



Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Commission

Minutes for July 24, 2019

Northland Regional Sports Park

Bemidji, MN

APPROVED

Commissioners Present: Tim Engrav, Bryan Pike, Rita Albrecht, Peg Furshong, Bryan Pike, Marc Mattice, Tom Schmitz, Rick Anderson, Tom Stoa, Jannik Anderson

Commissioners Absent: Tim Kennedy, Barry Wendorf, Tom Ryan

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

1. Meeting Called to Order at 10:02 by Secretary Treasurer Mattice

Welcome and overview of the facility by Dave Smith of the Northland Regional Sports Park. Smith welcomed the group to the Northland Regional Sports Park and provided information about the history, development and the year-round activities that take place in the 360 acres within the venue.

2. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance Mike Hulett, Former Commissioner of GMRPTC; Karen Umphress, UP! Outside /Mountain Bike Project; Dave Smith, Treasurer BTSC & Board Member HFFS

3. Consent Agenda: Approval of the minutes of June 26, 2019, Agenda for July 24, 2019 and Treasurer's Report through June 2019. Budget remaining \$36,066.08, through June 30, 2019 of month 12 of 12.

Motion by Schmitz

Second by Furshong

Motion Approved

4. **Executive Director's Report** (See attachment **ITEM 4** by *Mattson*) *Mattson* touched on the Mountain Bike Collaborative Meeting in Grand Rapids on July 15. D2 Commissioner *Pike* also attended the meeting. They felt that the meeting was very positive and those in attendance agreed with the Phase I research and Phase II marketing project. There was definite support for a collaborative effort within the region.
5. **System Plan Coordinator's Report** (See attachment **ITEM 5** by *Czapiewski*) *Czapiewski* asked the Commissioners to react to how they wished to respond to an inquiry for an application lacking the funding resolution by the August 2, deadline. There was a consensus by the Commissioners to allow this one Applicant, proactive with their request. They will have to have the full Application with the Resolution submitted following the next scheduled meeting that was holding up this Resolution. The Commissioners received a list of the 18 funding applications received as of July 22, 2019. *Czapiewski* will be making site visits to all applicants in the month of August.
6. **Items from Members and Letters to Commission** *Schmitz* reported that it looks like there will be Minnesota River Valley State Trail as part of the Highway 14 expansion. *Furshong* reported that she had a delightful stay and great experience at Lake Byllesby Regional Park. *Bonk* reported that the Cuyuna extension is being constructed as State Trail. *Mattice* reported that there was a successful fourth annual Triathlon event at Bertram Park.
7. **Old Business:**
 - 7.1 **Strategic Plan Update** *Czapiewski* reported the status of the sub committees. The sub-committees have been in contact with *Czapiewski* to share their work. Today, there are two sub-committees that will be reporting, and the Commission will follow up with discussion on their work/ideas. *Engrav*, *Mattice*, *Bonk* presented their Update Overview or Theme 1 which also included *Ryan* as a member but not present at this meeting. Included in their report were sections on the Importance of Land and Water Resources when Considering Designation and Classification and Criteria. Discussion followed with questions/suggestions. Subcommittee of *Schmitz*, *Pike* and *R Anderson* reported their Update Overview of Theme 4. Included in their report were sections on Organizing Master Plan Components and Evaluation of the Master Plan for Designation. Discussion followed with questions/suggestions. Considerable suggestions were presented during this discussion for the scoring. *Czapiewski*, along with the two sub-committees, will continue to fine tune their work because of the discussion/suggestions. *Czapiewski* indicated that the timeline for the updated Strategic Plan is on schedule. The remaining sub-committees will be finalizing their reports at scheduled meetings, we will then fine tune the document, and have the plan ready to roll out in the spring to the Commission.

7.2 Schoenbauer Response *Mattson* presented a copy of the response letter that along with the initial letter Schoenbauer letter will be posted in the minutes. Schoenbauer will also be receiving a copy of the response that will be sent to him by *Mattson*.

Motion by Stoa to approve this response letter and post, along with Schoenbauer's letter in our minutes. Schoenbauer should also receive a copy of the letter.

Second by J. Anderson

Motion Approved

7.3 Review of District 1 & 2 Trail Inventory Project *Karen Umphress* presented draft her report of the D1&2 inventory project. Umphress responded to questions from the Commissioners and brought attention to the data/graphs in her report. Commissioners had the opportunity to make suggestions for revisions and edits to the document. Umphress displayed samples of large detailed maps showing the trails in both District 1 and District 2. The Commission will be able to forward any additional ideas/suggestions to *Czapiewski* in the next two weeks. He will provide this information to Umphress and the report will come back to the September 25, GMRPTC meeting for final approval.

7.4 Review of FY20/FY21 Budget

Motion by Pike to accept *Mattson's* proposed line items for the budget of FY 2020 and 2021.

Second by Engrav

Motion Approved

8. New Business:

8.1 Review of System Plan Coordinator Contract Contract/ proposed fee for period October 1, 2019 to June 30, 2022. Contract proposal by JFC Strategic Services, Joe *Czapiewski*, Principal Consultant.

Motion by Schmitz Contract/proposed fee for Oct 1, 2019-June 30, 2020 in nine equal monthly installments @ \$6,600 per month, total of \$59,400.

Contract/proposed fee for July 1, 2020 – June 30,2022 in 24 equal installments at \$7,000 per month for a total annual contract of \$84,000 for two years.

Second by Engrav

Motion Approved

8.2 Selection of GMP&T Member for Working Group

Motion by Schmitz for selection of Marcia Larson

Second by R. Anderson

Motion Approved

Motion by Schmitz to appoint Michael Nigbur in the event Larson declines.

Second by R. Anderson

Motion Approved

8.3 Mountain Bike Collaborative Meeting Review report given in *Mattson's* report
Agenda Item 4.

8.4 DNR draft contract for FY20/21 Grant

Motion by Schmitz to approve the contract with authorized signatures.

Second by Bonk

Motion Approved

9. Consent Agenda

Approval of July Expenses

July Commission Expenses	\$2,819.97
July Consultants & Others	\$35,141.09
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	\$37,961.06

Motion by R. Anderson

Second by Schmitz

Motion Approved

10. Next Meeting and Agenda Items

September 25, Lac qui Parle State Park

Meeting will be a joint meeting with Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Director's Report for July 2019

Legacy Parks and Trails Liaison Meeting

Following the Commission meeting in beautiful Lake Benton I attended the PTLAC meeting in Luverne. Also in attendance at the meeting was Commissioner Pike, who hails from Luverne. This meeting had DNR leadership in attendance and they provided regional updates and information about their areas, with a focus on the work they're doing on the pillar of Connecting People to the Outdoors. The group discussed the implementation of a new Social Media Policy, which has been a work in progress for some months. The State Fair Exhibit was previewed, and all agreed it's a great update. Finally, there was a discussion about "Pop-Up Kits" available to move around the state and feature information about the Legacy park and trail work. The group anticipated 3-6 kits that could be set up at local events and other public activities where an interest has been expressed in having information. More to come on this. There has been discussion among a working group of a Statewide Bik and Hiking Trail. Just in the beginning stages.

Mountain Bike Collaborative Meeting

This meeting was hosted in Grand Rapids and is the follow up to the Mountain Bike Summit hosted by IRRRB at the Minnesota Discovery Center in May. The notes following the meeting are below and from the Doodle Poll it appears that October 2 will be the next meeting date:

Mountain Bike Collaborative Project

Meeting Notes for July 15, 2019

In attendance: Linda Johnson IRRRB, Benji Neff Giants Ridge, Tim Campbell Explore Minnesota Tourism, Max Peters City of Cohasset, Bryan Pike GMRPTC, Renee Mattson GMRPTC, Megan Christianson Visit Grand Rapids, Linda Jurek Visit Cook County (phone)

Research Phase I

It was agreed that we need to have better information about not only the number of riders but also who is riding, where they're from, how they heard about the trails, etc. All the information necessary to make informed decisions when we arrive at Phase II, marketing.

Peters noted the April 2017 study done by the Labovitz School of Business and Economics of the Economic Impact of Off Road Cycling in Duluth as a helpful document. (Study attached)

There was agreement from the group that the research piece would be a joint effort and would happen during the summer of 2020 on all the trails represented by those at the meeting. Tacit agreement from those not able to be at the meeting was confirmed by Mattson. If all trails participate there would be a total of eight in the study. Some in various stages of completion. Detroit Mountain – Cuyuna – Tioga Recreation Area (Cohasset) – Red Head Trail (Chisholm) – Giants Ridge - Duluth Traverse – Lake County – Cook County

Campbell felt this project would be successful applying for an Explore Minnesota Tourism research project grant. The maximum amount to apply for is \$7,000. Based on the match ratio for organizational budgets, Visit Grand Rapids would be the best choice to apply on the group's

behalf. Christianson graciously offered to be the named applicant and the fiscal agent for the grant, which is due on or before OCTOBER 1, 2019. Mattson offered to write the grant on behalf of the group.

Lengthy discussion about anecdotal information on trail usage. Campbell will talk to the EMT travel counselors for a sense of what questions they handle relative to mountain bike informational requests.

Research Phase II

Good discussion around a brand identity for the region. All agreed that we would do well to have a single brand, under which the individual trails/cities/regions would have their own identity. Mention of the OZ Trails in Arkansas as something to look at for guidance.

One name that came up: **Bike North MN #BikeNorthMN**

Nothing decided other than a state identifier was important to whatever brand is created. Also, a feeling that it would be wise to ensure there is a reference to Mountain Bike somewhere as we want to stand apart from paved trail biking.

A separate brand and landing page for a website was discussed. Jurek added it would be important not to lose the identity once a consumer jumped from the landing page to individual pages for more information. She suggested all use a template for their site (at least on the landing page) so people aren't confused when they leave one site for another. Jurek also thought it was necessary to extend the brand to the local cycling clubs etc. as much as practical.

Campbell offered to facilitate a branding session with the help of Dave Bergman from the North West region. Christianson has also led branding exercises and would be willing to lend support if needed. The group felt it was important to have a meeting in the fall of 2019 to get the brand discussion started.

Also, good discussion about rewards for achieving a certain number of miles ridden or for visiting multiple systems in the region.

The question was raised about what type of budgeting to expect and set aside in coming years. **Each Entity** for budget year 2020 - \$7,000 for the research phase and for 2021 at least \$7,000 for the initial marketing/development phase. Another \$3,000 possible total over the two budget years for cushion. The group will also apply for a collaborative marketing grant through EMT for 2021. These budget amounts are on top of any grant funds or assistance by GMRPTC.

The question was raised about who (what organization) would be the lead on this and keep notes, arrange meetings etc. all that is involved with keeping track of the needs. Mattson offered to take that role on behalf of the Commission.

Mattson will send out a Doodle Poll for a fall meeting with the hope that we can find a date everyone can attend a meeting.

Streetlight Data Meeting

I've mentioned this data collection system and meetings the PT Legacy partners have had about a way to utilize this data to determine user numbers in parks particularly. Streetlight information gets better literally every 30 days. This is not individual information, there is no way to track individuals via this collection system. It's based on census blocks. It's taken me some time to really comprehend how this works and after this, our third meeting, I believe I finally have realized the scope of knowledge we can gain by using Streetlight. On June 18 we had another meeting at Met Council with the researchers there that work with this data in other applications. At the conclusion of the meeting we had a discussion about funding a two-year research project with Streetlight Data through the Coordinating with Partners funds. This would be incredibly useful information across all the systems.

2019 State Fair Booth

We're in crunch time. The new graphics from last year were great and this year are even better, building on the knowledge we have about how the traffic moved around the space and how people read/understood the information in the exhibits. Any help over the 12-days of the fair would be appreciated. Due to some DNR policies we are not able to use Google this year to sign folks up to work, we're sorely short of filling shifts. I'll likely have to be there for a five day run this year.

Legislative Work

I'm setting up meetings with Senator Simonson and Senator Tomassoni to start preliminary discussions about our line item budget funding. In brief conversations both are receptive to helping.

IMBA

As part of the work on the Mountain Bike Collaborative I had a conversation with David Wiens, IMBA Executive Director and Anthony Duncan, IMBA Local Program Manager/Chapter Liaison about how IMBA is part of the regional branding initiative work. We agreed we're interested in working together, not exactly sure what that looks like, but perhaps a new Regional Designation for an area. We're planning to touch base again in the next few weeks.

GMRPTC
System Plan Coordinators Report
July 2019

DPC Administrative Support

The DPC District Administrators are beginning to plan and schedule for the September round of DPC meetings. The agenda for these meetings will be to prioritize the district's funding applications, review and comment on any designation applications or master plan submissions, and review Commission strategic planning progress.

District Strategic Initiatives

Paved Trails: Jillian (DPC3 Admin) has started to complete the online mapping project per the proposal you approved last month. Expect a report at a later meeting.

Mountain Bikes: Karen Umphress (MTB Trail Inventory Consultant and DPC 1 Admin) will have a draft final report on the Mountain Bike Inventory project for review at the Commission meeting.

On-Site Reviews and Technical Assistance

Technical assistance meetings were held with the following agencies/facilities

- No on-site T/A or site reviews were held since the June meeting.
- A Master Plan has been received for the Hormel Nature Center in Austin. It is being reviewed and a site review will be completed in August.
- Designation application assistance has been ongoing and nearing completion for the Itasca Ski Hill, as well as several other projects at various stages of inquiry.
- We have heard from nearly all of the funding applicants about their project requests for this year.
- I am scheduling site visits for all of the funding applications in August. My intent is to provide the Commission with updated schedules as they are completed and invite you to join me for any of the site visits as you are available.

Funding Application Updates

As of July 21st, there are at least 18 funding applications that I know about. At least three of these were started last week, so it wouldn't be surprising if there were more incoming prior to the August 2 deadline. Based on total inquiries and conversations at the workshops, we should see submission valuations in line with the previous couple of years – in other words, fairly large requests.

The new tutorials and updated guidance have generated positive feedback. I've noticed a new trend this year– questions from our applicants that have answers already listed in the guidelines. Given the volume of this type of request, I'm taking this to mean that we are at or approaching our limit for guidelines and regulations.

Strategic Plan Update

We will have reports from each of the subcommittees at this month's meeting.

ETeam

The Evaluation Team will be meeting in September, on a date yet to be determined. They will once again be providing Renee and I with feedback (not scoring) on the funding applications, as well as ranking and scoring for designation applications and master plans that have been submitted by that time.

We will also be reviewing strategic planning updates with them prior to their attendance at the October Commission meeting.

GREATER MINNESOTA REGIONAL PARKS AND TRAILS COMMISSION
2019 Funding Application Site Visit Schedule
As of 7/22/2019

Duluth Spirit Mountain, Jim and Brandi - Date, Time, Location

Lake Vermillion Trail, Carol - Date, Time, Location

Gull Lake Trail, Teri – Date, Time, Location

Red Lake River Corridor, Shannon and Amanda – Date, Time, Location

Moorhead River Trail, Kristie – Date, Time, Location

Fergus Falls Glacial Edge Trail, Ryan – Date, Time, Location

Otter Tail County Perham to Pelican Rapids Trail, Chuck – Date, Time, Location

Douglas County Lake Brophy Park, Brad – Date, Time, Location

Granite Falls Memorial Park, Kristi and Crystal – Date, Time, Location

Lac qui Parle Park, Kristi and Loren – Date, Time, Location

St. Cloud/Stearns County Beaver Island Trail, Scott and Sarah – Date, Time, Location

Wright County Crow River Regional Trail, Marc and Brad – Date, Time, Location

McLeod County Dakota Rail Trail, Al and Stewart – Date, Time, Location

LeSueur County Lake Washington Park, Tyler – Date, Time, Location

Goodhue County Lake Byllesby Park, Greg – Date, Time, Location

Cannon Valley Trail, Bruce and Scott – Date, Time, Location

Olmsted County Oxbow Park, Karlin – Date, Time, Location

Winona Bluffs Traverse, Ross – Date, Time, Location