

**Como Regional Park Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes – April 8, 2014**

Members Present: Dan Marckel, Pete Bolstad, Kathy Korum, Tom Dapper, Shirley Erstad, Tom Koshenina, Elizabeth Stiffler

Guest: Michelle Furrer

Introductions:

Shirley Erstad of Friends of Parks and Trails gave a brief description of the Friends of the Parks and Trails program. Shirley explained the Friends Tree sale program to the committee. The orders for the sale are due April 18, 2014.

Discussion/Decision Items:

- **Pedicabs** – The committee discussed possible recommendations for a pilot program for Twin Town Pedicabs in Como Regional Park and other City of St. Paul Parks. Ms. Korum indicated there was some concern amongst Como Campus management and the Parks Administration about having the pedicabs on the sidewalks during peak times of the parks. The committee agreed to use certain events as test projects using the pedicabs. The Lake Phalen Dragon Boat Festival, Ethiopian Fest, Water Fest and possibly Hillcrest Theatre weekend at Black Bear crossing were seen as possible events that Twin Town Pedicabs could use as test dates.
- **Como Regional Park Map Updates** – The committee reviewed the map of Como Regional Park and suggestions made by a Como Park resident. The committee offered possible additions to the map including listing Metro Transit stops, McMurray field signs, bus stops by the Conservatory, Nice Ride stop, Shuttle stops and shuttle routes. The committee was informed that the map of the permit parking was inaccurate. Elizabeth Stiffler agreed to send maps of the permit area to Ms. Korum so that most accurate information can be placed on the Como Regional Park map.

Updates:

- **Emerald Ash Borer:** The committee was informed that the tree removal project on Lexington Parkway would begin on Friday, April 11 with the plan of finishing the removal of trees by April 25. The committee was informed that the Forestry department hoped to plant 253 trees by end of May. Door knocker signs will be used for the affected area. Water bags will be distributed to the area of new planting.
- **Park Clean-ups:** The committee was reminded that park clean-up events would be occurring this weekend. The clean-up events are occurring at Como Park, Phalen, Highland, Harriet Island, Indian Mounds Park and Linwood.
- **Como Campus Parking Lot Signage:** Ms. Korum informed the committee of plans for the installation of the electronic parking lot signs in mid-April/end of April. The signs for Wolf and Palm lot will be completed first.
- **Historic Pedestrian Bridge:** The original contractor for this project went out of business and bids went out for a new vendor. The committee was informed that MNDOT will have final approval for the project due to the historic nature of the bridge. The committee learned that the railings for the pedestrian bridge may not be included in the first stage of project.
- **Como Campus Updates:** Michelle Furrer informed the committee of the plans for Hoofed Stock improvements and reported that the project would be completed in five phases. Ms. Furrer indicated the plans include a feeding station for the giraffes and summer programs. Ms. Furrer reported on plans for celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Marjorie McNeely Conservatory including the planting of a Centennial Garden. The committee reviewed pictures of proposed future gardens. Ms. Furrer indicated the plan is to have the Centennial Garden completed by June 2015 in conjunction with the American Public Garden Associations Conference at that time. June 2015.
- **Bonding Bill:** Ms. Furrer reported on the progress of the bonding bill for transportation and circulation and improvements to the Seals/Sea Lions area. The bill is requesting \$8.9 M for the project. The Minnesota House passed a \$5.4 M version of the bill for transportation. The Senate had not acted on the bonding bill as of the time of this meeting. Ms. Furrer indicated the \$1.1M requested for parking was consistent with the P1 recommendation from the Como Regional Park Transportation Implementation Plan. Michelle

indicated there were no specific plans for the location of any potential lot. Dan suggested any proposals for parking be run through this committee.

- Golf Vendor at Como: The committee was informed that the Como Course is scheduled to open sometime next week. The Phalen and Highland courses are scheduled to open this week. Dan Marckel summarized the public hearing at Wellstone and noted that the Parks Commission appreciated hearing from community about their concerns/issues. Dan indicated the Parks Commission was able to incorporate public input into the recommendations made to staff for the final document. The Parks Commission was pleased by the public participation. Tom commented that the process was very short for the folks around Phalen since they only had three months lead time. Tom talked about how Prom has not actually operated a golf course and golfers want to take a “wait and see” approach and have a “mixed” reaction. Kathy provided a nuts and bolts” update about staffing changes at the two courses. They will be keeping a safety office at Phalen. Tom expressed concern that the rates went up and the timing of those increases. Prom can’t exceed the rates set by the city but could offer discounts
- CRPAC web page: Ms. Korum informed the committee that the minutes are up to date on the CRPAC web page.

Next Scheduled Meeting: The committee was informed that the next committee meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 10, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,
Pete Bolstad
Reviewed by Kathy Korum