

**Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Meeting Minutes for October 28, 2015
Oxbow Park, Byron MN**

Approved 11/25/15

Members Present: Rita Albrecht; Jannik Anderson; Rick Anderson; Mike Hulett; Tim Kennedy; Al Liefkort; Marc Mattice; Keith Nelson; Tom Ryan; Tom Schmitz; Barry Wendorf; LuAnn Wilcox

Members Absent: Bryan Pike

Staff/Consultants Present:

Renee Mattson, Executive Director
Joe Czapiewski, System Plan Coordinator
Jeff and Kathy Schoenbauer, Strategic Plan Coordinators

1. The meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Rita Albrecht

2. Motion by Nelson, second by J. Anderson: Approve the minutes of September 23, 2015. **Carried.**

3. Approval of the Treasurer's Report

Renee submitted a summary status report of the three operating grants.

Motion by Ryan, second by R. Anderson to approve the Treasurer's Report. **Motion Carried**

Commissioners reiterated the request that reports include the percentage of funds spent and the percentage of funds remaining, and also that the report be dated.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Renee requested that *JFC Strategic Service Contract Changes* be added as an action item under 6.4, that items 7.2 and 7.3 be presented in reverse order, and that *Regional Designation* be added as an action item under 7.6. Tom R. invited members to take a brief tour of the zoo and playscape facilities of Oxbow Park during the lunch recess.

Motion by Kennedy, second by Hulett to approve the agenda as amended. **Motion carried**

5. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance (none)

6. Unfinished Business

6.1 - Funding Priority Criteria (Chair Al Liefkort now presiding)

Renee reported that ten requests for funding had been received which included projects under the *Take Care of What We Have* and *Connect People and the Outdoors* strategic directions in addition to *Acquire Land, Create Opportunities*. Joe reported that the requests amounted to \$15.65 million. The deadline for funding request submissions is October 30 and receipt of additional applications is anticipated. Commissioners asked that projects be entered on a spreadsheet illustrative of the information received; describing relevance to the selection criteria outlined in the meeting minutes of 09/23/15; and identifying the location and commission district number. The Commission will also scrutinize projects, including those that are legislatively designated, by their adherence to the *Parks and Trails Legacy Plan* according to which Strategic Direction(s) it addresses and which Key Strategies will be utilized. Projects will be graphically illustrated on a map with color coding by classification, delineation between projects for FY 2016 and FY 2017, and identifying the two legislatively designated projects.

Jeff distributed a draft *Funding Request Evaluation and Prioritizing Protocol* for discussion. Members discussed the proposed Process Steps at length, particularly whether and how the Evaluation Team (ETeam) would be involved. A round table conversation concluded that the ETeam will provide feedback to the staff/consultant team regarding the worthiness and prioritization of projects, but will not formally evaluate or analyze the funding requests. Members requested other editorial changes, including using appropriate titles for staff and consultants, and recognizing the work will be accomplished under the direction of the Executive Director. The Commission also directed the Executive Director to confer with DNR grants administration staff after funding decisions have been made and prior to the submission of the report to the legislature.

Motion by Wendorf, second by Nelson: Approve the protocol as amended in the discussion.
Motion carried

6.2 - Schoenbauer Consulting contract extension

Renee received a *Professional Services Proposal* for continuation of Strategic Plan Coordinator services from Schoenbauer Consulting. Al read aloud some of its provisions, as members had not received a copy of the document.

Motion by Mattice, second by Schmitz: Approve extension of the contract with Schoenbauer Consulting as proposed.

A motion by Hulett to call the question was not seconded.

Motion by Wilcox, second by Nelson: Table the discussion until members have been provided a copy of the proposal. **Motion carried by a vote of 11 to 1**

Resumption of the discussion included questions regarding the timeline of the contract, budget considerations, and tangential comments about alterations to designation criteria, the role of the District Planning Committees (DPCs), performance metrics/data collection and analysis. Members asked for clarification of the roles and relationship between the System Plan Coordinator and the Strategic Plan Coordinator under item A.c in the proposal, and to specify that their work be coordinated through the Executive Director.

Motion by Nelson, second by Kennedy: Approve the contract extension with Schoenbauer Consulting through December 31, 2016 as amended, striking item B.b Optional Service, for up to \$40,000. **Motion carried**

Note: the Commission will revisit the proposed *Optional Service: Create Statewide Plan for Mountain Bike Facilities* for consideration at a later date.

6.3 - Giant Voices Contract

Renee reiterated the request she made at the September 23 meeting to contract with Giant Voices for development of a statewide map with overlays depicting regional, state, and national parks and trails, and other public lands available for recreational use. The detailed written proposal and scope of services that was requested by the Commission in September was not provided.

Motion by R. Anderson second by Mattice: Approve the execution of a contract with Giant Voices by the Executive Director for services described in an amount not to exceed \$3,750 which includes up to two revisions. **Motion carried**

6.4 - JFC Strategic Service Contract Changes

Renee distributed a proposed addendum to the contract with JFC Strategic Services, per Commission discussion at the September meeting.

Motion by Schmitz, second by Hulett: Approve addendum to the contract with JFC Strategic Services as proposed in the amount of \$5,000. **Motion carried**

7. New Business

7.1 - Houston Engineering contract for Master Plan Portal

Jeff said that Schoenbauer Consulting will provide the wireframe for development of an online Master Plan submittal tool by Houston Engineering. The intention is to enable agencies applying for regional designation and funding to easily and succinctly fulfill *Master Plan Requirements* as described in the *Strategic Plan*. This will aid smaller communities with fewer resources in particular, and reduce the time and expense of Master Plans for all applicants. Applicants with more extensive plans and supplemental documents will be able to attach additional materials as addenda. The goal is to launch this portal by February 1 2016.

Motion by Nelson, second by Schmitz: Approve a contract with Houston Engineering for development of a Master Plan Portal to be negotiated and executed by the Executive Director of the Commission in an amount not to exceed \$8,000. **Motion carried**

7.2 - DPC Fall Meeting Review

Joe presented a report on the DPC meetings that were held earlier in October.

Concerns raised by the DPCs pertaining to designation and funding criteria include:

- Short, but important trail connections are disregarded because of their length
- Criteria is skewed toward linear and connector trails rather than loops and systems that serve local population centers
- Separate applications are required for trail connection segments rather than evaluating them in aggregate as a cohesive system that includes state trails
- Water trails present important opportunities for park facilities and points of access
- The addition of a motorized trail classification resulted in applications for mixed use rather than motorized-only use

7.3 - DPC Changes

Members discussed possible changes to the *Operating Procedures* relative to the DPCs, with consideration for the evolving needs of the Commission and the opinions expressed at the DPC meetings. While the Commission is supportive of more active involvement of the DPCs, their role will continue to be advisory rather than authoritative. DPCs are most useful in identifying existing park and trail amenities, and in turn the gaps and opportunities, within the district. They can then be useful as outreach ambassadors to build stronger, broader coalitions and address district priorities.

Joe will compile the ideas and suggestions with those discussed in 7.3 above to make recommendations regarding the role and composition of DPCs. The Commission directed him to draft a rewrite of the DPC Operating Guidelines.

7.4 - DPC Summit Meeting

The Commission will hold a DPC summit for members from all districts and set the tentative date for Saturday, January 30. Members discussed the purpose, agenda, and logistics for the summit and will solidify plans at the December meeting.

7.5 - Update Procedures and Policies for Secretary

Changes made to the role and function of the Secretary last March, and the subsequent hiring of the Executive Director, necessitate revisions of the Operating Guidelines for this position. Some members would like to eliminate the position altogether, while others would like to retain the position but revise the guidelines.

Motion by Hulett, second by Wendorf: Eliminate section II.C from the Operating Guidelines.

After discussion, Hulett amended the motion to: Direct the Executive Director to rewrite section II.C with more limited duties, reflective of member comments, for action at the January meeting of the Commission. Motion carried

Note: LuAnn will work with Renee to assure that approved minutes are posted on the state and Commission websites. Draft minutes are to be available to staff and Commissioners only and are not made public until formally approved by the Commission.

7.6 - Regional Designation

Joe submitted two properties for Regional Designation: Lake Brophy Park in Douglas County and Lake Washington Park in Le Sueur County. The ETeam gave them scores of 400 and 325, respectively. Joe indicated that Brophy Park will apply for funding to pursue a timely acquisition opportunity and that Lake Washington is not ready to apply for funding in the current cycle.

Motion by Mattice, second by Nelson: Approve the designation of Brophy Park and Lake Washington Park as regionally significant and adopt them into the Statewide System Plan.

Motion carried

8. Executive Director's Report

Members received a written report which was filed with the minutes.

9. Items from Members

Members conversed about anecdotal experiences, observations, and ideas.

Al distributed a letter he received from Greater Minnesota Parks & Trails commenting on some aspects of Commission process. He will respond to their concerns at their meeting on October 29. Renee will also be in attendance at that meeting.

10. Consent Agenda

Rita reviewed and submitted the bills and claims as follows:

- Commissioners expenses	7,302.06
- JFC Strategic Services	7,911.34
- Schoenbauer Consulting	2,640.00
- City of Bemidji	4,967.37
- Trinity Creek Consulting	9,656.19
- ETeam expenses	466.60
- DPC member expenses	1,148.38

TOTAL **34,091.94**

Motion by Kennedy, second by Ryan: Approve the consent agenda as submitted. **Motion carried.**

11. The next regular Commission meeting is scheduled for November 25, 2015 at Sartell City Hall.

Motion to adjourn was made by Wilcox, second by Hulett. **Motion carried.**

*All motions are carried unanimously unless otherwise noted. Motions which are not unanimous are recorded in the Vote Tally Journal.