

# COALITION OF 100 AFRICAN AMERICANS

August 3, 2022

**The Coalition of 100 African Americans has organized more than 100 African American residents, community leaders, Hiawatha history observers, environmentalists, south Minneapolis neighbors, golfers and non-golfers alike to vigorously oppose the MPRB proposed Master Plan that recommends reducing the Hiawatha Golf Course to 9 holes.**

*The stated mission of the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board is to permanently preserve, protect, maintain, improve, and enhances its natural resources, parkland, and recreational opportunities for current and future generations of our region including people, plants, and wildlife.*

*The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board dismantles historic inequities in the provision of park and recreation opportunities for all people to gather, celebrate, contemplate, and engage in activities that promote health, wellbeing, community, and the environment.*

This laudable mission statement notes the priority of MPRB is to preserve, protect and enhance its resources – not abandon, ignore or destroy those treasures. The Board strives to dismantle historic inequities, but - destroying the Hiawatha Golf Course exacerbates those historic and racial inequities.

The African American community was not well served by the MPRB, when they allowed segregated club houses and the formation of white members only golf groups to play and keep the handicap system. African Americans could not qualify for competition at other courses without the handicap documentation. The proposed Master Plan of Hiawatha Golf Course seeks to remove the handicap documentation by reducing the course to 9 holes.

Implementing the proposed plan is in no way a compromise to preserve and honor the Hiawatha Golf legacy – it is an insult and injustice.

The Coalition of 100 African Americans is deeply rooted in the history of Hiawatha Golf Course. Documenting and acknowledging that history is essential, and why we support the nomination of Hiawatha Golf Course to the National Register of Historic Places.

The Coalition of 100 African Americans requests the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board cease all actions surrounding the failed Hiawatha Master Plan. We expect equity to be the center of all of your decisions as you seek full and authentic public engagement in efforts to keep the 18 holes at the Hiawatha Golf Course, rehabilitate Lake Hiawatha, collaboratively work with the City of Minneapolis, Minnehaha Creek Watershed District, MPCA, DNR and other agencies to bolster resilience and address the very real environmental and water management challenges facing the region.

LaJune Lange, Co-Chair  
Coalition of 100 African Americans

Harry Davis, Co-Chair  
Coalition of 100 African Americans