

**Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Minutes for September 26, 2018**

Quarry Hill Nature Center
701 Silver Creek Road NE
Rochester, MN 55906

APPROVED

Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Ryan, Tim Kennedy, Timothy Engrav, Rita Albrecht, Bryan Pike, Peg Furshong, Brad Bonk, Barry Wendorf, Marc Mattice, Rick Anderson, Tom Stoa

Commissioners Absent: Jannik Anderson, Tom Schmitz

Consultants Present: Renee Mattson, Executive Director, Joe Czapiewski, System Plan Coordinator, Margy Hughes, Administrative Assistant

- 1. Meeting called to Order at 9:08 A.M. by Chair Ryan**
- 2. Consent Agenda:** Minutes of July 25, 2018, Treasurer's Report and Agenda for September 26, 2018
Motion by Wendorf
Second by Anderson
Motion Approved

3. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance:

Mike Hulett, Brad Harrington/ Wright Co Parks, Sarah Weed/Stearns Co, Ben Anderson/Stearns Co, Marty Walsh/ DPC District 6, Karlin Ziegler/GMPT District 6, Jennifer V. Julsrud/Hartley Nature Center, Ted L Suss/GMPT, Mike Nigbur/ GMPT & Rochester Parks as well as meeting host, LuAnn Wilcox/Administrative Assistant District 6, Elizabeth Wefel/Lobbyist GMPT. Telecommuters: Bob Manzoline/ GMPT District 1, Marcia Larson/ GMPT Bemidji Parks and Recreation

4. Welcome Greater Minnesota Park and Trails Board Members/Guests: (refer to list for Agenda Item 3. Above)

4.1 Overview of Quarry Hill Park Prairie House – Mike Nigbur/Rochester Parks

Quarry Hill Park Building we are meeting in opened in the Spring of 2018, and the park consists of 329 acres. Park activities are based exclusively on Education and Conservation. This is the first park in Minnesota that is a storm shelter. DNR has 70 acres adjacent to the Park. The Rochester School District funds some of the instructional programs by providing their teachers. The Friends of Quarry Hill Park

facilitates fund raising for some instructional programs. The Park is open 360 days of the year and staff is always here. GMPTC funded the Prairie House building.

5. Executive Director's Report by Renee Mattson

State Fair Booth at the DNR Theatre was very successful for the culmination of the 10-Year Legacy Celebrations. Overall things went very smoothly.

Project GO Mattson was able to take Sara Grover Holger to meet with the Duluth Parks and Recreation Director to talk about a grant project she has for training sessions in Minnesota. Sara also met with the YMCA and training their staff to be trainers.

GMRPTC Budget Review FY20 & FY21 Mattson met with Erika Rivers about future funding of the Commission and the potential to obtain a line-item in the Governor's Budget.

Heartland Trail Regional Status Erika Rivers and Mattson arranged a meeting in Detroit Lakes and invited DNR staff, the representative from the Clay County Heartland Trail Committee, and Commissioner Bonk to discuss the request by a member of the Clay County Heartland Trail Committee to consider taking a portion of the yet unbuilt State Trail and making it regional in an attempt to complete the trail-Park Rapids to Moorhead. Clay County will not agree to the trail maintenance, so the meeting was called off. There is interest by the DNR to move sections of trail to regional when it could result in getting the trail completed and for the good of Minnesotans.

DNR Grant Funding Updates All FY2016 Grants are now closed. Chisago County/Sunrise Prairie Trail came in under budget. Those funds are rolled back into the general Legacy account and we do not have access to them. Willmar Robbins Island grant would like to reallocate the funds proposed for an interpretive boardwalk.

MN Great Outdoors Website The new site is up and working well. People were very interested in the hands-on search capabilities at the State Fair booth. Mattson also met with the MN IT and MN GEO team to develop a clean way to get new designations into the website. GMRPTC has continual additions and updates unlike the DNR and Met Council.

6. System Plan Coordinator's Report by Joe Czapiewski

DPC Administrative Support Another round of DPC meetings has been advancing (D1,2,3,4,6 completed). Administrative coordinators worked with DPC's on funding application prioritization, designation review, visioning and strategic initiative advancement.

District Strategic Initiatives Grand Rapids meeting with DPC2 member Olilla about a proposed birding trail across the bog areas of D1 and D2, met with Bemidji Parks Department about re-starting their designation attempt with a new initiative (D2 Bemidji Area Planning), continued to work with Duluth on their planning processes (D1 Duluth Area Planning), reviewed Heartland Trail planning negotiation with Mattson (D3

Heartland Trail Corridor Planning), and visited with SW MN League of Municipalities in Kellogg about regional trails planning and water trail planning (D6 Initiatives).

Outreach and Planning Assistance While most of the outreach effort this period focused on funding application review, significant planning assistance was conducted:

On-Site Reviews On-site Master Plan review was conducted for Sawtooth Bluffs in Grand Marais, On-site Funding Application reviews were conducted for: Morrison County Belle Prairie Park; Cannon Valley Trail; Rochester Gamehaven Park; Fairview Township Gull Lake Trail; Wright County Bertram Park; St. Cloud Beaver Island Trail; Chisago County Swedish Immigrant Trail and Sunrise Prairie Trail; Mesabi Trail; Lake Vermilion Trail; Moorhead River Corridor Trail; Granite Falls Memorial Park; Redwood County Plum Creek Park; Red Lake River Corridor. Site visits were complete for all funding applications except Fergus Falls GET, Otter Tail County Perham to Pelican Rapids Trail, and Lincoln County hole in the Mountain Park. All three of those projects have been recently reviewed prior to the application.

ETeam Review Director Mattson and Czapiewski met with the ETeam in Hinckley for an extended review session. Three Master Plans and one Designation Application were scored and ranked.

Mountain Bike System Planning Proposal Development Director Mattson and Czapiewski held interviews with each of the two primary contractors who submitted proposals for this.

Data Management System (DMS) Development Working with Full Circle Group to explore what Phase III of DMS development will look like.

7. Items from Members and Letters to Commission

Letter from Ashley Holo re: Battle Lake to Ashby Trail – emailed previously.

8. GMRPTC & GMP&T Discussion

8.1 40-40-20 Split

Ted Suss GMPT It is time to consider future funding for all parks and trails. Suggestion to move the funding for the Commission from funds available to grant to an appropriation. **Elizabeth Wefel** to move the operational budget to General Fund obligation would need more support.

General Discussion: 40-40-20 split remains but as funds grow above an established ceiling, then they would be evenly split between the three agencies. **2.** We will not be actively approaching Legislators to change the 40-40-20. The Commission members responded to this split with the following remarks:

40-40-20 split is acceptable to remain for now, but we ask to set a firm dollar benchmark and any dollars over that benchmark will be split into equitable third splits, Legacy funds should not be used for maintenance, other funds should be available for

maintenance requested GMPT to go before the Legislature to inform of our needs, continue improvements and preservation. Guests from GMPT as well as one guest spoke to this. **Mattson** has met with Erika Rivers and once again brought up the question to discuss the benchmark number that would be set so that any future dollars over that would be divided equally into thirds for the GMRPTC, MET Council, and DNR. Comments from the GMPT members in attendance were that there is a comfort zone at this time for the 40-40-20 split. We need to be in sync with the GMRPTC and supporting what you are. The funding for general maintenance is a concern. There needs to be more funding areas elsewhere like the other two groups have. We need to keep in mind that folks use all three sectors of the Parks and Trails in Minnesota. **Wefel and Suss reconfirmed** a continuation for “Equitable Funding Distribution” for Parks and Trails in all districts. GMRPTC is available to help with technical assistance. **Ryan on** behalf of the Commission, I want to thank all of you from the GMPT for attending and updating us. We appreciate this collegial opportunity as well as your candid thoughts on the subject matter.

8.2 Anticipated funding for FY20 & FY21

Mattson Estimated amount of funding available in the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund to appropriate for FY20 \$51,212,000 and for FY21 \$51,635,00
1% is taken off the top to fund Legacy Advisory support staff and their activities. With the 40-40-20 split, FY20 starts with \$10,140,000 funding. Less the Grant Administration of 2.5% and the operating budget of \$450,000 for both FY20 and FY21, less a 10% holdback in FY20 in case of a shortfall of tax collections:
FY20 \$8,492,000 FY21 \$9,518,000.

9. New Business:

9.1 FY20 Funding Application Overview

Czapiewski Presented the funding application overview

Motion by Anderson to exclude Lake Vermillion Trail in the funding cycle due to an incomplete application related to lack of signed Joint Powers Agreement

Second by Mattice

Motion Approved

9.2 Designation Review and Approval

Voyager Country ATV System

Motion by Furshong to table the application due to being incomplete.

Second by Wendorf

Motion Approved

Mesabi Trail (Update)

Motion by Pike to accept the Updated Master Plan scoring of 445 as presented

Second by Albrecht

Motion Approved

Duluth Spirit Mountain

Motion by Mattice to designate

Second by Furshong

Motion Approved

Battle Lake to Ashby Trail

Motion by Pike to not Designate at this time

Second by Kennedy

Motion Failed 6-5

Motion by Mattice to table for further exploration and information presented to the Commission as to how this trail fits within the region and within D3

Second by Furshong

Motion Approved with one dissenting vote

9.3 System Plan Coordinator Contract Renewal

Mattson shared the contract information and asked for approval

Motion by Kennedy to approve the System Plan Coordinator as recommended by Mattson

Second by Albrecht

Motion Approved

9.4 Willmar Robbins Island Park Change to Grant Scope of Work

Removed from Agenda until further notice.

10. Old Business:

10.1 Mountain Bike Trail Analysis RFP

Mattson shared the recommendations of *Czapiewski* and *Mattson* as follows:

Split the work project into separate work plans, Contract Rock Solid for the Design Standards and Construction Guidelines, Contract UP! Outdoors for the System Mapping and Hold off on the Demand Evaluation until such time as there is a better ability to conduct trail counting.

Motion by Anderson to authorize up to \$30,000 to Rock Solid for Design Standards and up to \$25,000 to UP! Outdoors for Mapping in D1&2

Second by Pike

Motion Approved

11. Consent Agenda

Approval of July, August and September 2018 expenses

July Consultants and other Expenses	\$5,999.89
August Consultants and other Expenses	\$2,128.10
September Consultants and other Expenses	\$24,126.52
September Commission Expenses	\$3,860.89

Total **\$36,115.40**

Motion by Mattice

Second by Kennedy

Motion Approved

12. Next Meeting and Agenda Items

October 24, 2018 at the North Branch EMS Building