

# **Parks and Trails Legacy**

## **Advisory Committee Meeting,**

### **February 15, 2018**

MINUTES PROVIDE A RECORD OF MINNESOTA'S PARKS AND TRAILS LEGACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THESE MINUTES WERE APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE AT THE MEEETING ON APRIL 12, 2018

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# Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

Cottage Grove Service Center

Room #147

13000 Ravine Pkwy S

Cottage Grove, MN 55016

February 15, 2018

9:30 am – 2:30 pm

## Updates and Announcements

Next Meeting: April 12, 2018

Meeting Host: Department of Natural Resources

TBD

**Committee Actions Required:** See items 1 (posting meeting minutes) 2 (circulating volunteer sign up sheet to work Legacy Tenth Anniversary Events, and 3 (PTLAC members working on intentional outreach for upcoming events) below.

## D R A F T   M I N U T E S

### Members Present:

Wayne Sames, Brook Maier, Kathy Bergen, Nancy Hanson, Tim Mitchell, Louise Segreto, Les Ollila, Chris Crutchfield (via Webex: Bob Bierscheid, Katherine Bloom, Pete Royer, Randy Sorensen, Pat Stieg)

**Liaisons:** Emmett Mullin, Renee Mattson, Erika Rivers

**Guests:** Sandy Breuer, Connor Schaefer, Stacy Sjogren, Jon Oyanagi, May Yang, Margot Imdieke-Cross

**Staff:** Paul Purman, Stefanie Stearns, Scott Struelens

### 1. Welcome

Brook Maier, Chair, and Sandy Breuer, Washington County Parks Director welcomed committee members and guests to the Cottage Grove Service Center.

Agenda approved; for conflict of interest review, May Yang noted that she is employed by Great River Greening, which has received Legacy funds in the past.

December minutes approved.

**Action – Staff submit approved minutes to LCC for posting on PTLAC website.**

***2. Silverwood pilot regional event report (Brook Maier and all)***

Brook showed a PowerPoint of photos from Silverwood and explained layout and flow.

Silverwood team members added comments: Kid zone highlights, adaptive equipment specifically drew in people, \$100 game was fun for adults and kids, would like to see if \$100 game results are different in different locations, there were always people in the video tent (adding CC made it more accessible for everyone.) Some people spent a lot of time reading over posters possibly trying to find trivia answers. Main goal of trivia was to gain feedback via last two questions. Big maps worked well. Activities were a huge draw for the families. There was some crossover attendance from Polar Plunge. There was some lost participation from adults with small kids who were preoccupied with their children.

Recommendation was raised and discussed that we be careful about posing questions to public that could be perceived as ‘leading’ questions. (“How is Minnesota better off because of Legacy Funding? How are you better off because of Legacy projects in your area?”) e.g., “What is the importance of Legacy?” Stacy noted that one of the reasons behind “better off” questions is **Results-based accountability** as a tool used in state government, a way to evaluate what is the direct impact on individual lives. How is your life different because of Legacy funding? A way of getting at the **so what?**

Strong sense from those in attendance that the event really captured what we were after. Celebrate was a main theme, Stacy’s involvement in helping frame questions and listen to the public has been important. More (and different) projects should displayed at future events. Public interacting directly with staff and agency leaders was great. We now have a template package to take to other events. Important that DNR commissioner Landwehr, Met Council chair Tchourumoff, GMRPTC chair Ryan all attended. Staff people from all agencies was great.

Stacy had prepared summary of event from volunteer feedback, which was distributed to committee. Silverwood team has reviewed; a few takeaways are that three hours felt a little long, so future sites may cut back to 2-2.5 hours. Event in Marshall will be 4/29 in hopes of getting SW Minnesota State students involved in volunteering. A volunteer sign-up sheet for remaining events was circulated. We had about 40 volunteers at Silverwood, hoping for at least 25 at each event.

**ACTION: Paul will circulate the committee member volunteer sign up sheet to the members who were not in the room today for adding their names.**

***3. Moving forward from Silverwood (Stacy Sjogren)***

Goal of this hour is to focus on the so what? What are we getting out of the regional events? So what in terms of accountability? What does accountability mean to our committee and the agencies? Highlighting the advisory committee communications with different stakeholders. Reminder of PTLAC Mission:

"The mission of the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee is to champion the 25-year *Parks and Trails Legacy Plan* by providing recommendations to enhance, promotion, coordination, and accountability throughout implementation of the plan."

Why is PTLAC stakeholder engagement important?

- 1) Better positioned to see Legacy fund impact holistically
- 2) Better recommendations to agencies regarding Legacy funds
- 3) Better strategic support by PTLAC for agency efforts.

A fatal flaw for any committee is to assume people in the room know everything!

Agencies must demonstrate full circle of accountability. Results in better decisions. And since the Advisory Committee only gives recommendations, those recommendations should result in better decisions.

Comment that the lead up to the Silverwood event, and the event itself, has helped shape 'shared outcomes reporting' (the work of the three agencies to provide more unified and transparent reporting).

PTLAC has a great opportunity to lead the way in inter-agency relations. Member notes that one of the goals of the 25 year ***Legacy Plan*** is to create better coordination between state agencies.

Stacy walked group through work plan item from December 2016 that led to the Tenth Anniversary events. Work plan recommendation: "**An opportunity to recognize the 10th anniversary of the passage of the Legacy Amendment, discussing the accomplishments of Legacy so far, convene many partners and the public to reflect on the accomplishments and dream and plan the work ahead for the next 15 years.**"

Question posed by Stacy to small groups to work on:

**Q1. What new strategies could be attached to existing engagement activities to better tap into underrepresented voices?**

(Individual members wrote answers on sticky notes and presented to the group, followed by members voting on our most compelling ideas with sticky dots): Top three selected strategies **bold underline**.

- Youth activities should be designed to result in more meaningful qualitative data.
- Federal Agencies
- Friends Groups
- Signage –More/Simple
- Retirement Community
- Go to where people are
- Leverage other existing events
- Ensure diverse activities
- Alignment w/ other outdoor recreation

-Partner with existing agencies providing a specific service to educate them about other opportunities  
**-Be certain that legislators are both invited and solicit their participation and ideas**

**-St. Paul had a van do pop up meetings to discuss issues**

-Diversity in age and getting senior communities involved

-Work with public schools to promote facilities

-Think about inclusivity and thinking critically about who is represented

**-Strategically meeting with underrepresented groups to get them involved in planning and attend events**

## **Q2. What could PTLAC members commit to doing in support of the best of those new strategies?**

- 1) Reach out to underrepresented groups now in your region to build relationships & involve (which groups? Name them!)
  - a. Ask to speak at their meetings
  - b. Have “answers sheet” targeting their likely needs. (E.g. what can people do at these parks?)
  - c. This begins to build trust with community members
- 2) Secure list of groups
  - a. Send to committee memberships to identify any existing connections
  - b. “Reach out” assignments
- 3) Site captains at upcoming Legacy celebrations share list for planning outreach
  - a. Make sure to build in the questions about who underrepresented members might be when planning upcoming Legacy events

**ACTION: Brook, Paul, and the Ten Year Events work group will provide opportunities for individual members to advance these objectives in the coming months.**

Finally - Stacy reviewed a draft of Tenth Anniversary Events final report and asked for any suggestions from Committee members and liaisons.

## **4. Liaison updates**

Liaisons in attendance were asked to give an update on work and current events in their respective agencies since the last PATLAC meeting. Updates included:

### **DNR – Erika Rivers**

- **Bonding session.** 2018 is a bonding year, not a budget year. Governor has been focused on asset preservation. Governor’s proposal is \$1.5 billion overall, including major investments in “taking care of what we have”. This includes up to \$134 million for existing DNR assets. PAT has about 60 percent of assets in DNR.
- **Accessibility.** Commissioner and DNR have advanced “Access Outdoors” in which they asked \$20 million to create holistic recreation experience to focus on three or four parks where every major component of the park would be fully accessible. The initiative made it through Governor’s office at half the amount requested (\$10 million).

- **Local parks and trails.** Funding for grant program for local park and trails connections did not make it through Governor's office. Grant program description: outdoor recreation activities start close to home. Good news is, it has been [recommended to Legislature by LCCMR at \\$2 million](#). As session goes forward, hoping for people to advocate for funding for local parks and trails.

#### **Met Council – Emmet Mullin**

- **Bonding session.** Governor's final bonding bill is focused on preserving state assets. The Governor's bill did not include the \$15M request that Met Council submitted to MMB and the Governor's Office. The ten Metropolitan regional park implementing agencies are working together to request \$15M in state bonding.

#### **GMRPTC – Renee Mattson**

- Greater Minnesota is working to support funding for local parks and trails.

#### **LUNCH BREAK**

#### **5. Sub Committee and Small Group Break Out**

Three subcommittees or workgroups met:

- **Youth Outreach Subcommittee.** Met with Scott Struelens, 2018 Conservation Corps Youth Outreach specialist. Scott reported on his work plan at DNR, including his plan to continue the initiative begun in 2017 to intentionally connect with existing youth groups, work with their leadership to facilitate their decision-making towards an outdoor recreation experience, and gather feedback from them on Legacy-funded options available currently. Scott will also work with the subcommittee on greater continuity in youth outreach from year to year.
- **Accessibility work group.** Discussed a mission statement for the workgroup. Draft is: 'Promote, ensure, educate about accessibility at Legacy events, and in the four pillars/strategic directions of the Legacy Plan.'
- **Ten Year Events work group.** The work group met and agreed on the importance of three items:
  - Get an initial meeting set up between Bob, Brook, liaisons, site captains, and site contacts ASAP.
  - Share the Silverwood template with each site, so it's clear what needs work and what doesn't.
  - Promote outreach to local groups near each event site.
    - Direct action by PTLAC members (see above, Q2 under 'Moving Forward from Silverwood.'
    - Personal invitations by those involved in working the event.
    - Work with local sites to use their communication networks.

## 6. Updates

- **State Fair Legacy project.** The planning team for this initiative met this week (Paul, Amy Ellison, Scott, Stefanie, Renee, Emmett, and Brook). Visited the DNR theater space where the exhibits will go. Agreed that the Fair is a great way to carry forward the themes of the Ten Year Events: Celebrate, Educate, and Listen. The Fair is all about fun, so this will require less text, more pictures and activities. Although we are using DNR space, it is a partnership efforts of the three agencies and PTLAC, so it will be branded differently than a DNR only experience would. Paul is serving as temporary project manager, but the liaisons support bringing on a project manager, and this is in the works and should be done soon. There will be significant demands for volunteers to work the exhibits.
- **Shared Outcomes Reporting.** As discussed at the December 2017 PTLAC meeting, the intent was to have a draft of the first Shared Outcomes Report for the Silverwood Event in January. Bad news is that it was not ready to hand out. Good news is that the content for the report, and much of the General education material displayed at Silverwood is the same. The big maps at Silverwood – though not quite big enough! - marked the first time all three systems were placed on a single map together (since the creation of GMRPTC). We will use what we learned at Silverwood to strengthen the general displays, make them less text heavy, more graphics. That will then translate into material we can put on the LCC site for Shared Outcomes.
- **Integrated Website.** Stefanie with support from Paul is working with MN GEO to get the first public version of the site launched during the Legacy Events. A further development effort will begin immediately and launch perhaps as soon as summer/state Fair. In answer to a question about accessibility, Stefanie noted that it will at least fully comply with all State of Minnesota accessibility requirements.

## 7. Washington County Parks presentation.

Sandy Breuer and Connor Schaefer gave an overview of Washington County Parks, trends, and the importance of Legacy to them. A few highlights:

- Lake Elmo Park Reserve Legacy project examples: trailhead facility, warming house, high school ski meets. Lighted ski trails. The sandy bottom swim pond (pool that mimics a lake experience) got a face lift and created more accessibility.
- St Croix Bluffs Regional Park (4000 feet of river frontage) in 2012 through Legacy funds, shower and storage facility improvements, landscaping around facility. New maintenance shed.
- Hardwood Creek Regional Trail provides good connectivity in the region. Added benches, trash cans, information kiosks about local businesses and attractions.
- Pt Douglas Regional Trail multi use regional trail connects 3 counties. Opened last year.
- Showcasing Legacy support by signage, website, support for Legacy celebrations.
- Current project of Cottage Grove Ravine Regional Park. Anticipating more growth and want to get ahead of growth by developing park before county gets bigger. New park entrance investment. Higher visibility for park. Added paved trails. How to minimize impact on natural resources. Laying foundational infrastructure for future investments. Using rented GOATS to help with natural resource management/invasives control.

The committee asked numerous questions and thanked the staff for providing the information/insights.

***Meeting Adjourned***