



Office of the Common Council

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Dear Park Commissioners:

I write you today to respectfully ask you to reconsider the vote you took on item VI.C. at your April 14, 2010, meeting, regarding the management of geese in Warner Park.

I do not ask lightly that you do this, as I value your time and I realize that reconsideration may not result in a different outcome. However, it is clear to me that our constituents, the people I represent on the City Council and that you represent on the Board of Parks Commissioners, are angry and upset, both about your decision and the manner in which it was made. I feel you owe it to the public to reopen the discussion in a public forum. That should include an opportunity to hear information on what is being asked of the City and why, what we know and can learn about managing geese, what the proposed action is and how it would impact park users and other species in the park, and what alternative forms of management exist and/or have been tried. In addition, I believe the public should have a chance to comment on, and you should have a full discussion of, these issues. I realize that this vote was taken in a legally noticed public meeting and that the public had the opportunity to comment at the time. It is, however, clear to me that very few people knew that "goose management" would be discussed, much less that it meant killing geese in the park.

In the short term, I believe the solution is to reopen the discussion on this item. In the long term, I would like to work with you to find ways to better educate the community about issues on the Board of Park Commissioners agenda. Perhaps posting the agendas to our neighborhood listserv would be a good start, or putting the Parks Commission agenda on an RSS feed, or offering an email list individuals can sign up for to receive agendas and minutes of your meetings. I firmly believe that giving the public more information and inviting more public comment and discussion will result in better decisions and more public acceptance of those decisions.

Whether or not you reconsider your vote, I hope you will open your long-term policy on goose management throughout the City for a thorough and public discussion. Although some of my constituents have expressed their fondness for the geese in Warner Park, I understand the need to control the goose population for several reasons, including aviation safety, park user experience, and the integrity of the ecosystem in the park. I

am not writing this letter to ask you not to control the population; I am asking you to consider the methods you use to do so and, in the process, to ask and have answered the questions that have been raised publicly over the past weeks. These questions include:

- What is the goose population at Warner Park throughout the year?
- What is the difference between resident and migratory geese populations, and are different methods needed to control them?
- How much is the Warner Park population actually contributing to the problem at the airport?
- What is the airport doing onsite to prevent geese from interfering from flights? Why is there an increased concern now?
- What has the City done, at Warner Park or elsewhere, to discourage geese from visiting and/or nesting? What have other cities done? What do UW experts suggest? What has been successful?
- Have the measures in the "Clean Lakes & Beaches: A Water Quality Plan 2005-2006" relating to waterfowl management been implemented? If not, why not?
- If geese are going to be killed, how is it done? What is done with them? Can they be donated to food pantries?
- What will the impact of trapping/killing geese be on other species, especially cranes?
- Do you expect to have to kill geese every year if that is the adopted control strategy? How will you know if it is or isn't working? What will it cost the taxpayers to implement?

I hope you will take seriously my requests. I understand that you will be receiving a presentation on long-term goose management plans at your next meeting. While that may seem a sufficient opportunity to discuss the issue, I urge you to reconsider your vote and reopen that discussion as well. I know many of my constituents, and many others around the city, would appreciate the chance to be heard and to potentially influence your final decision.

Sincerely and with thanks for your service,



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