

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
May 27th, 2015 10:00am – 3:00pm
Sartell City Hall

MINUTES

1. Call to order – Chair
2. Approve minutes of April 22nd, 2015 Meeting
 - Skipped – Not all commissioners had received copy
3. Approve Treasurer's Report
 - Motion by Albrecht, 2nd by Anderson, Motion Carried.
4. Approve the Agenda
 - Amended to add term limits to District Planning Committee's (DPC) and meeting schedule for the DPCs to the Training, Meetings and Applications portion of today's agenda.
 - Motion by Bruins, 2nd by Hulett to accept amended agenda. Motion carried.
5. Acknowledge Commissioners in Attendance:
 - Rita Albrecht, Rick Anderson, O. William Bruins, Michael Hulett, Al Lieffort, Marc Mattice, Keith Nelson Tom Schmitz, Barry Wendorf, and LuAnn Wilcox were present. Bryan Pike and Thomas Ryan were absent.
6. Acknowledge Member of the Public in Attendance:
 - Joe Czapiewski, Kathy and Jeff Schoenbauer
7. Unfinished Business:

7.1 End of Legislative Session Report:

Legacy Bill did NOT pass thru Senate.

The Conference Committee Language passed thru House of Representatives with no time for the Senate to act on it. A special session will be the only way for the bill to pass. The language passed in the House requires us to list our funding recommendations for 2017 by 1/15/2016. It also requires the Commission to list Criteria for Funding from Parks and Trails Fund.

The bill contains two legislative spending directions; one to the city of Le Crescent in the amount of \$400,000 for the Wagon Wheel Trail; and, one to the Mesabi Trail in an unspecified amount. The funds are under our appropriation and coming out of the 20%. DNR is once again administrating all grants.

If bill passes in a special session, we have money to operate on. If not or, until it does, we have \$94K in our Capacity Building Grant and \$11.5K in our System Plan Grant.

Commissioner Nelson stated that he understood funding for Mesabi Trail to be \$1.4 million in 2017.

7.2 Executive Director Position – a discussion was held regarding the application process for the ED position. The sub-committee (Hulett, Bruins, and Wendorf) will report back at the June meeting

Lunch -1/2 hour is allocated for this break; **submit expense vouchers upon reconvening.**

Unfinished Business continued

7.3 Training, Meetings, & Applications – Joe Czapiewski

Joe reported on the 6 application workshops in the Districts with a total of 156 attending. Districts 4 and 5 tied for highest attendance. Locations were great. Thanks to the District Commissioners for help lining up the sites.

- To date we have **45 users and 27 applications started.**
- On average we have 20+ people accessing the website daily.
- People are very excited about all the features. Things are working pretty much as advertised. If users have issues, they are getting in touch with me and I'm in touch with Houston and getting issues worked out. Usually username or password – not getting typed in correctly.
- People asking questions as invited. Larger number than expected for consulting firms in attendance. They have multiple clients. All who attended seem to have a better understanding of the process and what is needed for the application.
- Tools on website on application page.
 - Sample Master Plans
 - Requirements for Master Plan from the Strategic Plan
 - Q & A's
 - Tutorials for Applications and Criteria

Joe was asked if an applicant could see a successful application from last round. Successful applications are probably public records at the point of designation. We could use some help from the legal branch of the State Government on this topic.

DPC' terms and meeting schedules:

- We aren't scheduling at this time because of Legislature. If nothing resolved, we could end up doing the DPC's work ourselves. Our current policy is 3 meetings per year.
- Need to have another round of DPC meetings in early September.
- Need to get thru E-Team evaluations for new designates. This will help the DPC's with their meeting. Will also provide feedback to the commission before they have to go to work on their list.
- Due to the uncertainty of funding we will plan on ending the terms of the DPC members as well as the E-Team members at the end of this cycle.

8. New Business

8.1 Strategic Plan Consultant – Schoenbauer Consulting Inc.

Data Management System (DMS)

- Application Portal (Phase 1) is pretty much complete.
- E-Team Evaluation Portal (Phase 2) is underway but we only have enough money to get us half way thru. If Legacy Bill not passed, then it will go back to paper and pencil to keep the process moving or else it could be shut down.
- Budget for Houston Engineering Phases 2, 3, 4 is estimated to be \$50 – 60K most coming in early post July 1 time frame.
- Designation Portal (Phase 3) – Once the Commission decides application meets criteria and it is designated as a Regional Park or Trail, the information moves into the system in a more formal way. All data stored in the Application Portal moves over to the Designation Portal. If necessary, more information such as Master Plans and Budgets are added
- Funding Portal (Phase 4) – This will be developed with the funding criteria from the Strategic Plan along with any additions that the Commission makes this summer in response to legislation.
- Miscellaneous Enhancements (Phase 5) a future phase

Discussion: Commissioners asked “Are we anticipating going back to the applicants and talking to them about phasing their projects? Consensus around the table was yes. We agree that it would be wise from the start to tell applicants that they may want to consider phasing a project as money is limited. We can let applicants know that phases do not need to be consecutive but, that project should be for complete phases of a park or trail.

Resolutions Examples for Applications:

- We need to have resolution support from a city or county no matter who is making the application because grants must be made to cities or counties. We will provide 2 simple resolution forms that make sure there is an entity behind the request supporting the request.
- Public entity, City or County Resolution. “We are the applicant”.
- Non Public Organization – Possible regional development group - resolution that states “Yes, they are working for us.”

Mountain Bike Planning Strategy:

There is a desire by the Commission to work on a State-Wide Plan for Mountain Bike Facilities as we received 3 or 4 proposals last year. Working with DNR and the Met Council we would suggest:

- Defining roles
- Define best approach to ongoing long term maintenance and upkeep
- Establish research and performance measurement plan

The Consultants recommend further discussion with DNR and Metro Regional Parks

Strategic Goals for Funding Round – Discussion

- Figure out what the criteria for funding is – examples: geography, size of community. Need quality outcome.
- How will local share affect ranking

At the request of the Chair, this will be discussed further at the July 2015 meeting.

8.2 System Plan Coordinator Items – Joe

Joe focused on helping to make sure that all of the Commission is connected to and communicating with the new website. Commissioners should pass along any desired changes or features to Joe.

9. Consent Agenda

May work for JFC	\$ 7,658.42
SC Inc.	\$ 9,291.83
Houston Engineering	\$25,319.64
Commissioner expenses for workshops	\$ 782.88
Commissioner Meeting 5/27/15	\$ 1,468.87
Chairs expenses and extras	<u>\$ 1,107.00</u>
TOTAL	\$45,628.99

Motion made by Commissioner Albrecht and second by Commissioner Wendorf.
Motion carried.

10. Items from members

- Need link between GIS and website.
- Do we have any sense of the 19 designated parks and trails, how many are requesting funding?
- Commissioner Albrecht – Agrees with the great work that Joe has done and that we should keep him on as there is a great deal of work that seem to want/need personal attention and we will still need Joe's services.

11. Next Meeting – Duluth June 25, 2015