

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Minutes for October 26, 2016

Sartell City Hall, Sartell, MN

APPROVED

Commissioners in Attendance: Mike Hulett, Tom Ryan, Marc Mattice, Rick Anderson, Tim Kennedy, Bryan Pike, Peg Furshong, Barry Wendorf, LuAnn Wilcox, Jannik Anderson

Commissioners Absent: Keith Nelson, Rita Albrecht, Tom Schmitz

Staff and Consultants Present: Renee Mattson, Executive Director, Joe Czapiewski, System Plan Coordinator, Jeff and Kathy Schoenbauer, Schoenbauer Consulting

1. Meeting called to order at 10:04am by Chair Hulett

2. Approval of September 28, 2016 Minutes

Commissioner Wilcox noted that Old Business 10.2 Connecting People to the Outdoors was not discussed at the meeting, although it was on the agenda. Further, Wilcox requested that CPO be placed more to the beginning of an upcoming agenda to allow the Commission to fully discuss this item.

Motion by Wendorf

Second by Ryan

Motion Approved

3. Treasurer's Report

Commissioner Ryan asked about the operating grants that are still outstanding and whether we can spend down those funds moving forward? Yes, they must be expended in three years, so we do have time.

Motion by Pike

Second by Wilcox

Motion Approved

4. Approval of Agenda

Motion by R. Anderson

Second by Wendorf

Motion Approved

5. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance

Mary Koep and James Bobier

6. Presentation by James Bobier – Dakota Rail Trail

Mr. Bobier showed a Power Point presentation about the Dakota Rail Trail project and requested the Commission not approve the trail funding request at this time. He does not represent any of the 14 townships in McLeod County, he is an interested citizen. 13 of 14 townships do not support paving the Dakota Rail Trail.

7. Executive Director's Report

Schoenbauers reported on the meeting results of the October 4, 2106 Mountain Bike Meeting in Duluth. Kathy reported that two dozen people were in attendance. It was the start of a conversation. They feel they got good information out of the meeting. Jeff felt it was important to gain a baseline for the information out there. They feel comfortable making a recommendation to the Commission to start work in FY18. Per Commissioner Wilcox request, Mattson elaborated on the LAC meetings that were held on October 5 and 18. There is an opening on the Legacy Advisory Committee for Greater Minnesota. Commissioner J. Anderson filled a term which will be up in January. Commissioner Anderson stated she is not going to reapply. Questions were asked in the ED report as to what the MN USA meeting was; Minnesota United Snowmobilers Association. This is one of several organizations Mattson presented to in October, spreading the message of the Commission's work and taking advantage of the opportunity to answer questions about where we are in our maturing organization.

There was a request by Commission Wendorf to put on the November agenda an item related to the District Strategic Initiative outcomes. What is the Commission's plan for these strategic initiatives?

Commissioner Ryan requested an agenda item addressing the level of financial assistance available to groups and agencies requesting Master Plan funding.

8. Items from Members and Letters to the Commission

Commissioner Pike shared an article in the Brainerd Dispatch from September 14, 2016 about the Milford Mine Memorial.

Commissioner Ryan floated a section of the Zumbro River. Left from a DNR site and came out at a county land site that is accessible from the river.

9. System Coordinator's Report

Recap of the District Initiatives and reporting on the recently held DPC meetings. Czapiewski shared a letter from the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission. They are asking if the county would be eligible for planning dollars for hiring a landscape architect to assist with design for the Lac qui Parle Park; and what level of design is required in a Master Plan to qualify for designation as a regional park?

Czapiewski feels we should evaluate the Memorial Park Master Plan that we helped fund as a prototype project in the last round of granting. This should be on the November agenda.

Commissioner Furshong feels it is important to support those small communities that don't have the resources to prepare Master Plans or hire designers.

J. Schoenbauer feels it's important to not throw all the decisions for designation to the ETeam. The Commission has a responsibility to not set expectations of communities that score High but may never reach the level of a regional designation.

Schoenbauers feel we did not provide to the Commission enough information and context to make good decisions about the designations in this most recent round.

Czapiewski feels there is a perception that if an application scores High they will be designated.

Chair Hulett feels it is likely time for a mid-course correction.

Commissioner Wendorf made the observation that the Commission shouldn't be funding Master Plans for non-regional parks and trails and in some cases, we won't know that until the Master Plan has been submitted.

Commissioner Ryan proposes that at the January meeting in Little Falls we perform a "tune up" of sorts and re-energize with the question of "What we are? Planning/Funding or hybrid". The meeting should be predominantly a mid-term assessment. The Commission is relevant and people are coming to us for counsel and advice.

Czapiewski handed around a report on the DPC's and where we are in the process of work on the district strategic initiatives as outlined in the Strategic Plan. They are at various levels of maturity. Joe, Renee and Commissioners are there to provide guidance. Many are advancing because they can work with other entities and get things done.

Commissioner Wilcox had a question about District 6 and the Regional Park Density Analysis. It is in relation to understanding how many regional parks are justified in an area. What is a "right size".

Commissioner Pike feels the District 2 looks accurate in terms of the initiatives.

Chair Hulett reported that District 3 had a good meeting and the report reflects the discussion and there was a good turnout and good input.

Czapiewski commented on the river corridor initiative and the turn to looking at the whole corridor.

Commissioner Kennedy felt District 1 had a good discussion and now Duluth is in the fold more with the addition of the City Park and Recreation Manager in Duluth.

Prospect Trail and Superior Hiking Trail conversations are still happening.

J. Schoenbauer related concerns about the process of the strategic initiatives. He feels that as the planner for the Commission he needs to be more involved. We should have planning expertise to support the endeavors.

Commissioner Ryan thinks a solution for those communities that can't get a start due to lack of funding is to send our planner to talk to them if requested. Commissioner

Furshong spent time with the Upper Minnesota Valley Regional Development Commission. They could be the local expertise and local capacity. Czapiewski is in regular contact with Kristi from the UMVRD and has been helping her and her clients all along. Part of her letter was to push the Commission to discuss capacity and these very issues.

10. New Business:

10.1 FY18 Funding Discussion

Mattson introduced the information that had been previously sent to the Commissioners and explained how the recommendations for funding have been arrived at; through discussions among staff and consultants. There are areas in which all were in agreement and several that have split votes. All are put before the Commission today for discussion and further work and follow up.

Mattson described the funding available in FY18 and FY19, net is \$8,298,810 FY18 and \$9,148,630 FY19.

Mattson handed the discussion off to the Schoenbauers and Czapiewski for their insight.

J. Schoenbauer noted decisions are becoming more difficult as we have added parks and trails into the system.

The summary of each request is noted below:

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|--------|--|
| 16-006 | <p>Lake Wobegon Trail</p> <p>Consensus was to go forward with this project but determine which parts of the project we will approve. Agreement it is a critical link. There was a lack of interest in funding the wetland credits. This request needs a look into the budget and a firm recommendation to the Commissioners as to what should be funded.</p> |
| 16-022 | <p>Moorhead River Corridor</p> <p>While there was spirited discussion on both sides for and against benches and waste receptacles, final discussion was to approve the \$660,600 recommendation, but a conversation should occur with the applicant to ensure that they can fund the benches and waste receptacles which everyone seemed to agree were important for all projects.</p> |
| 16-028 | <p>Big Falls Campground</p> <p>Concerns raised about the \$25,000 per acre acquisition costs. The recommendation was to approve the full requested amount of \$333,300 which included the road work to provide access. Only action required on this request to confirm that \$25,000 is reasonable for acquisition, as it was felt the per acre cost might be low.</p> |

- 16-031 Detroit Mountain
The consensus was to reduce the funding request by \$340,000. There was much discussion about snowmaking/lighting Nordic trails vs. eliminating the treehouse and playground. Final discussion was to reduce funding by \$340K. But there was consensus that the budget needs to be ferreted out further.
- 16-038 Cascade Lake Park
Not a unanimous decision on moving forward on this. But it was decided that we fund this project at the full amount and there was no discussion that more information was required.
- 16-045 Mesabi Trail
The Commission is not ready to decide until we provide them with more information about whether they will in fact enter their MP into the Portal. Commission will decide next month based on what their decision is.
- 16-024 Tioga Trail
Large funding request that seemed to be everything to fund. Much more work needs to happen with respect to what they are looking at for funding. The request needs to be pared down and the budget dug into. There was a feeling that the cost of trail construction was unrealistic. J. Schoenbauer suggests there are a number of technical questions to be answered before funding happens for this project.
- 16-010 Kensington Park
Commissioner Wendorf likes this project. No funding at this time.
- 16-029 Dakota Rail Trail
Commissioner Wendorf moved and Commissioner Mattice seconded that the portion of this trail that costs \$680,000 and the \$20,000 for contingency in the budget is their match and we move forward on this portion of the project. Trail corridor is there and this could be funded. Commissioner R. Anderson in agreement that this is a good project. \$600,000 would be the amount funded which is less the contingency and -10%.
- 16-018 Luverne Loop and Blue Mounds Trail
Not approved for this round of funding. Wait until FY19. Determine if this is a local, regional project. There was a vote that failed to move the project forward.
- 16-039 Milford Mine

It was consensus that we eliminate the \$45,000 for site preservation action plan and marketing strategies and \$15,000 for the memorial wall and approved \$60,000. Total funding recommended at \$60,000.

- 16-009 Memorial Park
On hold, plan needs further evaluation. There was discussion among the group about whether certain elements of the request should be included for funding. This project also wraps up into the River Corridor initiative.

Commissioner Mattice thinks it will be a good discussion to hear what the planners think of the Memorial Park Master Plan that the Commission approved funding for in 2015.

Chair Hulett feels it will be important to vote on each proposal individually. There are still funds available to be dispersed after decisions are made at the November meeting.

10.2 Master Plan Portal and Master Plan Requirements

This item was not discussed due to time constraints

11. Old Business:

11.1 Pending Designations

At the suggestion of J. Schoenbauer this item was referred to the November agenda as part of the larger discussion. There was consensus for this to be held over.

11.2 Vistal Partners Contract

Approval of a contract not to exceed \$50,000 for work to fix the DMS site.

Motion by Pike

Second by Wilcox

Motion Approved

12. Consent Agenda

Consulting Services	\$41,863.17
Commissioners	\$2,787.16
<u>DPC</u>	<u>\$548.16</u>
Total	\$45,198.49

Motion by Mattice

Second by Wilcox

Motion Approved

13. Next Meeting and Agenda Items

November 23, 2016 in Sartell at the Sartell City Hall. Agenda items as noted in the minutes.

Meeting Adjourned