September 28, 2009

Como Woods Advisory Committee meeting minutes

Attendees: Nick Beerman, Alison Bunge, Keith Philippe, Deb Robinson, Josh Leonard, Teri Heyer, Jennifer Otremba, Joan Mc Kearnan, Adam Robbins.

**PRIORITIES FOR 2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR:**

* Continue pursuing School Forest designation.

DECISION—start with asking if Como Sr. High would we willing to be the primary school—the agreement would be between MN DNR, Como Sr. High, and St. Paul Parks and Rec. (SPPR) Josh indicated that the principal would be supportive of this idea.

ACTION-Teri, Josh, and Jessica meet to begin discussing this.

ACTION-Teri ask MN DNR, Amy Kay what the process would be as more schools come on board.

* How to schedule schools to use the property? What happens now for other facilities is a reservation is taken by phone, no on-line system and no on-line calendar. It would be good to have a calendar to help in tracking how the site is used.

DECISION—for now reservations will come via Megan at environment@ci.stpaul.mn.us or 651-632-2459.

DECISION-Jennifer will set up a Google calendar, Megan will contact Jennifer to add events to the calendar. (Adam informing Megan of this).

ACTION-Deb will contact Great River School and Jessica Como Sr. High about this new step.

Long term scheduling might be given over to the new volunteer/education coordination at SPPR to be hired in July 2010.

* Web site update-there are both short term and long term issues related to this. Short term the site need updating. Long term not sure where the site will end up residing and functioning if SPPR takes it over. A suggestion was made that makes sense is that there may need eventually to be two sites: one for SPPR consisting about basic information about the site, how to reserve a time and another for the Advisory Committee. But in the meantime the site needs some updating.

ACTION—Jennifer will take a shot at updating the website and send it out to the Advisory Committee to comment on.

* A financial partner. If the AC is going continuing pursuing grants to fund our activities a financial partner will be needed. A logical place to start is the Parks Conservancy.

ACTION-have Jim Olson for the Parks Conservancy come to our next AC meeting to discuss with us how we might be able to partner with them.

* Teaching materials-as we develop partnerships more with teachers teaching materials will be needed. This is also the “match” included in the LCCMR grant. We need to come to a consensus of what this would look like. The original vision was one of teachers and students writing multi-disciplinary lesson plans (art, history, science, math), perhaps seasonal suggestions, by grade levels. As teachers use the web-based materials they could add their own suggestions or ideas. Teri commented that there are many EE curriculum already out there including. These are still useful but it still would be helpful to have SITE SPECIFIC ideas. Also keep in mind that if the CWOC does become a School Forest and the DNR provides training they will be working with national curricula such as Project Learning Tree.

**UPCOMING ACTIVITIES**

* Como Sr. High Field Day held 9/25, went well despite rain. More mentors are needed for spring event, tentatively scheduled for **May 21, 2010.**  Another need is looking at the data collected to see if it can be organized better and what the long term use of it might be. A good suggestion was that the mentors make sure that at least the name, date, and plot number are on the data sheets from the group they are working with.

ACTION—Joan, Josh, Jessica Ley, and Keith will meet to discuss this issue of data use and organization.

* Buckthorn Bust-next one is Sat. Oct. 24, see flyer. Looking for about 50 people: 25 students and 25 adult volunteers. ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PLEASE COME IF YOU ARE ABLE.
* Teri informed the group that the Forest Service will be providing more grant funding through the “More Kids in the Woods” program. She will see if there are any suggestions for improving our odds this time (ranked well regionally but not when competed with project across the country.)

ACTION—Teri will connect with other FS folks, review the proposal, and make suggestions as to how to proceed next meeting.

NEXT MEETING-SO WE CAN GET ON FOLKS CALENARS EARLY THE DECISION WAS MADE TO HAVE OUR MEETING THE LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH, 7-8:30 pm. The location will continue at the Streetcar station unless notified.

ACTION—Teri will call Rhonda to reverse that time on the District 10 calendar.