

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Minutes for May 24, 2017

Sartell City Hall, Sartell, MN

APPROVED

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Hulett, Bryan Pike, Tim Kennedy, Peg Furshong, Rita Albrecht, Jannik Anderson, Rick Anderson, Keith Nelson, Marc Mattice, Tom Schmitz, Barry Wendorf

Commissioners Absent: Tom Ryan, LuAnn Wilcox

Consultants Present: Renee Mattson, Executive Director, Joe Czapiewski, System Plan Coordinator

1. Meeting called to order at 10:06 by Chair Hulett:

2. Approval of March 22, 2017 Minutes:

Motion by Nelson

Second by Schmitz

Motion Approved

3. Treasurer's Report:

Motion by Pike

Second by Kenney

Motion Approved

Discussion of how we move funds around within the categories in the future.

Executive Director will inform the Chair when funds need to be transferred between budget categories.

4. Approval of Agenda:

Motion by Schmitz

Second by R. Anderson

Motion Approved

With removal of the Old Business, CPO 11.1.

5. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance:

None

6. Annual Executive Director Contract Review:

Report on the contract review by the Executive Committee was provided by Chair Hulett. Chair Hulett and Executive Committee Member R. Anderson met with Mattson to review the terms of a new two-year contract and the deliverables expected by the Commission. Mattson was instructed to prepare a draft contract for review prior to the June 28 Commission meeting. Mattson was instructed to find someone to take minutes at the meetings so she can be an active participant in the meetings.

7. Executive Director's Report:

Mattson reviewed the written report provided to the Commission at the meeting. Further discussion centered on the Commission's work in future funding cycles to strengthen recommendations for accessibility within funded projects. Future percentage distribution of funding breakdown among the three agencies was also discussed during this report.

Report attached.

7.1 Survey Report

Mattson and Commission reviewed the survey results for the four Greater Minnesota units where survey work was completed in the summer of 2016. In addition to the actual survey work there was also a survey tool (manual) prepared as the survey method in all the units. This manual will be shared with all our designated parks and trails to assist with future survey work they perform on their own, so we have an apple to apple comparison moving forward.

8. Items from Members and Letters to the Commission:

Kennedy has had conversations with Superior Hiking Trail board members and how we incorporate the trail into our system. It is a part of the D1 District Initiatives and we should find a way to make this work. Interest from the Superior Bike Club to develop an ADA compliant bike trail. Forest service, Superior Hiking Trail cooperation. Mattson as asked to sit down with their new ED and have a conversation about assisting them in getting designated for at least portions of the trail.

Nelson asked what decision we made about not telling applicants for designation that they are not being accepted. Rather telling them they are not accepted at this time. They may be designated in the future by doing certain things. Chair Hulett asked we address this item later in the agenda.

Schmitz reported KARE 11 Sports Department did a feature story on New Ulm parks and trails, he's working on Minnesota River Valley initiatives. Also hopeful the tax bill is passed to continue the local sales tax that benefits parks and recreation.

Hulett reported that the Fargo Marathon was on the previous Saturday. Always an inspirational event, particularly when the wheelchair participants finish. Hulett is a

member of the Clay County Heartland Trail Group. DNR has the corridor from Park Rapids to Moorhead for the extension of the corridor. This is not a top DNR priority, his group is working on the completion of this section of the corridor independently.

Wendorf attended the D4 meeting, Sherburne County attended for the first time, good to have their representation. Also, a planner representing a county was there. The DPC still wants to be engaged in the district. Governor's Fishing Opener was in D4 this past weekend and there were programs within the park systems in Stearns County.

Albrecht reported that the Hubbard County Economic Development Director called, they are issuing an RFP for planning in Hubbard County. If we do come to Bemidji there is a ribbon cutting on June 2 in Southshore Park, received Lessard-Sams funding, not Parks and Trails. Renovations of a beach and an old stone beach house.

9. System Plan Coordinator's Report:

9.1 This is a new report, Joe is looking for feedback on the report as this will be a standard monthly moving forward. The District Workshops focused on the Master Plan process and the tutorial; what we're trying to accomplish through our Master Planning requirements. Attendance is down a bit from previous years, not entirely surprising as this is the third year of workshops. Districts 2 and 5 were down quite a bit. The low attendance in District 5 was surprising as it's been a heavily involved district. However, District 6 where there has been light attendance was much better attended and there was good engagement from the participants. Czapiewski sent out a survey to the attendees following the workshops and so far, has received good feedback.

District 4 DPC meeting addressed the Kraemer Lake/Wildwood Park designation and this will be addressed later.

Finally, Czapiewski, Commissioner Pike and Mattson attended a tour of the Red Lake River Corridor. It was a dynamic tour of a large corridor and we were able to provide them good feedback and also learn more about the scope of their project and understand it better. Pike added that he also found it helpful.

Czapiewski further reported on the DMS process and assisting constituents as they begin applications.

Report attached.

9.2 Kraemer Lake – Wildwood Park Designation

Ben Anderson from Stearns County sent the answers to the questions the Commission had after the March meeting where their designation was reviewed. Mattice reported that D4 talked in depth about the designation at their recent meeting. Mattice and Wendorf also toured the park recently. D4 recommends designating Kraemer Lake/Wildwood Park. Wendorf expressed the DPC's thoughts on the recommendation which is based on the high population center within that

area, the need for swimming beaches in the area and the interest in a swimming beach at Quarry Park, where after that beach was put in visitations increased dramatically, which they know based on the revenue they receive from parking at the park. So clearly there is a need for swimming facilities within the district. The concerns raised during the last meeting regarding water quality/clarity based on the swimming beach being the focal point have been addressed. There are additional positive elements within the park that speak well to their designation, among them public access to the lake within the park.

Motion by Mattice to approved Kraemer Lake/Wildwood Park for designation
Second by R. Anderson

Discussion point by Wendorf, referring to Nelson's earlier concern to not saying "no" to designations. Better to say, "at this point in time we are not recommending for designation, however, these are items that can improve your application in the future, these are the questions we would like answered". Nelson, how can we help you to make this a better facility is a more important way to help our applicants rather than simply saying no.

Czapiewski agrees with keeping the door open to applicants, but there are times when there is no place to go with the application, case in point, Roseau Recreation Area which has ranked Medium both times. They are a small community with a small population base and not much tourism activity. They've come to the workshops and asked for help but there just doesn't seem to be much more we can do for them and there will be times that we do have the ability to not move forward with a designation application.

Albrecht wanted the minutes to note that the DNR is a partner in many of the projects and the local staff are hardworking and do strive to help projects along. Nelson wonders about how we help smaller communities that simply do not have a population base and we leave them behind if we don't have criteria for them. Albrecht cautioned about painting with a broad brush and saying always this and always that.

Motion Approved

10. New Business:

10.1 Fiscal Agent Review/ Approve New Fiscal Agent

For the Fiscal Agent services for the Commission to be performed by Saint Louis County Auditor and move the fiscal agent services from the City of Bemidji.

Motion by Albrecht

Second by Pike

There was discussion that Mattson did not seek a comparative percentage from Bemidji prior to going to Saint Louis County. We will have a 2.5% fee at Saint Louis County compared to 7% at Bemidji. Wendorf and Hulett asked that a letter of thanks be sent to Bemidji for the work they've done to help the Commission. A

change was made to the proposed contract to change the signer from Mattson to Hulett.

Motion Approved with Nelson Abstaining

10.2 Succession Planning for Chair:

Chair Hulett will be resigning from the Commission in September. Chair Ryan would be serving as Chair until the elections for the Commission in January. Hulett will be spending time in Arizona and therefore cannot attend several meetings over the course of the year

10.3 Commission Procedures/Reconfirm Current Version DPC Operating Guidelines

Chair Hulett introduced all three remaining items under New Business to be considered as one conversation.

The first item was discussion of how we develop a System Plan. Are we going to be proscriptive and determine where the designated parks and trails will be located in Greater Minnesota, or develop the System Plan through the designations of parks and trails making applications to the commission, thereby creating a Greater Minnesota regional system? Kennedy feels it is important to understand our capacity for funding projects moving forward. Mattice suggested that perhaps we should look at bonding for projects in the future. There was general agreement that we are developing the system plan according to our legislative charge and our Strategic Plan.

The Commissioners reviewed the 2/25/2015 operating guidelines for the District Planning Committees.

Motion by Schmitz to reaffirm the 2/25/2015 DPC guidelines and follow them

Second by R. Anderson

Discussion followed about the work of the DPCs as noted in the first section. There was prolonged discussion about bullet points on pages 2 and 3 under District Planning Committee Roles, Responsibilities and Selection, specifically bullet points 4 and 5. How much involvement should the DPCs have with respect to recommending funding projects to the Commission.

Amendment by Wendorf to remove the fifth bullet point "Making recommendations on selection of projects each year for funding"

Amendment accepted by Schmitz

Second not accepted by R. Anderson

Second by Nelson

Albrecht asked that the bullets be lettered or numbered for clarity within the document and to provide better reference within the document where a bullet is noted add the section where it may be found.

Czapiewski asked how we move forward with these changes and others that have been made since this document was adopted, so we can be in compliance, dates for example as

noted by Commissioner Pike, that have changed and other items. It was suggested that Czapiewski and Mattson should make the document changes and bring back to the Commission at the June meeting. These are administrative changes primarily.

Kennedy brought back the issue of clarification on bullet points four and five and requested more information about the commonly understood difference between those two items. Mattice returned to the importance of having DPC input on the funding applications because they are close to the needs and priorities in the district. There may be an application that better meets the needs of the district. The document does not state the recommendations are for the district.

Pike noted we still have the motion to adopt Section V on the table. Pike suggested taking the word funding out of bullet point five. Which would accomplish the goals. Nelson asked that we do not use numbers when reworking the document as it gives the impression of priority, letters would not.

Wendorf asked why R. Anderson had a hesitation to support seconding the amendment. Anderson felt there needed to be a process to prioritize the funding applications within the district by the DPCs. Further discussion led to Wendorf asking to withdraw his friendly amendment. Wendorf asked that in bullet four the word funding is removed for the bullet to read.

“Making recommendations on regional ~~funding~~ priorities, as defined under Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Funding Program in the Strategic Plan”. And the next bullet point, five, would remain the same “Making recommendations on selection of projects each year for funding”.

Schmitz withdrew his motion, Nelson withdrew his second. It was the consensus of the Commissioners to have Mattson and Czapiewski edit the document as discussed and bring it back to the Commissioners for approval at the June meeting.

10.4 Distribution of Responsibilities Among Executive Director, System Plan Coordinator and other Contractors & Consultants

Hulett asked R. Anderson and Mattice to provide their point of view about this item based on conversations they have previously.

R. Anderson felt we need to find a consulting firm that has ample staff to provide each District with a planner to help with their individual needs and issues in the Districts; with an overall planner/manager they report back to, which helps with maintaining continuity. R. Anderson also feels that the work of the Commission is clear in that we add appropriate designated parks and trails to the System Plan, creating the system as we go. The Commission needs to see the big picture and the Strategic Plan is our guideline. Mattice added that the planner in the district would have the expertise to help develop the system plan for the district, with the DPCs input; six (6) district plans with regional expertise with a planning agency we will be able to weave the Statewide

System Plan together and meet the needs and fill the gaps within a district. Give the Districts the ability to plan and bring to the Commission their district plan.

Mattice clarified that Czapiewski has been leading the DPCs and has done a good job, but he can't do it all for what needs to be done in the districts. He would coordinate planning staff, would coordinate the meetings and bring back to the Executive Director who would summarize the information and bring back to the Commission. Czapiewski is the **System Plan** Coordinator, the support planners are district planners. There are funds available as the Schoenbauers contract has expired.

Furshong felt the RDCs in the districts should be made aware of the RFP process as there is expertise among them as many have worked in the districts.

Pike felt verifying the firm(s) selected has the communications expertise to help with our communication plan is important as well.

Czapiewski stated his thought on this process would be to identify not a geographic distribution but a skill set distribution; someone good in trails, park design, implementation plans. Either way we build capacity that is needed, either geographic or skill based. This helps as we develop a much larger system over the years with more needs.

Nelson wants to have a budget identified first before an RFP is distributed. We need to know the actual number; what funding sources we can dedicate to this project to maximize what we can get (hire) for our funds.

10.5 RFP for Planner to Manage and Lead District Initiative Work

Motion by Mattice, to direct the Executive Director and System Plan Coordinator to write an RFP for district planner needs, and identify the funding source available to hire the planners.

Second by Nelson

Mattson and Czapiewski will write a draft RFP and circulate to Commissioners prior to the June meeting so they will have something to react to before the meeting.

Motion Approved

11. Old Business:

11.1 DMS Redesign Review

Czapiewski reviewed the new DMS with the Commissioners and expressed our satisfaction with the outcome.

Wendorf suggested that in Phase II we add a feature to track the number of acres of parks added and miles of trails so we have better/easier reporting of our progress.

Motion by Nelson to send the Schoenbauers a letter of appreciation for their work with the Commission these last several years.

Second by Wendorf

Motion Approved

The Executive Director will prepare a letter for the Chair's signature.

11.2 Value Stream Maps Revisit

Mattson wanted to revisit this item from the previous meeting as she did not feel we adequately addressed adding the DPCs into the process in VSMs for funding and application. Nelson suggested we hold on this item until we have the DPC guidelines from 2/25/2015 finalized. Mattice feels it is important to add the DPCs into the VSM process. Mattson will send out the VSM information again prior to the June meeting.

12. Consent Agenda:

April

Consulting Services	\$15,774.13
Commission Expenses	\$1,317.27
<u>DPC Expenses</u>	<u>\$241.85</u>
Total	\$17,333.25

Motion by Mattice

Second by Pike

Motion Approved

May

Consulting Services	\$26,346.46
Commission Expenses	\$2,518.31
<u>DPC Expenses</u>	<u>\$190.46</u>
Total	\$29,055.23

Motion by Mattice

Second by Wendorf

Motion Approved

13. Next Meeting and Agenda Items:

June 28, 2017, the Launchpad, 102 1st Street West, Bemidji, MN 56601
10am – 3pm