

# Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting, April 27, 2017

MINUTES PROVIDE A RECORD OF MINNESOTA'S PARKS AND TRAILS LEGACY  
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY THE  
COMMITTEE AT THE MEETING ON JUNE 22, 2017

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# Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

Whitewater State Park  
19041 Highway 74, Altura, MN 55910  
April 27, 2017  
9:30 am – 2:30 pm

## Updates and Announcements

Next Meeting: June 22, 2017  
Meeting Host: Metropolitan Council  
Elm Creek Park Reserve  
12400 James Deane Pkwy, Maple Grove, MN 55369

## Subcommittee/Workgroup Actions Required

[Click here to enter text.](#)

# A P P R O V E D M I N U T E S

## Members Present:

Bob Bierscheid, Brook Maier, Chris Crutchfield, Katherine Bloom, Les Ollila, Patrick Stieg, Peter Royer, Randy Sorensen, Tim Mitchell, Tom Stoa, Wayne Sames

(via Webex: Kathy Bergen, Nancy Hanson)

**Liaisons:** Renee Mattson, Mike Hulett, Laura Preus

**Guests:** Margot Imdieke Cross with the Minnesota State Council on Disability; Stacy Smith, Melinda Anderson, Jason Peterson, Rick Clark, MN DNR.

**Staff:** Paul Purman, Maria Lee, Stefanie Stearns

## 1. Welcome to Whitewater State Park

Brent Anderson, Whitewater State Park Manager, welcomed the Legacy Advisory Committee to the park. Brent shared about the history and current highlights and challenges of the park. Its proximity to Winona, Rochester, and the Twin Cities Metro, brings in high visitor numbers, about 250k a year. The park is one of the largest communities in the area during the busy season. During the site visit, we'll get a sneak peek at the \$7 million Legacy funded campsite addition. After the 2007 flood, DNR staff decided a new campsite was necessary for visitor safety.

Agenda approved, no conflicts of interest identified.

February minutes approved with no changes.

*Action: Staff submit to LCC for posting on PTLAC site.*

## 2. Legislative Updates

Updates from Laura, Renee and Mike. Several of the agency liaisons were out because the Legacy Conference Committee today.

- Shared a side by side comparison of the House and Senate Legacy Bills showing similar language and appropriations for the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund.
  - Legacy agencies have made numerous presentations to committees, demonstrating that they're working together.
  - Only a \$1,000 difference in total appropriations.
  - The House Bill has some language on direct and necessary spending which is not included in the Senate Bill.
- Representative Gunther has opened the discussion about the future of the funding split between the three agencies after FY19; 40/40/20 was proposed to go through FY18/19. Has signaled willingness to consider solutions the agencies bring forward. Recommendation from a member to agencies: when reaching out to legislators for field visits and meetings, etc, be sure to invite legislative staff.
- A question on the state of the bonding bill brought up the following points:
  - No clear signs of whether a bonding bill will pass.
  - If there is no bonding, will have major implications for planned spending in parks and trails, as well as other Legacy programs like critical habitat protection.

## 3. 2017 Work-Planning for 2018 Events

Paul gives context from February Meeting where the 10-Year Parks and Trails Legacy Events Work Group was expanded. Bob Bierscheid has agreed to chair the workgroup. Today is an opportunity to make further progress.

Bob and Brook report out on Work Group Phone Call and Work Planning.

- **Why Legacy Matters**. Brook proposes anchoring 10-year P&T Legacy event planning in a tag-line/purpose statement.
  - This theme allows us to prompt a range of discussions, e.g.,
    - the love for place with how Legacy impacts those places.
    - Disconnect between the drive and interest to make a camping reservation at Lake Itasca 1 year in advance and learning about the Legacy Fund.

## 10 Year is All About

- Remind people why the Legacy Amendment happened and check in on progress
- Celebrating the vision and what's been done
  - Legacy was created for a reason and is unique legislation.
- Reach New Audiences
  - Engaging more users (reaching non-users)
  - Hearing from many voices
- Raise awareness of Legacy

- Building momentum and planning for the expiration of the Legacy Amendment.
- Building community health and wellness
  - Discussion on how this as a focus can alienate, especially in disability community.
- Furthering Partnerships, Seamless System

### **Discussion on Audiences for events**

- Folks who love parks and trails but don't know about Legacy OR folks who don't know about either? (remember target markets identified in 25 year plan)
- Intentionally engage community leaders and representatives like school board members, county commissioners, youth leadership boards, and city council members. (Remember the power of the personal invitation as opposed to the news release).
- Re-visit the same public meeting attendees from 25-year plan outreach.
  - In 25-year plan outreach, what contributed larger attendance to outreach events? More populous areas? Proximity to park or trail? Can we learn from the past outreach to build greater success?
- It's important to be clear about who we are inviting, who we are trying to prompt a discussion with, and what the boundaries of that discussion are. Then we can figure out how to invite them in, where to hold events.

### **Ideas Generated**

- Legacy Weekend!
  - One weekend when a park or trail has pop up activities and information about the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund.
  - Many Parks and Trails could host pop-ups on the same day.
  - *Could park and trail fees be waived on this day? Could participants get day passes?*
- Complementary Legacy Marketing Campaign that moves along the 10 year events
- Tell the legacy story in a scalable way: individual stories, to regional economic development, to Minnesota as a leader in the nation because of Legacy.
- 7-8 Regional Get Together / Focus Groups
  - How many? How to designate regions?
  - Create presentations that overview the whole fund but has regional emphasis.
  - Pilot in Fall of 2017

### **Measures of Success – what do we want to be able to demonstrate when events are over?**

- Articulate who we organized the events for, why, what we did to help them be part of the conversation
- Compared to that, who actually showed up?
- Reporting back and showing the public what has happened with the Legacy Fund is a huge piece of success.
- What strategic directions forward are suggested by the conversations?

*Actions: Work Group will refine ideas and send out notes and hopes for action before June Meeting. Have number of regional outreach events finalized by mid-May. Pilot a 'Regional Meeting' in Fall of 2017.*

#### 4. Integrated Website Project Update

Stefanie Stearns showed and explained how the integrated website would work. The site is still in development but the URL was shared with committee members.

Project Updates Include

- Mobile First Design, no separate desktop version
- Purpose of tool is not to report on Legacy Projects, but to find recreation sites.
- Currently only State Parks data is in the tool. Data from other Legacy eligible sites is being collected.
- A challenge has been creating a usable search that will turn out results when people don't know what to search for.
  - Example: Acknowledging typos like Lake Itaska.
  - Example: Getting people to the recreation experience they want. You should be able to search Bike Trails, then have a choice in terms of mountain biking or paved trail.
  - Example: Folks will be able to see that their local and city trails that connect to regional trails as part of the background base map. BUT the local trail won't be searchable, since they are not Legacy eligible.
- Question on how to get to the tool and make the tool popular after it launches.
  - Being a .gov site will help it turn up in searches.
- Several names for the tool are under consideration, and will be evaluated by a group of users when usability testing occurs in late May or June.

#### Break for Lunch

#### 5. Subcommittee and Work Group Break Out Time

Subcommittees and Work Groups met for 20 minutes and shared out in full group.

Benchmarks: *Action - Staff help Benchmarks Subc. Set up call in Mid-June.*

Funding: Question about whether the chair of the House Legacy Committee is seeking a solution to the funding split in January 2018, or 2019? (Answer – work towards an initial proposed solution by 2018, though a final answer will not be put into legislation until 2019 session). Funding Subc. is interested in beginning to collect objective data, such as what portion of DNR funding goes to facilities in Metro vs. greater Minnesota counties, or what percentage of grant requests have gone unfunded.

*Action – Funding Subc. Will work with liaisons to begin looking at funding split options after FY19.*

Youth: Working on putting together work plan and goals for youth engagement.

10-Year Work Group: *Action – will take outcomes of today's discussion, meet again, write a mission statement for the 10-year events, and circulate back to group in May.*

Accessibility Work Group: General discussion on recommendations that could be made based on common and persistent problems. Will be putting more thought into what their recommendations

should be. Could include not only built infrastructure, but signage and programming. *Action – staff will work with chair and liaisons about additional members on workgroup.*

## **6. Presentation on Accessibility from Minnesota State Council on Disability**

Margot Imdieke Cross, an Accessibility Specialist from the Minnesota State Council on Disability, gave a presentation, “Parks and Trails Access for All.” She noted that 27 Years after the passage of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), serious issues of access still persist in public lands. Some of her key points included (attach PowerPoint):

- If you design to the minimum legal requirement, you are designing for minimum access.
- We lack critical connections in accessibility. We often have pieces of a site accessible, such as the visitors’ center or a picnic shelter. However, the path from the parking lot to the building or the bathroom by the picnic shelter may lack accessible features, which is very frustrating.
- The aging population will demand a greater focus on ambulatory access.
- ADA has outdoor guidelines that give guidance on how to label trails.
  - Key metrics and descriptions to provide users with data to evaluate whether the facility is a good choice for them, rather than simply ‘Easy/Hard’.
- Other considerations
  - Policies for service animals in protected areas.
  - Raised tent platforms for some campsites at transfer height is a good, simple idea.
  - Margot expressed interest in MSCOD being represented on the PTLAC’s new Accessibility Work Group.

[US Access Board Town Hall](#) on May 9, 1:30 PM to 4:00 PM at University of Minnesota Recreation and Wellness Center.

## **Meeting Adjourned**

Meeting adjourned at 2:30 PM, took a short break before regrouping for Site Visit.

## **Site Visit**

Stacy Smith, Melinda Anderson, Jason Peterson, Sara Holger, Nicholas Schwaegerl, Rick Clark, and Brent Anderson highlighted the new campground developments for the Advisory Committee. We made stops at the new camper cabins, semi-modern group camp, group camp sanitation building, and accessible spurs. We were all excited to see this Legacy project near completion!