



PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes August 11, 2021

City Hall Council Chamber



I. Call Meeting to Order

President Crosby called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Present: Amanda Crosby, David Demmer, Britt Rohrbaugh, Jenny Peterson, Barb Darland, Natalie Chin, Kala Pedersen, City Council Liaison – Arik Forsman, St. Louis County Commissioner – Ashley Grimm, Jill Lofald – ISD 709 School Board Liaison

Not Present: Tjaard Breeuwer, Noah Kramer

III. Approval of June 9 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Rohrbaugh motioned for approval of the June 9 meeting minutes; second by Commissioner Demmer. Unanimously approved.

IV. Presentations

A. Meet Project Technician, Katie Bennett (Informational) Jess Peterson, Manager

B. County Land Exchange (Action Requested) Diane Desotelle, Natural Resources Coordinator and Steven Robinson, Senior Planner with Planning and Economic Development

Demmer shared he was pleased to hear that the public's voices were heard regarding concerns on Dodge Street. Questioned what the steps would be to have a formalized trail in the Downer area. Jess Peterson shared that within the Council-approved Duluth Traverse Mini Master Plan, for example, there are proposed trails that City staff can approve. Demmer questioned what the purpose is of the Duluth Natural Areas ordinance. Desotelle indicated this plan defines categories of items that have significant ecological value for permanent protection. Demmer questioned what it means for the management of forested land that isn't urban. Desotelle shared community partners and the City are developing a plan to define roles, funding, and education to manage the lands.

Crosby questioned how this will correlate with the Parks and Recreation Master Plan. Desotelle shared that that Natural Resources Program Management Plan will be included with the Master Plan, and the land swap does include non-park land, which would be included in a separate plan. Jess Peterson clarified that the Natural Resource Program Management Plan and the Parks and Recreation Master Plan are two separate but concurrent planning processes.

Chin questioned the timeline for the acquisition of the land. Desotelle shared if the acquisition passes City Council, the City has three years to complete the deeds. Jim Filby Williams shared a meeting will be taking place with the County tomorrow morning to further discuss the timeline. Crosby questioned how this will be included with the Climate Action Plan. Desotelle indicated collaboration is taking place with other climate agencies.

Darland questioned how maintenance and invasive species management will be developed. Desotelle shared grant money is being used to develop a program plan. Shared the Director of CISMA works closely with the City to develop a priority list and provide consultation on management practices.

Peterson motioned to approve the list of tax forfeit parcels in St. Louis River, Mission, Piedmont, Hartley, Downer, and Lester/Amity public land project areas, as well other specifically indicated parcels that the City admin has proposed for city acquisition and permanent protection.



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That the City Council, simultaneous with acquisition formally designates city parks those parcels that the city admin has indicated for conveyance for park use under State Statute.

The City Council simultaneous with acquisition designate as portions of the St. Louis River Natural Areas all parcels previously recommended for inclusion so that all such parcels will be immediately subject to the protections of the Duluth Natural Areas Program ordinance and the St. Louis River Natural Area Management Plan. Second Pedersen. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

C. Proposed Amendments to Chapter 35 Article III – Public Golf Courses (Action Requested) Jess Peterson, Manager

Peterson questioned if this went through the Public Golf Committee. Demmer indicated that three drafts have been reviewed by the Public Golf Committee, and much of the conversation dealt with who can do what (such as openings and closures). Indicated this language was unanimously approved and believes this will make the golf program more efficient, which was affirmed by Indigo Golf.

Chin questioned how the fee structure worked in the past, and how it will be changed. Jess Peterson shared this has been part of the fee schedule, which includes everything that is charged and approved by City Council. Shared the fee schedule doesn't allow amendments during the year. This plan gives flexibility to the golf course manager based off supply and demand.

Jenny Peterson questioned if there will be land available to be developed. Jess Peterson shared there is land identified for potential development.

Demmer motioned to approve the amendments to Chapter 35 Article III – Public Golf Courses Ordinance. Darland second. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

V. Commissioner Committees

Administrative (E-Board) meeting date: Thursday, September 30 at noon, virtual meeting on Webex
Amanda Crosby, Tjaard Breeuwer [Jess Peterson, Jessica Haig, Jim Filby Williams]

Public Golf Committee – Wednesday, September 8 at 5 p.m., virtual meeting on Webex
David Demmer, Noah Kramer [Jess Peterson, Todd Armbruster, Jessica Haig, Jim Filby Williams]

VI. Commissioner & Liaison Reports

A. Public Golf Committee Report (Informational) Commissioner Demmer, Chair of Committee

Demmer provided an update on the Enger Golf Course Renovation planning process and timeline. Jess Peterson shared that after further review and analysis, the layout of Enger Park Golf Course will remain as-is with only slight adjustments. The proposed sale and development of the driving range did not prove financially beneficial to the overall golf course renovation and will no longer be moving forward.

VII. New Business

VIII. Old Business

A. Baywalk Project Update (Informational) Cliff Knettel, Senior Planner

Darland questioned how the DECC has been involved with the planning. Knettel indicated the DECC Board Members have been involved with the planning process, meeting weekly on this project. Mentioned AMI Engineering and the Port Authority have been involved with planning and guiding with regulations.



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Jenny Peterson questioned how long the corridor needs to be placed and how circulation will be impacted. Knettel shared it will need to be temporary for loading and unloading purposes. Indicated that while this is taking place – there would be a reroute for traffic flow. Mentioned this could take a couple of hours. Shared the other corridor will need to stay permanently, as vessels could be docked for several days.

Rohrbaugh shared this could be a big problem in regards to circulation, especially with shows taking place at Bayfront. Questioned if a tunnel or some sort of alternative could take place. Knettel indicated there are several different types of vessels, where a common design would not have worked. Stated the international vessels will cause issues, all other vessels will not impact circulation.

Lofald questioned if there are alternative locations to dock vessels. Shared it would be important to define the long-range desires of having more cruise ships attracted to our city. Knettel indicated due to security concerns, this was the only viable spot for border patrol.

Forsman questioned how safety was examined with this project. Knettel indicated communications with the Chief of the Duluth Fire Department have occurred. Forsman questioned if there is an idea to go up around the parking lot, rather than around the movie theater.

Jenny Peterson questioned if the parking north of Amsoil is existing. Knettel confirmed it was. Peterson questioned if there would be additional parking added. Knettel indicated there would not be.

Darland questioned what the plan is for having a barrier between the walk way and the lake. Knettel indicated there will be signage and there is an opportunity to add buoys, and there will be a fence on the top of the seawall.

Demmer highlighted the importance of having art installations. Shared concerns with the alternative route, which should include signage showing the route. Questioned if an access will take place for a canoe and kayak launch. Knettel indicated it is important to hear the community comments, and believes there is a place in the project for this idea.

Crosby questioned how deep the water is. Knettel indicated it is around 20 feet, and dredging will need to take place for some of the vessels. Shared a final presentation will be given to the Parks and Recreation Commission in October.

IX. Division Report

Jess Peterson shared six in person focus group meetings occurred earlier in the week, which included approximately 60 citizens. An internal project advisory committee has been formed and includes staff, members of various boards and commissions as well as citizens.

Crosby motioned to request a Special Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting on September 15 at 5:00 p.m. to take action on the Enger Park Golf Course Renovation Plan and discuss the conveyance of land parcel(s) at Lester Park Golf Course from the City to DEDA. Unanimously approved. Motion carries.

X. Public Comment

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 6:59 pm.



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XII. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 15.