

**Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Meeting Minutes for June 25, 2014
Sartell City Hall**

Approved 7/23/14

Members Present: Rita Albrecht; Rick Anderson; Bill Bruins; Mike Hulett; Al Lieffort; Marc Mattice; Keith Nelson; Bryan Pike; Anita Rasmussen; Tom Ryan; Tom Schmitz; Barry Wendorf; LuAnn Wilcox

Members Absent: Tom Schmitz

1. The meeting was called to order by Chair Al Lieffort

2. Motion by Hulett, second by Anderson: Approve the minutes of May 28, 2014 as written. **Carried.**

3. Motion by Wilcox, second by Wendorf: Approve the agenda with no additions. **Carried.**

4. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance

Joe Czapiewski, JFC Strategic Services

Karen Fuglie, "curious and interested" Sartell resident and applicant to District 4 DPC.

The guests introduced themselves, but otherwise did not speak to the Commission.

Al noted that JFC Strategic Services is an applicant for the System Plan Coordinator contract and will be excused from the meeting during discussion of that contract.

5. Unfinished Business

5.1 - Houston Engineering Contract

The Commission reviewed and discussed the revised contract with Houston Engineering for the GoMN database of parks and trails of regional significance in Minnesota. The contract includes: upgrade and reformat the software; migrate data; configure cloud based service; enable the commission to view and edit proposed and completed projects; annual technical support and maintenance. The fee for these services totals \$31,000.

Upon further consideration and consultation regarding an agreement with Stearns County to serve as web host, Al determined that the Commission should own the software, data, and license, so that the Commission will have autonomous access and control of the server.

Concern was expressed about the reluctance of some counties to provide data in the past. Some counties were reticent because of data ownership questions and the possibility that other entities could profit from the information.

Al explained that MNIT (Minnesota Information Technology) has a directive to integrate all state data into common language, format, and location for the purposes of inter-agency sharing and streamlined public information access. This will provide access to "databases we create, and to display information we collect," but is different than the GoMN system.

Motion by Wilcox, second by Wendorf: Approve the contract with Houston Engineering as described. **Motion Carried.**

5.2 - Review and Approve Strategic Plan Revisions

Members discussed the need to communicate that the strategic plan is a dynamic document describing a long-term vision, the execution of which is subject to annual revision. Any changes to the planning processes, documents, or criteria that are deemed necessary will be designed to provide more clarity, openness and transparency, but will not "move the goalposts" through substantive or wholesale alteration.

Members agreed on the need to clarify that the plan is applicable to fiscal year 2016 and that an Executive Summary should be drafted for subsequent inclusion. Mike suggested that "Our overarching goal is making sure that the parks and trails of highest merit in Greater Minnesota ultimately become part of the regional system," as found on page 30, be included in the Executive Summary.

Motion by Nelson, second by Ryan: Adopt the Strategic Plan contents as revised, with a paragraph added to the inside cover describing its applicability for fiscal year 2016. **Carried.**

6. New Business

6.1 - District Planning Committee (DPC) Appointments

The two commissioners from each district met privately to review applications to the DPCs and nominate district appointees. Concern was expressed that affirmative action be taken to present a diverse slate from the applicant pool, and that the Commission engage in ongoing outreach to assure broad inclusion in the districts.

Motion by Rasmussen, second by Albrecht: Accept the slate of appointees to the District Planning Committees.

In the discussion of the motion, Keith stated that Commissioners will provide a list of DPC appointees to state legislative representatives and direct appointees to follow up with legislators after the initial DPC meetings. Al will also draft an announcement to that effect.

Motion carried.

6.2 - Review and Recommend System Plan Coordinator

Six applications were received in response to the RFP for a contract System Plan Coordinator. Commissioners deliberated at length regarding the merits of each application. The deliverables requested in the RFP included: attend and facilitate 12 district planning meetings during July and August; compile information from district meetings and work with the Commission to create a coherent statewide system plan for regional parks and trails; provide consultation through June of 2015.

Members agreed to dismiss three applicants from consideration based on an evaluation of the applications by six of the commissioners.

Motion by Anderson, second by Wendorf: Eliminate Hoisington Koeigler Group from consideration because their proposal ends October 22nd. **Motion carried.**

Motion by Nelson, second by Rasmussen: Award the contract to Short Elliott Hendrickson. **Motion failed 6-6.**

Motion by Albrecht, second by Wendorf: Award the contract to JFC Strategic Services.

In discussion, Anita asked members who voted against awarding the contract to Short Elliott Hendrickson to explain why, and they did so. Comments included the perception that this firm is a builder, not a planner and that the contract work would be divided between several people, providing less cohesion to the Commission, among other factors.

Amended by Albrecht, second by Wendorf: Include a contingency clause to award the contract upon evidence of industry standard levels of insurance and final contract approval.

Al offered to negotiate the language pertaining to insurance and a hold harmless agreement, to which Keith suggested that it be consistent with state standards and practices.

Motion carried 11-1.

6.3 - Proposal Evaluation Team selection

Members discussed an open solicitation process and invitations for applications. It was agreed that the team be consistently referred to as the "ETeam" instead of "Peer Team."

6.4 - Discussion of Commission web page

Tom S. asked for a place to post and share draft documents online. It is the practice of the Commission to post only approved and finalized documents. Keith pointed out that an online discussion of draft documents would violate the open meeting law, but it might be acceptable if facilitated by an intermediary. Al will seek legal advice and clarity regarding sharing draft documents outside of meetings.

LuAnn will send requests for removing outdated information and reorganizing the web page. The DPC meeting schedule will also be posted when available.

6.5 - Report on University of Minnesota Inventory and Framework

Al reported that the Center for Changing Landscapes received \$250,000 to update the inventory of parks and trails of statewide and regional significance to include those that were proposed or constructed with any state grant funds. The data is not accessible, but will serve as the baseline for the GoMN system.

6.6 - DNR/Commission Grant Agreement

As the granting authority, the DNR has requested the Commission submit a work plan for utilizing the supplemental funds appropriated by the legislature in the amount of \$200,000. Al proposed that the work plan include \$100,000 for the consultant contract for System Plan Coordinator, and \$100,000 for costs related to creating the system plan (geo database, software, contract, generating reports, etc.).

Motion by Bruins, second by Albrecht: Authorize Chair Al Liefert to proceed with an agreement with the Department of Natural Resources as described. **Motion carried.**

7. Consent Agenda

Motion by Albrecht, second by Ryan: Approve expenses as incurred. **Motion carried.**

8. Items from Members

Mike asked how reappointments to the Commission will be made and was informed that vacancies are posted by the Secretary of State and members interested in continuing their service will be required to reapply.

Barry noted that the Request for Designation as a Park or Trail of Regional Significance application form has a deadline of June 30 and Al pointed out that the deadline is moot this year, as the Commission is not the granting agency for fiscal year 2015.

Motion to adjourn was made by Bruins, seconded by Pike. **Motion carried.**

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