



Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Bertram Chain of Lakes Park – Chalet
9910 Briarwood Avenue NE | Monticello, MN 55362

Minutes for August 25, 2021

APPROVED

Commissioners Present: Rick Anderson, Ted Suss, Jonathan Wolf, Bryan Pike, Barry Wendorf, Beth Pierce, Jen Foley, Brad Bonk, Tim Engrav, Peg Furshong, Tom Ryan via Zoom

Commissioners Absent: Tom Stoa, Matthew Hill

Consultants Present: Renee Mattson, Executive Director, Joe Czapiewski, System Plan Coordinator, Tess Dandrea, Administrative Assistant via Zoom

1. Meeting Called to Order by Vice Chair Anderson. 10:02 am

2. Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance

Former Commissioner of District 4 Marc Mattice, Wright County Director of Parks and Recreation, Lynn Anderson from Wright County Parks, and Representative Marion O’Neill.

Mattice, a past District 4 Commissioner, welcomed the group to Bertram Chain of Lakes Park.

Mattice discussed partnerships with the cities of Otsego, Monticello, and Clearwater for trail planning, management, and operation; outreach to the townships of Clearwater, Monticello, and Silver Creek, local outdoor enthusiasts and stakeholders, and the general public, and link those partners with a regional trail corridor that fills a 35-mile gap in the regional and statewide trail network.

Additional items mentioned:

- Bertram Chain of Lakes Regional Park acquired 1,257 acres since 2008
- Bertram Campground was the last project utilizing Legacy funds and was completed in November and has been full since opening in July.
- Conley Park
- Nye’s park home of their environmental Education Center.
- Stanley Eddy Park Reserve is a new park reserve:

- Seven miles of hiking trails completed this spring
- 14.25 miles of single-track mountain bike trails in partnership with MORC
- Monticello school district partnership for outdoor based education for pre-school through Grade 5 will be moving into the new facility.
- Two designated trails in proposed Great River Regional Trail.
- Phase 1 completed for Kroger Regional trail Phase 1. 11.5 miles completed and more next year to complete a 34-mile trail. Phase 2 feasibility study this fall.

3. Approval of Agenda for August 25, 2021, Minutes from July 28, 2021 and Treasurer's Report through July 2021

Motion by Suss

Second by Engrav

Motion Approved

4. Executive Director's Report

There is a need for Commissioner's signatures needed for Oath of Office that are not on file currently. Follow up to question asked at Strategic Planning Session; if Legacy funds can be rolled from one biennium to another, yes but it would take legislative action to extend the funds, the same process it takes to extend grants we make.

5. System Plan Coordinator's Report:

Last month has been review and funding site visits which some commissioners have been able to attend, and it is appreciated by staff. It's always good to have more people viewing the proposed projects.

Question from commissioner as to where was meeting with Regional Development Commission? In Bemidji. And how many RDC were there? Approximately seven, 10 attendees in total with others attending as well.

Are meetings held annually as that is outreach for us? Meetings are held quarterly.

6. Items from Members and Letters to the Commission

Foley - Nothing

Ryan - Nothing

Anderson - Joined the site visit to Hole in the Mountain Park in Lake Benton, it's a well done funding proposal.

Suss - Joined Renee and Joe on park visits to Granite Falls Memorial Park and Redwood Falls Ramsey Park, both of which have benefitted from Legacy funding in past grants.

Wolf - Nothing

Pike - Nothing

Wendorf - Isanti Parks Medallion Hunt, 6th year for this event which has \$1,000 in prizes. Park visitation is down this year compared to last, but still higher than past years. The Fall Festival is canceled for the second year due to COVID concerns.

Pierce - Nothing

Furshong – Raised the topic of Tribal Nations becoming eligible to apply for grants.

Bonk - Lake Brophy Triathlon canceled last year in what would have been the first year. It was held this year with 240 participants for the first year. Asked for an update on the Streetlight Research Project, Renee gave an overview.

Engrav - Nothing

7. New Business

7.1 Initial Review of FY23 Funding Applications. Joe presented an overview of the 22 2021 funding applications received by the deadline of July 30.

We have identified three resolutions that do not adhere to the template provided in the Application Toolbox. There is also an issue with the F RTP matches in the Spirit Mountain funding application that they are working to correct.

Commissioners commented and posed questions about some of the applications reviewed, staff responded.

A robust discussion was had about what resolution criteria must be met for the application to be considered complete. All applicants should be held to the same standard. Technically, applications that are not complete, should be disqualified. Specifically, regarding the funding resolutions for Wright County/Detroit Mountain Recreation Area. Additional discussion addressed the Wright County resolution that was accepted in 2020, which is largely the same resolution submitted this year. There was a request to bold in red the resolution information in the portal to make it even more noticeable to applicants.

Motion by Suss to disqualify the Detroit Mountain Recreation Area funding application for lack of a complete funding resolution.

Second by Wendorf

Motion Approved

Motion by Furshong to disqualify Wright County's funding resolution because it does not meet the requirements of the template in the Application Toolbox.

Second by Pierce

Vote taken: Seven yes, three no and one abstention.

Motion Carried

Discussion was held about considering federally recognized Tribes to become eligible to apply for GMRPTC Legacy grants. They are an entity with no channel of access. Some trails

are near or crossing Tribal lands. A Statue change would be needed to accomplish this. Review of statute 85.536, Subd. 1 suggested change to statute, should commission recommend, would add “federally recognized tribes” after cities and counties. Discussion was tabled and it was suggested to bring in a Tribal Representative to a meeting. It was noted it would be difficult to have one representative speak for all tribes.

7.2 Strategic Planning Review

Discussion regarding additional contractors as designated facilities have increased to 66 over time and Greater Minnesota will continue to add to the system.

Tribal and Commission Liaison suggested.

Discussed bringing Ted Schick, consultant for Strategic plan, back to work with us during the January meeting which will be held virtually.

7.3 FY22/FY23 Budget Planning

Motion by Wendorf to approve the Fiscal Year 2022 and Fiscal Year 2023 budget as proposed by Mattson

Second by Suss

Motion Approved

8. Old Business: none

9. Approval of August Expenses

Commission Expenses	\$1,814.63
<u>Consultant Expenses</u>	<u>\$23,709.31</u>
Total for August 2021	\$25,523.94

Motion by Furshong

Second by Bonk

Motion Approved

10. Next Meeting and Agenda Items

September 22, 2021 Lake Byllesby Park

Meeting adjourned at 2:24 pm

Vice Chair Anderson

Date

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Director's Report for August 2021

Partner Meetings

- GMPT article for monthly newsletter

PTLAC was to staff the Minnesota Parks and Trails Center building at the State Fair Tuesday, August 31 but that building (though outdoors) will be closed, so we will not have a presence at the State Fair this year. I had planned to volunteer for a shift and the staffing was pretty thin. Hopefully we can be back next year and have more volunteers with COVID hopefully largely eradicated.

Funding Application Site Visits

This has been a busy and interesting month of site visits for Joe and me. Our travels have taken us around the state, with just a few visits remaining. You've all seen the schedule and some of you were able to participate as well.

Site tours were conducted as follows:

- Granite Falls, Memorial Park – August 3 (this also included a grant close out visit with Audrey Mularie from DNR, Commissioner Suss attended)
- Redwood Falls, Ramsey Park – August 3 (Commissioner Suss attended)
- Red Wing, He Mni Can Park – August 5 (this also included a grant close out visit with Audrey Mularie from DNR)
- Cannon Valley Trail – August 5
- Detroit Lakes, Detroit Mountain Recreation Area – August 12
- Duluth, Spirit Mountain – August 16 (Commissioner Pierce attended)
- Duluth, Duluth Traverse – August 16 (Commissioner Pierce attended)
- Winona, Bluffs Traverse – August 18
- Rochester, Cascade Lake Park – August 19
- Olmsted County, Chester Woods Park – August 19
- Austin, Hormel Nature Center – August 19
- Lyon County, Garvin Park – August 20
- Lincoln County, Hole in the Mountain Park – August 20 (Commissioner Anderson attended)

FY23 Funding Applications

We have a total of 21 applications. Joe will have a good overview to present at the meeting, but for a view of how applications came in across the districts:

D1 – 3 | \$3,505,421

D2 – 2 | \$3,313,021

D3 – 2 | \$1,843,102

D4 – 5 | \$3,285,075

D5 – 3 | \$4,358,461

D6 – 6 | \$2,394,280

Total - \$18,699,360

As a reminder, we have \$12,201,546 available to grant for FY23

Site Visits and Partner Calls

- Gamehaven Park on August 19. Joe and I stopped in for a tour during our stop in Rochester for Cascade Lake Park. Huge changes since my last visit there in the fall when the mass grading had just been completed.
- Superior Hiking Trail inquiry about the Supportive Partnership designation.

GMRPTC
System Plan Coordinators Report
August 2021

Funding Application 2021

We received 21 applications worth \$18,699,360 in Legacy requests by the July 30 deadline. That is up slightly from last year, although there are issues with the qualifications of a couple of applications that we will discuss at the meeting. We likely won't be able to calculate the candidates for Connecting People to the Outdoors without additional analysis, as not all projects that list it as a pillar qualify for the set-aside. Overall, we are very happy with the quality of this year's applications. We will provide you with an overview of all applications at this month's Commission meeting.

Renee and I have completed the majority of funding app site visits. Thank you to Commissioners Suss, Pierce and Anderson who have been able to join us on a few of the ones completed so far. Here are the visits completed to date:

- Granite Falls Memorial Park
- Redwood Falls Ramsey Park
- Red Wing He Mni Can Park
- Cannon Valley Trail
- Detroit Lakes Detroit Mountain Recreation Area
- Duluth Spirit Mountain (I was unable to attend personally)
- Duluth Traverse (I was unable to attend personally)
- Winona Bluffs Traverse
- Rochester Cascade Lake Park
- Olmsted County Chester Woods Park
- Austin Jay C Hormel Nature Center
- Lyon County Garvin Park
- Lincoln County Hole in the Mountain Park

We have several other facilities that we will complete visits for in the coming weeks – please let me know if you still plan to attend any of them. The Evaluation Team is also scheduled to conduct their informative review on September 14th via Zoom, which will help Renee and I with our scoring.

Normally the Commission received my first overview of the applications in September. Unfortunately I will be missing my first Commission meeting ever in September, unless I am able to hop on by Zoom for a little bit. We will have our comprehensive review, including scoring, at the October meeting as originally planned.

On-Site Reviews and Technical Assistance

Renee and I were able to complete a mid-project review for the Rochester Gamehaven project, which is creating much of the basic infrastructure and amenities to go with a section of property we previously helped them purchase. Looking forward to a grand opening next summer!

We have provided Designation Application or Master Plan assistance over the phone and email to the following:

- Otter Tail County extension of the Glacial Edge Trail. Also met their new Recreation Director Kevin Fellbaum via Zoom.

- Lake of the Woods County Northerly Park, which will be submitting their Master Plan soon. Renee and I are finally planning a site visit for this facility now that the border is open.
- A new trail idea from the City of Lewiston.

We have also received a Designation Application for East Park from the City of St. Joseph and a Master Plan from Otter Tail County Phelps Mill that are under review but will not be ready for this month's meeting.

Partnerships and Outreach

I presented to a subgroup of Regional Development Commission staff from across the state. Most attendees were in person. This is an important group for our outreach efforts, as they are specifically listed in our outreach plan. I conducted a shortened version of our Strategic Plan workshop that focused on Master Plan development, since that is an area where many RDC's can provide assistance to applicants. It was very well received with great discussion. We also received feedback from planners who have used our online application portal that they found it very helpful and even enjoyable. We concluded the session by asking them to help make our local champions more successful, to connect us with potential applicants, and to help connect us with various user groups and other potential partners in their regions.

DMS Updates

We have a proposal from Full Circle for the next phase of development, which is significantly geared towards syncing our system with the new Strategic Plan, to review with you for consideration.