

Minutes

Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission



Meeting date: October 2, 2025

Time: 4:00 PM

Location: Cleary Lake Regional Park

Members present:

- ☒ Chair, Tony Yarusso, at large
- ☐ Monica Dillenburg, District A
- ☐ Vacant, District B

- ☒ Tess Bouska, District C
- ☒ David Yakes, District D
- ☐ Chris Suerig, District E
- ☐ Cecily Harris, District F

- ☐ Anthony Taylor, District G
- ☒ Amanda Duerr, District H
- ☒ Wendy Wulff, Council Liaison
- ☐ = present, E = excused

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Metropolitan Council acknowledges that the land we currently call Minnesota and specifically the seven-county region is the ancestral homeland of the Dakota Oyate who are present and active contributors to our thriving region. As part of the Metropolitan Council's commitment to address the unresolved legacy of genocide, dispossession, and settler colonialism and the fact that government institutions, including the Metropolitan Council, benefitted economically, politically, and institutionally after the forceable removal of the Dakota Oyate, the Metropolitan Council is dedicated to instilling Land, Water, and People Commitments in regional policy. These commitments support the Dakota Oyate, the eleven federally recognized Tribes in Minnesota, Ho-Chunk Nation, and the American Indian Communities representing over 150 diverse Tribal Nations that call the seven-county region home.

Call to order

Without a quorum being present, Committee Chair Yarusso called the regular meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission to order at 4:09 p.m.

Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment

The Dakota Land, Water, and People Acknowledgment was noted by Chair Yarusso.

Agenda approved

Without a quorum present, Chair Yarusso suggested moving the Information Item ahead of the Business Items, in the hopes that a quorum would become present. Agenda approved.

Approval of minutes

Postponed awaiting a quorum.

Public invitation

None.

Information Item

Update on the Revised Slate of Outcomes Measures for the Regional Parks and Trails System (Colin Kelly, 651-602-1361 and Kevin Phan, 651-602-1333)

Kelly and Phan gave an update on the revised Slate of Outcomes Measures for the Regional Parks and Trails System as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso commented on the shoreline miles measures and asked, whether progress has been made with partners? Phan responded that they are working with Environmental Services and the DNR and are making progress.

Approval of minutes

With a quorum now present and with the correction of Yake's name throughout the minutes (erroneously spelled Yates) it was moved by Yakes, seconded by Duerr to approve the minutes of September 4, 2025, Special meeting of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission.

Motion carried.

Business item

1. 2025-242, West Mississippi River Regional Trail, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Award (Meyer), Three Rivers Park District (Jessica Lee, 651-602-1621)

Lee gave a presentation on a Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund request from Three Rivers Park District for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail (Meyer property) as outlined in the materials provided.

Yakes asked what the property values of unacquired parcels are. Lee stated it often depends on whether they have homes on the property or not.

Chair Yarusso questioned the legal description. Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District stated he doesn't understand the 'legal speak' but noted that there is a clear title to this acquisition.

It was moved by Duerr, seconded by Yakes, that the Metropolitan Council:

Approve a grant of up to \$332,408 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Three Rivers Park District to acquire a 1.59-acre parcel located at 16560 Dayton River Road in Dayton, MN, for the West Mississippi River Regional Trail:

Motion carried.

2. 2025-243, Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail, Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund Award (CCRRA Phase 2), Carver County (Jessica Lee, 651-602-1621)

Lee gave a presentation on a Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund request from Carver County for the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail (CCRRA Phase 2) as outlined in the materials provided.

Chair Yarusso asked about road crossings. Marty Walsh, Carver County, responded that railroad crossings already exist in the corridor and are controlled.

It was moved by Yakes, seconded by Duerr, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve a grant of up to \$1,368,375 from the Park Acquisition Opportunity Fund to Carver County to acquire in easement approximately 7.7 acres of a former Carver County Regional Railroad Authority corridor located in Chaska, MN, for the Minnesota River Bluffs Regional Trail.
2. Authorize the Executive Director of the Community Development Division to execute the grant agreement and restrictive covenant on behalf of the Council.

Motion carried.

3. 2025-245, Cleary Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan, Scott County (Tracey Kinney, 651-602-1029)

Kinney gave a presentation on the Cleary Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan as outlined in the materials provided.

It was moved by Yakes, seconded by Duerr, that the Metropolitan Council:

1. Approve the Cleary Lake Regional Park Long-Range Plan.
2. Advise Scott County to consider implementing the recommendations for solar resources and population forecasts in the Advisory Comments section of the business item.

Motion carried.

Reports

1. Chair – Chair Yarusso noted that there is an Open House on October 3, 2025 at Lebanon Hills for the Greenway Project from 3:30 – 6:00 p.m.
2. Committee Members – None.
3. Council Liaison – None.
4. Staff – Mullin noted that the November 6, 2025 MPOSC meeting only has one agenda item for a small amendment to the Gale Woods Farms Special Feature that can be done administratively, and suggested that meeting be canceled. Chair Yarusso described the proposed park boundary change and then Three Rivers Park District explained how this would allow them to acquire the land. Lee explained that the landowner wants to make the sale before the 1st of the year (2026).

Mullin discussed the timeline and while we do not want this action to set a precedence, he noted that this item would need to go to the Community Development Committee on November 3, 2025 and to the full Council on November 12, 2025 for the landowner to be able to close by the desired date. The Committee agreed to cancel the November 6, 2025 MPOSC meeting and unanimously recommended that this action move forward as discussed.

Chair Yarusso made a motion to offer the following resolution: Be it resolved that:

1. Council staff are directed to proceed with presenting a business item for a PAOF grant to Three Rivers Park District of up to \$365,356 to acquire approximately 1.58 acres located at 6801 County Road 15 in Minnetrista (Pieper property) for Gale Woods Farm Special Feature;
2. MPOSC supports approval of that acquisition as described in principle; and
3. This should be understood as an unusual circumstance to accommodate a willing seller's wishes, and not an indication of future procedure.

Yakes seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Adjournment

Business completed; the meeting adjourned at 5:16p.m.

Certification

I hereby certify that the foregoing narrative and exhibits constitute a true and accurate record of the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission meeting of October 2, 2025.

Approved this 4th day of December 2025.

Council contact:

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