



## Resolution 2023-70

### **RESOLUTION APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD AND THE TORO COMPANY REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH AND DELIVERY OF GUIDANCE ADVANCING A NET ZERO EMISSIONS POSITION FOR THE PARK BOARD**

Whereas, The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) was created by the Minnesota Legislature in April 1883 and has the authority to manage and operate park facilities;

Whereas, The MPRB cares for a wide range of park facilities, including neighborhood and regional parks, recreation fields, and golf courses, among others, with each containing a range of landscape types;

Whereas, Each park facility and landscape type carries the needs for specialized maintenance and perpetuation;

Whereas, The MPRB's maintenance of its park facilities employs a fleet that to varying degrees results in a contribution of a emissions with the potential for impacting park users, wildlife, and habitat;

Whereas, The MPRB anticipates an incremental evolution of its fleet, where practicable, with less dependence on fossil fuels;

Whereas, The MPRB continues to seek more efficient methods of caring for its park resources, especially where alternative maintenance strategies and energy sources can be applied;

Whereas, The MPRB is authorized to contract with public and private entities in the performance of its functions;

Whereas, The Toro Company (TTC) is a leading manufacturer of equipment employed in the care and perpetuation of landscapes, including parks and recreation areas and facilities;

Whereas, TTC continues to expand its range of equipment and tools that are not reliant on fossil fuels;

Whereas, TTC is conducting research through a number of leading park agencies across the United States with diverse holdings and locations in an effort to gain insights aimed at a position of net zero emissions;

Whereas, TTC desired to engage the MPRB as one of the park agencies through which such research will be conducted;



Whereas, TTC will deliver to the MPRB guidance directed to methods of identifying and implementing more sustainable practices supporting a position of net zero emissions;

Whereas, The MPRB has adopted performance goals supporting the Board of Commissioners' Strategic A, including a reduction in its carbon footprint of 25 percent by 2026 (when compared to 2018) and the advancement of 15 percent of resiliency projects identified in its master plans and the ecological system plan; and

Whereas, This resolution is supported by Parks for All, the MPRB Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036, which envisions Goal 3: "Provide core services with care" and Goal 4 "Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships;"

RESOLVED, That the Board of Commissioners approves a Memorandum of Understanding between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and The Toro Company regarding the conduct of research and deliver of guidance advancing a net zero emissions position for the Park Board; and

RESOLVED, That the President of the Board and Secretary to the Board are authorized to take all necessary administrative actions to implement this resolution.



TO: Administration & Finance Committee

FROM: Michael Schroeder, Assistant Superintendent, Planning

DATE: 26 April 2023

SUBJECT: RESOLUTION APPROVING A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE MINNEAPOLIS PARK AND RECREATION BOARD AND THE TORO COMPANY REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH AND DELIVERY OF GUIDANCE ADVANCING A NET ZERO EMISSIONS POSITION FOR THE PARK BOARD

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## **BACKGROUND**

This action considers approval of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB) and The Toro Company (TTC) regarding the conduct of research in collaboration with the MPRB and the delivery of guidance aligned with the Board of Commissioners' Strategic Directions and policy guidance from Parks for All related to a net zero emissions position for the MPRB.

TTC, a major manufacturer of landscape care and irrigation equipment, is undertaking a nationwide research effort aimed at better understanding the capacity of major land-entities to move toward a net zero emissions position. To accomplish this effort, TTC would engage up to eight leading public park and recreation organizations from across the nation to track equipment employed in their land care operations. TTC would provide and install monitoring devices, as needed, on the equipment of the park and recreation organizations, collecting a range of data regarding landscape types, equipment operation and maneuvering, and other key operational parameters. The collection period would continue across at least one entire year and likely two years after which a report outlining steps toward a net zero emissions strategy would be provided.

The strategy would be developed specific to the MPRB's goals as an agency. Ultimately, information gained by TTC may help it evolve equipment and/or services based on net zero emissions parameters and suited to the land care needs of organizations like the MPRB which is responsible for the care of thousands of acres of varied landscape types using a variety of equipment.

The MPRB has been expanding its non-fossil fuel dependent fleet and equipment, but that process has been incremental and does not address all vehicle and equipment needs of the MPRB. As the Board of Commissioners framed strategic directions for the organization, gaining increased insights into the potential of net zero emissions is an important first step. To support staff efforts, the Board has directed pursuit of Strategic Direction A: "Act boldly for our climate



future” with two performance goals:

- Carbon Footprint – By 2026, reduce the park board's operational carbon footprint by 25% from the 2018 level.
- Resiliency in Master Plans – Identify and track resiliency projects in service area master plans and the ecological system plan and advance 15% of identified projects by 2026.

Beyond the Strategic Directions, Parks for All, the MPRB Comprehensive Plan offers direction to evaluate equipment replacements with sustainable alternatives in mind.

TTC has provided a work plan and reviewed it with MPRB staff. Key to TTC’s efforts is the placement of monitoring devices on MPRB equipment. Early discussions reveal that devices currently deployed on MPRB’s fleet will meet TTC’s needs for digital collection. No other monitoring equipment would be required; if it is determined that additional devices are required, the costs would be covered by MPRB. MPRB would provide mapping and other digital information to TTC to allow for digital application of collected data to park and landscape types.

At the conclusion of TTC’s work, a guide would be provided to the MPRB outlining a recommendation for moving toward net zero emissions. The focus is expected to be on operations and maintenance practices although recommendations for an evolution of equipment might be anticipated. As indicated in the work plan, the recommendations are expected to fall across four topical areas:

- Green Space Management: TTC will conduct the investigations related to the management of the Park Board’s parks and other “green spaces;”
- Green Space Emissions Improvement: TTC will conduct investigations related to emissions of MPRB’s fleet and its operational practices;
- Green Space Water Management: TTC will investigate the Park Board’s water use practices; and
- Green Space Infrastructure Planning: TTC will, based on the tasks stated above and other work that may be necessary to achieve the goals supporting the Project, prepare materials for consideration by the Park Board as it moves toward a net zero emissions position.

As a study, the list of anticipated topics may be expanded or reduced on the basis of the type and extent of data collected and related findings.

A Non-Disclosure Agreement (NDA), as Exhibit A, is a part of the MOU for this effort. Staff in concert with legal counsel are satisfied that the conditions framed in the NDA can be addressed within the context of Minnesota laws and MPRB ordinances and policies.

There is no obligation for the MPRB to procure TTC equipment or services based on this work.



While staff will be assigned to this effort, their time will be directed to supporting and interpreting collected data. It is not expected that any data collection activities will result in delays or conflicts in the daily tasks of MPRB field staff.

Legal counsel has reviewed the Memorandum of Understanding and Non-Disclosure Agreement relative to form and legality.

***Staff requests this item, if reviewed favorably by Committee, to be advanced for Board consideration on May 10, 2023. TTC has made this request so the research can be initiated on the same schedule as other participating park agencies and to allow data collection during as much of the growing season as practicable.***

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board of Commissioners approve a Memorandum of Understanding between the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and The Toro Company regarding the conduct of research and deliver of guidance advancing a net zero emissions position for the Park Board.

This action is supported by the following goals and strategies in Parks for All, the MPRB Comprehensive Plan 2021-2036.

### **Goal:**

03. Provide core services with care

04. Work from our strengths and determine our role in partnerships

### **Strategy:**

05. Evaluate all equipment replacements with sustainable technology alternatives in mind.

13. Collaborate with other agencies and organizations to share best practices in parks and recreation, governance, engagement and public service.

This action is further supported by the following Strategic Direction and Performance Goal as approved by the Board of Commissioners as part of the MPRB's 2023 Budget:

Strategic Direction A Act boldly for our climate future

Performance Goal Carbon Footprint – By 2026, reduce the park board's operational carbon footprint by 25% from the 2018 level.

Performance Goal Resiliency in Master Plans – Identify and track resiliency projects in service area master plans and the ecological system plan and advance 15% of identified projects by 2026.



**Attachments:**

1. Attachment A - Memorandum of Understanding - Toro and MPRB
2. Attachment B - Exhibit A - NonDisclosure Agreement -Toro-MPRB

*Jbr 5.10.2023.*