

**Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Fort Snelling State Park**  
**101 Snelling Lake Road**  
**St. Paul, MN 55111**  
**Thursday, February 26, 2015**  
**9:30 am – 2:30 pm**

## **M I N U T E S**

*Members Present:* Brian Hubbard, Kathy Bergen, Nancy Hanson, Asha Shoffner, Jenny Smith, Rick Anderson, Tim Mitchell, Tom Stoa, Pat Stieg, Wayne Sames, Tony Yarusso, Brook Maier, Pete Royer, Bob Bierscheid, Dwight Morrison

*Liaisons:* Erika Rivers, Jan Youngquist, Arne Stefferud, LuAnn Wilcox

*Guests:* Mike Kimble, Larry Peterson

*Staff:* Laura Preus, Jade Templin, Darin Newman, Tutu Fatukasi

### **Training**

Training and orientation was held prior to the committee meeting. Asha Shoffner, Tim Mitchell, Patrick Stieg, Brook Maier, and Pete Royer were in attendance. Topics covered were: history and purpose of committee, development of 25-Year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan, highlights of legacy plan, and committee logistics.

***Action: New members fill out volunteer form and register as state vendor in order to be reimbursed for meeting expenses.***

***Action: Send out electronic versions of volunteer and state vendor agreement to new members.***

### **1. Welcome**

New members were welcomed and introduced to the committee.

Agenda approved as is.

Minutes approved as is.

### **2. LAC Learning Session**

Committee members participated in an activity and learning session to learn from one another on their vision and goals for their term. New members were paired with existing members to form small groups. Each small group responded to the following questions:

### **Next Meeting-April 23rd**

Metro Area – Location TBD

### **Committee Actions Required**

***New members: fill out volunteer form and register as state vendor in order to be reimbursed for meeting expenses.***

***New committee members should send a brief bio with a headshot to Darin at [darin.newman@state.mn.us](mailto:darin.newman@state.mn.us) by March 20. Returning members should review their information and forward any revisions.***

***Communications subcommittee will work with Darin to update citizing website and content.***

***Establish communication methods, like an email address, for the committee.***

### **Staff and Liaison Actions Required**

***Send electronic versions of volunteer and state vendor agreement to new members.***

***Send letter supporting 40-40-20 split to legislators.***

***Send meeting dates and appointments to all committee members.***

***Add time on future agendas to discuss benchmarks and evaluation.***

***Establish communication methods, like an email address, for the committee.***

1. Share your goals, philosophy, or interest in strengthening, Minnesota's network of state and regional parks and trails.
  - a. What assets and opportunities do you see?
  - b. What concerns and challenges do you see?
  - c. What goals or hope for growth do you have for your committee term?

After the breakout session each group gave a two minute report summarizing their discussion. Themes and key points from the activity included:

- Minnesota already has a great backbone to the state and regional park and trail system.
- Focus on who the next generation of stewards: connecting families and youth
- One goal is to create cross-state park and trail connections but this is constrained by cost of long-term maintenance.
- Need to work to create an integrated, connected system between agencies, providers, and systems.
- Address health and wellness through parks and trails.
- The Legacy Amendment ends in 2034, so we need to optimize use of legacy dollars and demonstrate its value to the public.
- Coordinate funding in the best way possible to maximize benefit and impact of funding.
- Communicate economic development benefits, including in-state and out-of-state tourism.
- Enhanced coordination should also occur with local and regional stakeholder groups and users who dedicate time, resources, and effort to build and maintain parks and trails.
- We have great parks and trails that function individually. There need to be efforts to create a truly integrated network that will serve all people better.
- Enhance signage, orientation, and use of technology to promote opportunities and connect people to the outdoors.
- Types of diversity to consider: people and demographics, type of recreational opportunity, places, spaces and ecotypes, and generational
- Components of Parks and Trails Legacy Fund success:
  - Build on what is already a great park and trail system.
  - Maintain what already exists and what is built in the future.
  - Demonstrate and communicate success of how legacy dollars are used.
  - Coordination between liaisons, providers, stakeholders, and users
- Our work is larger than Minnesota, and our work may impact people who could take this perspective elsewhere.

### **3. Updates from the liaisons**

Metropolitan Council, Arne Stefferud and Jan Youngquist

Legislative Updates:

- Representative McNamara introduced legislation (HF 1071) that would prohibit local governments from acquiring parkland through eminent domain.
- Representative McNamara talked about a trail pass to generate revenue for trail maintenance at the Parks and Trails Day on the Hill. This initiated a discussion about how to fund long term maintenance.
- The liaisons submitted prioritized project lists to the legislature on January 15. The amount available to appropriate decreased from the May 2014 revenue forecast based on a reduction in the November revenue 2014 forecast by Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) and the project list was revised accordingly. Update: On February 27, the amount available to appropriate increased due to an increase in the February 2015 revenue forecast. The revised prioritized project list will be sent to committee members based on the February 15 revenue forecast.

2040 Regional Parks Policy Plan was adopted by Metropolitan Council on February 11. The plan is going through final editing and formatting before it will be printed. The plan has additional focus on strengthening equitable use of the metro regional parks system. Specific strategies and policies to address equity will be developed through further discussion with the implementing agencies. One of these strategies is the hiring of a regional parks ambassador; another is developing an equity toolkit. A draft of the plan can be found here: <http://metro council.org/Parks/Planning/Parks-Policy-Plan.aspx>

Committee members had a discussion about the pros and cons of a trail pass, or other methods for generating revenue for park and trail maintenance.

*Question:* Could committee members see the equity toolkit?

*Answer:* The equity toolkit has not been developed yet. It can be shared when there is a draft version completed.

DNR, Division of Parks and Trails, Laura Preus

DNR submitted budget request with prioritized project list to the Legislature on January 15. This includes funding by Legacy Plan pillar, needs by pillar, and expected outcomes of projects. We use the plan and pillars when discussing our work and developing the Minnesota State Parks and Trails System Plan. The System Plan stems from growing systems and maintenance responsibilities and the challenge of funding long-term maintenance. The System Plan can be found online at: [http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/strategic\\_plan/system\\_plan.html](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/input/mgmtplans/strategic_plan/system_plan.html) and the prioritized project list can be sent to committee members.

A new DNR staff, legacy consultant, will be hired prior to the next meeting to support the committee's work. Tutu, CCM youth outreach specialist, is available to support the work and priorities of the liaisons. She will be working with the youth subcommittee and the DNR Parks and Trails Division outreach section.

The liaisons are working together on an integrated and accessible web-based platform for park and trail users. This was legislatively mandated and is in the 25-Year Park and Trail Legacy Plan. A workgroup is meeting to create a standardized data platform for all state and regional parks and trails in Minnesota.

This data will feed into one public mapping platform so users can get integrated information about parks and trails from one source. This will better serve users by having a search function and an integrated map with seamless transition between systems.

*Question:* Explore Minnesota Tourism should be a key player; have they be involved?

*Answer:* Explore Minnesota Tourism has been engaged throughout the process and may be used to facilitate public-private partnerships. It is possible that they could host and maintain the website.

*Comment:* The website will serve as a portal for users. They will search for opportunities, select a park or trail, and be directed to the park and trail provider's webpage for more information. The data will be available to external users for creation of apps, etc.

#### Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission, LuAnn Wilcox and Rick Anderson

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) also submitted a prioritized project list to the legislature. The proposed legislation includes up to 4.5% for support and administration of GMRPTC and up to 2.5% for DNR to administer grants. The Commission approved 19 parks and trails, including 2 special use parks, as the start of the regional park and trail system in Greater Minnesota. With the cooperation of DNR and Metropolitan Council we will be able to offer a quality product for users.

The Commission is using the Legislative Coordinating Commission (LCC) website until a long-term GMRPTC website is created. This website will have contact information and email systems for commissioners.

The Commission is interested in developing strategies for how to connect people to the outdoors. It is likely that GMRPTC will allocate less to projects in this pillar in the immediate future, though we expect this portion to increase throughout the duration of the amendment.

The current enabling legislation does not allow GMRPTC to allocate money for connecting people to the outdoors. The Commission would like to have the Legacy Advisory Committee's support to facilitate this legislative change. We are focusing on the budgetary items this legislative session and will work on legislative changes like this in future sessions.

*Question:* What are the special use parks?

*Answer:* A shooting sports park in Beltrami County and Robinson Park in Sandstone.

#### 4. Lunch

Larry Peterson, Fort Snelling State Park Manager, provided an overview of the park.

*Question:* How are legacy dollars used at Fort Snelling State Park?

*Answer:* The Legacy Fund supports I Can Camp! and I Can Paddle! programs that are held in the park. Naturalist corps staff are also hired through the use of the Legacy Fund. We do not have any active capital projects underway that are supported by Legacy Funds.

*Question:* Can you give a brief history of the upper post and historical site?

*Answer:* The upper post was developed in 1879 and later. It was a military and governmental center for the plains states and also home to a Japanese language school during World War II. The historic post is not part of a city, it is unincorporated. The upper post now contains 28 buildings controlled by the state, and a golf course and active fields managed by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board (MPRB). DNR, National Park Service, Minnesota Historical Society, Hennepin County, and MPRB formed a joint powers agreement to manage rehabilitation of the area.

## **5. Subcommittee Overview**

Returning committee members gave a brief overview of each subcommittees and the work they have done to date.

## **6. Subcommittee Reports**

### **Communications Subcommittee**

The domain [ptlegacymn.org](http://ptlegacymn.org) has been secured but the page needs an updated interface and content. We ask that members connect to the committee's Facebook page and twitter channels. The committee could solicit photos of legacy funded projects from users and funding recipients. We would also like for funding recipients to notify the committee when projects are completed and opportunities are open to the public.

Submit any ideas for content and posts to Tony at [ptlac@tonyyarusso.org](mailto:ptlac@tonyyarusso.org).

***Action: Communications subcommittee will work with Darin to update citizing website and content.***

***Action: Establish communication methods, like an email address, for the committee.***

### **Funding Subcommittee**

The subcommittee proposed endorsement of a revised letter supporting the 40-40-20 funding split to be sent to all legislators.

***Action: The letter is approved with the following revisions. Jade will coordinate distribution to legislators.***

- Include a brief summary of the committee and roster of members with names and hometowns on the reverse side.
- Change language in second paragraph to "metropolitan regional parks and trails"

Members provided an update on the subject of local park and trail funding. Minnesota Recreation and Park Association is interested in this effort and will consult with their legislative work group. Parks and Trails Council of Minnesota has endorsed this and put it in their legislative proposal. The Coalition of Greater Minnesota Cities is already in support of reinstating local park and trail funding. Support of these groups, the committee, and the liaisons could lead to funding of local parks and trails through the Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund.

#### Governance Subcommittee

The Governance subcommittee will be comprised of Brian and Kathy, as committee chair and alternate chair. Governance documents will be reviewed and updated as needed.

***Action: New committee members should send a brief bio with a headshot to Darin at [darin.newman@state.mn.us](mailto:darin.newman@state.mn.us) by March 20. Returning members should review their information and forward any revisions.***

Meetings will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month, except for December. This year's final meeting will be planned for December 10.

***Action: Staff will send out meeting dates and appointments to all committee members.***

#### Youth Subcommittee

The subcommittee looks forward to working with Tutu Fatukasi, CCM youth outreach specialist, and the regional parks ambassador that the Metropolitan Council plans to hire later this year. Members provided an overview of several ways to engage more youth:

- Engage youth during review and evaluation of regional park and trail projects in Greater Minnesota.
- Work with other programs like Project Get Outdoors, YMCA, and universities.
- Conduct field trips with park and trail evaluations with youth and first-time park visitors.

Members emphasized the need for collaboration and information sharing between agencies and park and trail providers.

#### Benchmarks Subcommittee

A full-committee discussion will help frame the subcommittee's work. Existing data and resources may be available to begin evaluation of some 5-year priorities. The liaisons welcome evaluation of legacy goals by the committee.

***Action: Add time on future agendas to discuss benchmarks and evaluation.***

#### Meeting Adjourned