Como Woods Outdoor Classroom Advisory committee

MINUTES

Monday, February 22, 2010

Attendees: Deb R, Bob Hale, Sally Worku, Ruth McDonald, Teri H, Jennifer O, Alison Bunge, Adam R, Josh Leonard, Kelley Dinsmore

1. Status of web site redesign. Jennifer/Ruth

<http://www.butterflydesign.com/newcomowoodland/>

Almost ready to go!!! Many thanks to Jennifer and Ruth.

Follow up actions :

Joan-talk with Jessica about moving Como study site data to the website and also a blank data sheet.-Teri check with Joan on this

Deb-additional pictures may be needed

All-need search words, Deb will send out a request email

1. Status of LCCMR grant-feedback from committee meeting and bill discussion.

Many thanks to the 5 folks that attended the hearing: Alison, Ann, Deb, Susan Jane, and Sharon. See notes attached from Deb Robinson. Deb will keep us posted if any our presence at any additional legislative committee meetings would be beneficial. Bottomline: nothing is for certain especially this year with the budget deficit, there was also concern about the EE projects in general from a committee member, and also there is a hunt for funds ($1M) for EAB related activities.

1. Introduction of new SPPR education staff person—Kelley Dinsmore!! Kelley used to work at the Como Zoo and has extensive background in EE including serving on the state EE board. Welcome to Kelley.

ACTION: set up meeting in March with new ed person to discuss how this person will assist us in implementing the School Forest designation, curriculum development and teacher training. Expressed interest in attending: Deb, Joan, Teri, Adam, and Josh.

1. Update from History/Kilmer memorial rededication subcommittee, see attached minutes from Deb.
2. Other grant opportunities?

Captain Planet Foundation

www.captainplanetfoundation.org

Promote understanding of environmental issues   
• Focus on hands-on involvement   
• Involve children and young adults 6-18 (elementary through high school)   
• Promote interaction and cooperation within the group   
• Help young people develop planning and problem solving skills   
• Include adult supervision   
• Commit to follow-up communication with the Foundation (specific requirements are explained once the grant has been awarded)

* Grant amt usually between $250 and 2,500
* All applicant organizations or sponsoring agencies must be exempt from federal taxation under the Internal Revenue Code Section 501, in order to be eligible for funding (this includes most schools and non-profit organizations). Deadlines for submitting grant applications are March 31, June 30, September 30, and December 31.

Decision-not at the time but maybe the Great Rivers school would be interested. Teri will email Tammy about this.

This lead to a discussion on fiscal agents which the committee would need to partner with to apply for a grant as we are not a 501-c3 non profit organization. Possibilities include:

* Como Friends—Kelley will approach the Zoo director, Michelle about this.
* Belwin Conservancy-the selling is that the classroom would be considered a “satellite EE site”-Josh will look into this
* MN Assoc. for EE-Kelley will check into
* EcoEduation-Josh will check into
* Local branch of the Sierra Club
* Audubon

Teacher materials: what grade levels make sense for us to concentrate on:

Here are the science emphasis for grades 1-5:

1. Animal 3 life science standards
2. Plants 3 life science standards
3. Plants/animals not many life science standards
4. Adaptations not many life science standards
5. Adaptation 5 life science standards

Hold over actions from prior meetings not completed yet:

ACTION-Teri will get a sample School Forest agreement from MN DNR and amend

it to include Como Sr. High and St. Paul Parks and Recreation.-in process but slowed down.

ACTION-Jessica will brief the Como Park Sr. high principal about the School

Forest concept.-NOT done.

ACTION-Teri will work Adam on the amendments are they relate to Park and

Rec and also who should represent Park and Rec with a follow up meeting

with Como Sr. high principal.NOT done

ACTION-once the agreement has been drawn up have a meeting with Como Sr.

High principal to present it for his signing. NOT done.

Deb Robinson’s report for Advisors 2-22-10

LCCMR report Deb, Sharon, Susan Jane, Ann, and Alison (Matt drove) attended Senate Environment, Energy and Natural Resources Budget Division hearing for SF 2462, Environment and Natural Resources appropriations bill (authored by Sen. Ellen Anderson, presented by her with Susan Thornton, Director of LCCMR). All 48 of the LCCMR recommended projects were mentioned and Sen. Anderson introduced our group. I had prepared packets for all five in our group just in case we were asked any questions. Strong vocal advocates for passage were Senators Frederickson (R) and Vickerman (DFL) – (both are also members of LCCMR). Two vocal detractors on the committee were Senators Bakk (DFL running for Gov., he thinks land purchases in this bill should be converted to job creation spending such as park & trail maintenance; he left room before vote) and Hann (R; criticized some of the educational recommended projects and questioned how they were chosen). Hann voted against passage of bill, all other voted yes to pass the bill on to Ways and Means Committee. After the vote, a rep from DNR addressed the committee and said that the DNR was going to request that 1million be taken out of SF 2462 and given to DNR to use for EAB/tree removal on private property – and DNR would be pursuing that 1M as SF 2462 goes through other committees and to the house and senate floor votes. (So, getting LCCMR funding is not a sure thing after all.) I’ll try to track the bill as it goes forward and keep you posted. I also requested, by email, that our proposal’s title be changed back to: “Get Outside! Urban Woodland for City Kids” (don’t know who changed or why).

**Website** JAN. 31: Deb wrote and sent images for website to Jennifer and Ruth for PROJECT TIMELINE, PROJECT FUNDING, PAST EVENTS, CURRICULUM (how to do a bird survey), HOMEPAGE WELCOME and PROJECT SUMMARY.

**History Subcommittee** Deb and Sharon met on February 11. (Katie emailed Deb some of her WW1 research and websites the following weekend). Deb has a detailed outline for Rededication booklet and on 1st draft sample chapter. Sharon has designed a “request for Dutch Ovens memories” flyer, submitted notice in Monitor, Bugle, D. 10 blast (and have received a few memories already).

Poet chosen for the workshops (recommended by Joan’s friend, TAP members, and others): John Minczeski is an award-winning poet and author of numerous collections and anthologies, including two anthologies of children's poetry. He has been a poet in schools for more than 30 years and is a frequent guest faculty in creative writing at universities across Minnesota. Sharon has gotten two schools onboard for the Poet-tree Workshops: Chelsea Heights and Como Park Elementary schools. The cost for both schools will be $600 (involving three classes in each school). So now we need to apply for grants and we need a fiscal sponsor before we apply for those grants.

Grants pursuing Target Foundation; Minnesota Regional Arts Council (will attend grant workshop March 9); 1 percent City Public Arts funding (Helgen looking into, Bryan not encouraging); Any ideas? Sharon and Deb will meet to work on Minn. Common Grant proposal February 24.

Fiscal agent search:

\*Deb attended D. 10’s Fund Development Committee to inquire about D. 10 fiscal sponsorship. The committee was very enthusiastic about it, but Committee Chair needed to get board approval. Fiscal sponsorship was discussed at D. 10 board meeting Feb. 16, but outcome not promising (and certainly not anytime soon will they be able to decide). New board Chair resigned after last board meeting and D. 10 very unstable again.

\*Sharon attended SPAS Conservation Committee meeting to renew SPAS fiscal sponsorship for the Poet-tree Program, and wrote to current SPAS President. He recommended that SPAS be a fiscal sponsor for us for this grant, but some decent came from new board member about providing fiscal sponsorships for any project.

\*Park & Rec? \*Any ideas?

Still not known (ask Jess or Josh): We were hoping to have the Rededication on same day as the May 2011 Field Day – we need to know if that field day can be mid week (and not Friday as it has been in past) May 17 or 18 would be best (can not be later, will conflict with Holiday; early May too cold).

UPDATE JAN. 28, FROM ADAM SENT THIS EMAIL TO ME: *I just wanted to answer a couple questions that came up at the CWOC meeting. Mike (Director of Parks & Rec?) has assured me that the funding for the coordinator positions is secure, appropriate, and a proven source for similar positions. No need to worry. Bryan is still working on details related to the Dutch oven reconstruction and the contractor is still a bit up in the air.*