

**Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting
Hope Communities, Inc.**

611 W Franklin

Minneapolis, MN

Thursday, December 11, 2014

9:30 am – 2:30 pm

M I N U T E S

Members Present: Rick Anderson; Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson; Kathy Bergen; Bob Bierscheid; Nancy Hanson; Brian Hubbard; Wayne Sames; Tom Stoa; Barry Warner; Dwight Morrison; Tony Yarusso;

Liaisons: Erika Rivers; Arne Stefferud; Mike Hulett for Al Lieffort

Guests: Mike Kimble, St Paul Parks and Recreation Department; Jonathan Vlaming, Three Rivers Park District; Jack (Dwight's guest); Anita Rasmussen; LuAnne Wilcox; Mary Keefe, Hope Communities

Staff: Jade Templin, Darin Newman

1. Welcome

Mary Keefe, Executive Director of Hope Communities, Inc., welcomed the committee and provided an overview of the work that Hope engages in. Hope started as a homeless shelter and took on housing in the '80s. Among other issues, their current work includes addressing equity in the Minneapolis park system.

Agenda approved as is.

Minutes approved as is.

2. Updates from the liaisons

DNR, Division of Parks and Trails, Erika Rivers

DNR is in the process of filling the legacy consultant position. This individual will provide staff support to the committee. This position will also advance and evaluate DNR's legacy goals and accomplishments. Two Conservation Corps of Minnesota (CCM) positions will also be filled in January. The planning specialist and youth outreach specialist will provide additional support to the committee.

Next Meeting-February 26, 2014

Fort Snelling State Park – Visitor Center
101 Snelling Lake Road
St. Paul, MN 55111

Committee Actions Required

Send updated information for 6-year celebration brochure including photos with captions, agency, location, and legacy pillar to Darin and Jade at: darin.newman@state.mn.us and jade.templin@state.mn.us.

Complete preparation and coordination for 5-year legacy celebration on January 15.

Organize orientation of new members upon their announcement. Assign buddies and contact new members prior to the February meeting.

Tom will revise the 40-40-20 funding letter and present it in February for approval.

Identify organizations that may share an interest in increased local park and trail funding and send them to Wayne.

Staff and Liaison Actions Required

Send updated information for celebration brochure to Barry and coordinate review prior to printing.

Determine what metrics are already collected and available for projects completed by each agency to assist in evaluation of Legacy Plan strategies.

Complete preparation and coordination for 5-year legacy celebration on January 15.

Revise the timeline process for adding new members according to recent dates. Look into ability to include governance subcommittee in process of selecting new members.

DNR has been working the last 6 months to develop our list of prioritized projects for Fiscal Year (FY) 16-17 legacy funding. The Parks and Trails Division Senior Management Team will meet next week to review and approve the preliminary list. This will be reviewed by Commissioner in early January before being finalized.

The 6-year celebration brochure will be updated in January to include updated photos, statistics, and information from FY 15 DNR grant program. The brochure will be completed and printed prior to January 15. Barry and SRF will provide resources to update the brochure.

Action: Send updated information for 6-year celebration brochure including photos with captions, agency, location, and legacy pillar to Darin and Jade at: darin.newman@state.mn.us and jade.templin@state.mn.us.

Parks and Trails Division System Plan is available online for stakeholder review. This plan will be reviewed in advance of anticipated legislative hearing in early 2015.

Question: Does DNR have a prioritized project list for FY 16-17?

Answer: DNR is currently working on completing a prioritized list. There is discussion about what level of detail is needed and how much projects need to be broken up and differentiated. Staff will meet with the Commissioner to discuss the list on January 7.

Metropolitan Council, Arne Stefferud

The 2040 Regional Parks and Open Space Policy Plan went through public review and over 400 comments were submitted. Review and approval of the plan was delayed due to the large volume of comments received. The plan will be discussed at the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission on January 6 and at the Community Development Committee on January 20. The plan will be reviewed by the Metropolitan Council on February 11 for final adoption.

Susan Haigh is departing Metropolitan Council as Chair of the Council and it is anticipated the Governor will appoint a replacement in January. This individual will review and appoint the Metropolitan Council's positions on the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee.

The Legacy appropriation to Metropolitan Council must be allocated to 10 implementing agencies according to formula defined in law. The liaisons have consulted with Minnesota Management and Budget to determine the estimated allocation to each liaison according to the 40-40-20 split. Metro Council solicits a prioritized project list from each implementing agency to match the total allocation according to the formula.

The committee was presented a draft of the Metropolitan Regional Parks System Prioritized Project List for Parks and Trails Legacy Fund – Fiscal Years 2016-17. This document was developed according to a legislative request and will be reviewed and approved by Metropolitan Council. Metropolitan Council is not able to revise the agencies' projects or allocations. The list of projects meet the legacy pillars – the pillars are not depicted in the table because it was not included in the request.

Metropolitan Council is also hiring a park ambassador to focus on connecting people to the outdoors. This position is not funded through legacy dollars.

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission, Mike Hulett

Greater Minnesota has a strategic plan available online. Each of 6 districts held planning meetings in parallel with the evaluation of parks and trails of regional significance. The next discussion will focus on the relationship between undeveloped state trails and the regional trail system in Greater Minnesota. The commission will have our recommendations ready for FY 16-17 legacy bill. The commission needs to be focused on how to engage the next generation of Parks and Trails (PAT) visitors.

The commission is finalizing our 2nd report to the legislature. This will include the top 20 regional parks and trails as well as prioritized projects for 16-17. A draft of this report was provided to the committee.

The commission is working on how to articulate its vision and purpose to all of Minnesota, not just Greater Minnesota. It is a struggle to do this without having dedicated staff. Multiple options are being considered to increase capacity including staff, consultants, and commitments from partners.

Question: How will you ensure that all pillars are included through designation of regional units?

Answer: We have been talking about it and have questions about the legal legitimization of projects categorized as connecting people to the outdoors. The commission is interested in championing this cause. This issue will become more important as the system is built out. At a minimum we seek to require a press release or grand opening for capital projects to receive funds.

3. Assessment of the Legacy Plan's 5-year priorities

Staff introduced the topic of the benchmark questionnaire. The committee reviewed the questionnaire during the October meeting and had much discussion without reaching specific conclusions. Existing data collected by each agency could be used to supplement the results of this survey. Existing data sources include: reports to the legislature, grant reports from funding recipients, information provided by the liaisons (like the information in the 5-year celebration brochure), and information collected through public engagement like Citizing website. The survey should not duplicate these other methods. First, what is the committee's role in evaluation? And second, what information does it need to fulfill this role?

- The goal is to pick a single strategy from the 25 Year Parks and Trails Legacy Plan and evaluate it.
- Who is the audience for the results of this survey beyond the committee?
- The committee would review the results and then provide an opinion to the liaisons and the legislature about how legacy goals are being met.
- There are two processes: creating questions, and interpolation of results. It would be better to have more detailed and nuanced questions to avoid subjectivity in the first step. This would be critical to have accurate data to form the basis of an evaluation.

- The liaisons should provide the committee with their accomplishments. The committee should review and determine if these accomplishments are adequately meeting legacy goals and strategies.
- It may not be necessary to evaluate individual agencies or opportunities. We would aggregate results and then make a determination.
- The survey respondents would be any agency that spends legacy dollars. This includes DNR Parks and Trails Division, 10 implementing agencies in the 7-county metropolitan area, and all DNR grant recipients.
- The DNR Parks and Trails Division management team will be conducting our own evaluation internally. We welcome an external perspective in addition to our own.

Action: Determine what project metrics are collected through existing means by each agency to assist in evaluation of Legacy Plan strategies.

4. Subcommittee Meetings with Lunch

5. Subcommittee Reports

Governance Subcommittee

A DNR news release was issued on November 20 requesting applications from prospective committee members. The news release contains links to the committee website as well as the online application. The deadline for applications is Monday, December 22. Committee members should try to identify and recruit several applicants that would fill the committee's needs.

Action: Revise the process for adding new members according to recent dates. Look into ability to include governance subcommittee in process of selecting new members.

Orientation of new members will be completed prior to the February meeting to outline governance, reimbursement of personal expenses, and meeting format. Incoming members will be paired with returning members as a buddy. Buddies are expected to reach out to new members upon receiving their contact information. New members will join for their first committee meeting on February 26.

Action: Organize orientation of new members upon their announcement. Assign buddies and contact new members prior to the February meeting.

The committee discussed the practice of rotating meeting locations. Meetings will continue to be rotated between DNR, Metropolitan Council, and Greater Minnesota as done in the past.

Kathy Bergen will serve as the next alternate chair.

An event is being planned to celebrate the 5-year anniversary of all four legacy funds. The event will be held January 15 from 12:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the Minneapolis Marriott Northwest in Brooklyn Park. In preparation of the event several actions should be taken:

- ***Complete and bring copies of 6-year celebration brochure***
- ***Each liaison should prepare 1-2 page flier highlighting legacy accomplishments***
- ***Coordinate breakout session for parks and trails fund***
- ***Determine if allocation for Legacy Advisory Committee can be used to support the event***

Communication Subcommittee

The subcommittee discussed and clarified the roles different media outlets utilized by the committee. The Citizing site should focus on soliciting feedback from park and trail users about their opinions to supplement the benchmark evaluation. Facebook and Twitter will be used to communicate more informal messages and seek feedback in addition to that gathered on Citizing. The Legislative Coordinating Commission (LCC) website will be used primarily for official committee communications including minutes, agenda, and meeting information.

Funding Subcommittee

The funding committee presented a letter from the Legacy Advisory Committee stating support for the 40-40-20 funding split. This letter will be personalized and sent to each house and senate member of the legacy legislative committee.

Discussion:

- The recommendation should follow the biennium cycle for practicality. Implement the split in the first biennium, evaluate it in the second biennium, and revisit the discussion in the third.
- When does this split become a permanent formula? The plan states that it will not be fixed. It should be the committee's role to honestly have this discussion in the future.
- The letter should specify that we do not have the metrics yet to guide the discussion. If this formula was revisited now it would not be guided by appropriate facts.

Action: Tom will revise the letter and present it in February for approval.

The committee agreed to send the letter to all members of the legislature and send copies to each liaison as well.

Wayne introduced a letter from the committee in support of expanded funding for local park and trail opportunities. There is pressure on legacy funds from local projects because they have no other source of funding. The state, regional, and local park and trail systems are complimentary and we have created artificial boundaries and criteria to define them. We can revise the letter based on the same comments about structure and personalization made for 40-40-20 funding letter.

Discussion:

- Would this request be strengthened by having cosigners like: League of Minnesota Cities, Greater MN Cities, Greater Minnesota Caucus, and Minnesota Recreation and Park Association?

- The DNR supports increased local park and trail funding – local opportunities are the stepping stone to regional and state systems.

Action: Identify organizations that may share an interest in increased local park and trail funding and send them to Wayne.

Benchmark Subcommittee

This brochure has value in comparing the accomplishments of each liaison. Benchmarks committee looks towards the future – we can make conclusions and speculations about future conditions based on funding that has already been allocated.

Comment: There need to be resources dedicated to the benchmarks subcommittee. This goes beyond the volunteer capabilities we have now. Could legacy funds be used to advance this purpose?

Youth Subcommittee

The youth subcommittee would like to work with the two new Conservation Corps of Minnesota (CCM) specialists to integrate work. The goal is to conduct in-field assessments with youth groups and/or schools in park and trail units this upcoming season. Train the trainer sessions could be a possibility.

It will take a while to begin offering programming around Greater Minnesota. The hope is for the CCM person to connect with local staff to provide assistance and help build programming capabilities.

Question: Can legacy funded programming occur outside of a state/regional park?

Answer: It has not been done in the past.

Question: How comfortable is this committee with pushing the envelope on funding programming that occurs outside of state and regional parks and trails?

Answer: Legacy funded programming could occur outside of state and regional parks as long as it is promoting opportunities in parks and trails of state and regional significance. If we think we can promote parks and trails by staying in regional and state parks and trails, we will fail.

Meeting Adjourned