following key points about them:



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes of December 14, 2016

City Hall – Council Chambers
411 West 1st St



- 2 of 4 meetings focused solely on water access points
- 1 meeting on signage
- Each meeting was an hour of review
- The last meeting was all presentation from the City
- There was never a vision and little talk about trail or rail-and-trail.
- For such a significant parks development, this is lacking a vision

Richard Haney: Shared that he retired from UMD and served on Parks Commission decades ago and worked with Judy Gibbs on the Outdoor Program, emphasizing that Judy deserves credit for her vision of the trails and bikeways committee. Commended mayors on SLRC initiative, and noted that Duluth's legacy is in its waters. Noted that for many Duluthians, the area west of the Point of Rocks does not exist and explained its importance as Duluth's Native American history began along the St. Louis River. Also recommended that as we build trails, we should address abilities of all citizens, including those of limited abilities, noting that the Lake Superior and Mississippi Railroad allows people of limited ability to experience the river area.

Vogtman: Shared his experience of WWFT stakeholder meetings and noted that passing the plans tonight is a big deal and captures the history of both the city and the neighborhood. Discussed the talk of the town in the west side and the trails that will attract people to move to town. Passing these plans opens opportunities for locals and attracts new visitors. Thanked everyone, including Judy Gibbs.

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjournment. Moved by Torch, second by Wodash.

XII. Next meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday January 11, 2015 at 5pm in the City Council Chambers.