



## **Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission**

Holiday Inn & Suites  
75 South 37<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
St. Cloud, MN 56301

**Minutes for January 22, 2025**

**APPROVED**

**Commissioners Present:** Rick Anderson, Rob Mason, Brad Bonk, Jonathan Wolf, Jen Foley, Karlin Ziegler, Barry Wendorf, Peg Furshong, Tom Stoa (virtual), Tim Engrav, Beth Pierce (virtual), Tom Schmitz, Reed Huttunen (virtual).

**Consultants Present:** Renee Mattson-Executive Director, Joe Czapiewski-System Plan Coordinator, Tess Dandrea-Administrative Assistant (virtual)

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 10:00 am  
Meeting goals are to have a timely and efficient meeting.
2. **Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance**  
No one from the public was in attendance
3. **Approval of Agenda for January 22, 2025, Minutes from November 27 and December 11, 2024 and Treasurer’s Report through November, 2024**  
**Motion** by Schmitz  
**Second** by Engrav  
**Motion Approved**
4. **Executive Director’s Report**  
Renee to provide talking points about the DNR grant administration fee to commissioners.  
Commissioners to contact their legislators about the DNR Grant Administration fee issue.
5. **System Plan Coordinator’s Report**  
Czapiewski to break down the grantee meeting recording into subsections and post online. Czapiewski and Mattson will create a new "grant management" category in the online toolbox and add relevant documents and videos.
6. **Items from Members and Letters to the Commission**

*Wendorf* – Has been trying to use the CPO trailer but due to lack of snow, some events have been canceled.

*Bonk* – MNPAiR update. Had a good meeting with the Upper Sioux agency.

*Furshong* - Invited to Memorial Park for MNPAiR in February.

*Zeigler* – MNPAiR doing well. Different mediums being used in the four parks.

*Engrav* – ATV trails have a lot going on. The Joint Powers Board had a good report stating that that 80% of riders were visitors to the county and there is a \$36 million-dollar economic impact from ATVs.

*Anderson* – Hired SRDC to work on the Camden Trail. Originally, they were only going to do three communities but per his request they will extend.

*Mason, Huttunen, Pierce, Wolf, Schmitz, Foley and Stoa*- Nothing new to report.

## **7. New Business**

### **7.1 Redhead Mountain Bike Park Master Plan 22-015D**

The potential designation in Chisholm was discussed, the need for trail reinvestment, other mountain bike facilities in area, and the potential for bike trails to offset the impact of climate change on winter sports. It is important to form a marketing plan for trail system to attract more visitors. In addition to the Master Plan, Chisholm property development and trails development may be challenging due to checkerboard landownership and potential mining rights. Safety concerns about contaminants in the soil on the trails from mining was raised. There is a distinction between the southern part of the system and the northern, with the northern section being less desirable from a riders perspective.

The conversation included the potential that the trail must be moved if mining interests come in, and the need for a 25-year lease for trail easements.

Mining has been good a resource in Minnesota and new technology may allow for remining. How can it be done responsibly and how can we be supportive?

**Motion** by Bonk to table the decision to allow for further analysis until the March 26, 2025 meeting. Czapiewski will report back.

**Second** by Mason

**Motion Approved**

### **7.2 Stearns County Equipment Partnership Scope Change Resolution 035**

There are funds remaining from the grant and the partnership seeks to purchase kick sleds for \$700 to expend the grant.

**Motion** by Engrav

**Second** by Furshong

**Abstention** by Wendorf

**Motion Approved**

### **7.3 Stearns County Beaver Island Trail Project Scope Change Resolution 036**

There remains \$293,647.32 from the grant. The request is to use the funds to pay for engineering and a trail extension to Warner Lake County Park.

**Motion** by Bonk

**Second** by Foley

**Motion Approved**

### **7.4 2025 Funding Application Review/Criteria**

Mattson and Czapiewski will reorganize policies into one document for uniformity and make needed changes to the criteria with the input of a committee. Commissioners Wendorf, Foley and Engrav volunteered to be on the committee.

Small proposals can be being overshadowed by large ones and important critical rehabilitation are needed in small buildings, but they typically don't rate high. ADA updates can be very costly so should we consider asking for a match of some sort? Most applicant requests intend to meet ADA standards, so how can the standards be measured? Mattson stated we have set aside funds for specific things so if Commission decides to, we are able put an emphasis on certain programs.

Strategic review of the Commissions work plan and discussion should get underway, it could take a year to implement. Should we go back to one and a half for strategic planning conversations? Future sales tax revenues determine budgets and, historically budgets have increased but there are no guarantees.

Subcommittee to clarify issues that come up.

Commissioners Bonk, Furshong and Engrav volunteered to work on the work plan committee.

### **7.5 2024 Policy and Planning Report**

The Report is two pages longer than planned, which was already four pages longer than usual. Due to construction and the need for escorts to get to the legislative offices, access to the Centennial Building is difficult. Because of the difficulty of getting to see Legacy Committee Members all were mailed the 2024 report rather than as has been typical, a personal delivery of the report. Mattson shared the progress on the bill for an appropriation of \$500,000 annually for the operating budget from the general fund and the proposed change in the DNR administrative fee from 2.5% of actual costs to \$140,000 annually. She expressed concerns about the DNR's response but stated they have had the information and a long time to respond. The Commissioners agreed to focus on the facts and the benefits of the proposed changes. Mattson to provide talking points, committee lists, and contact information for legislators. Also discussed was the potential impact of the

proposed changes on the DNR and the need for targeted communication with relevant committees.

**7.6 Legislative Update** see above 7.5

**7.7 Election of Commission Executive Committee**

Current officers: Chair Anderson, Vice Chair Engrav, At-Large Furshong, and Secretary/Treasurer Wendorf re-elected for 2025

**Motion** by Schmitz

**Second** by Wolf

**Motion approved**

**8. Old Business:**

**8.1 Review of Mandatory Grantee Award Meeting**

Discussion of the successful Grant Awardee meeting held the previous day, with positive feedback on turnout, content, and engagement. Areas for improvement include providing clearer guidance on the archaeological survey process, potentially involving Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, and optimizing the meeting flow and timing.

Takeaways were:

1. Do not hold on Tuesdays
2. Stay in St. Cloud
3. Get a bigger room

**9. Approval of December 2024 and January 2025 Expenses**

December 2024      \$31,731.93

January 2025      \$33,384.64

**Motion** by Mason

**Second** by Schmitz

**Motion Approved**

**10. Next Meeting and Agenda Items**

No meeting in February

Next meeting is March 26, 2025 at Rochester Cascade Lake Park

Meeting adjourned 1:48 pm