

**FINAL
Lake Elmo Park Commission
Minutes of the Regular Meeting
September 21, 2009**

Chairman Ames called the meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Ames, Booher, Blackford, Zeno, Dunn, Steele, Larson

STAFF PRESENT: Project Assistant Kriegler

Agenda

Agenda was approved. (M/S, Blackford/Dobbs, 7-0)

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Minutes

August 17, 2009 minutes approved as amended. (M/S Steele / Zeno, 5-0, Larson, Booher abstaining)

Minutes corrected to reflect that Steele abstained in approval of the May minutes.

August 24, 2009 minutes approved. (M/S Larson / Blackford, 4-0 with Dunn, Booher, Zeno abstaining)

“Embrace” award for the city’s conservation efforts at Sunfish Lake Park and possible recognition

Kriegler reported that “Embrace” is interested in presenting an award to the City in recognition of its efforts in placing Sunfish Lake Park in conservation easement with the Minnesota Land Trust. “Embrace Open Space” is a collaborative among Twin Cities organizations concerned about protecting open space in our region. Their primary goal is to serve as a catalyst for greater citizen and elected leadership to conserve and steward natural areas and parks, lakes and rivers in the 11 county Twin Cities Metropolitan area. In addition, the organization would like to participate in some sort of event when the award is presented, preferably in the park. Embrace has expressed a willingness to publicize and promote the recognition event.

Individuals expressed their appreciation for the recognition and interest in conducting an event of some sort. They also expressed a preference for conducting the event in the spring, rather than rushing to do something this fall. With all of the planned improvement activities scheduled for the park in the spring, they would like the recognition event to be conducted in conjunction with one of the planned improvements. Kriegler responded that she would forward those desires back to Embrace.

Discussion on Sunfish Lake Park Area 2 concept plan development

The Commission reviewed the current draft of the Area 2 concept plan. The recently approved Sunfish Lake Park Conservation Easement to the Minnesota Land Trust states that Area 2 of the park, a 20 acre portion, may have limited development for education, outdoor recreation and nature observation purposes, in accordance with a city approved concept plan.

Steele commented that he thought the plan should include an introduction of some sort. He agreed to craft one on behalf of the Commission. Concerning the draft narrative related to prairie / oak savanna, considerable discussion took place as to whether the concept plan should include specifications related to the prairie. Kriegler reported that this was not necessary. The DNR grant for the prairie restoration requires that the restored plant community resemble what would have existed during pre-settlement times and that there are resources available to assist in the determination of the appropriate plant types / seed mixes. The City will be required to provide a prairie restoration and management plan to the Land Trust and DNR for their approval. Members expressed that the prairie restoration RFP be based on well researched and rational specifications. They also expressed the interest in having as much of the restoration work completed by city staff, volunteers, and outside non-profit organizations.

There was some discussion about the parking area and the future size and configuration that it might take on in the future. There was some discussion about the need for the parking lot to take on a size and shape that would accommodate school buses and trailers. It was decided to simplify the last sentence of the paragraph without specifying any particular user group needs. Rather, the commission expressed that all of the concept planning should be based on the following:

- Consideration for meeting the needs of all park users.
- Consideration of the impacts on neighbors.
- Consideration for ensuring public safety.

Sunfish Lake Park West

Once the landfill clean-up project is complete, the footprint of the landfill will be reduced by about 6 acres. The Commission reviewed a "footprint" map showing the location of the landfill as it exists now, as well as the anticipated boundaries of the landfill once the clean-up project is complete. Blackford expressed concern over the accuracy of the boundary indicated on the map and asked that the matter be reviewed. Final grading plans showing contours of the area were also reviewed. Kreigler reported that there will not be any infrastructure located in the "turn-back area" and that there will be very few, if any limitations on future uses for the area. She also reported that the MPCA staff is very willing to meet with the commission to have a discussion related to the opportunities and limitations for the site. Members requested that the MPCA attend the October meeting.

Chairman Ames requested that items on the agenda that were not covered, be placed on the front end of next month's agenda.

Adjourned 9:05

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Kriegler,
Project Assistant