



Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Virtual Meeting

Minutes for November 26, 2025

DRAFT

Commissioners Present: Commissioners Present: Rick Anderson, Rob Mason, Jonathan Wolf, Jen Foley, Peg Furshong, Tim Engrav, Beth Pierce, Karlin Zeigler, Barry Wendorf, Tom Schmitz, Brad Bonk, and Tom Stoa.

Commissioners Absent: Reid Huttunen

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

1. **Call to Order** – Chair Anderson called the meeting to order at 9:03 am
The primary goal of the meeting was to review and approve funding for various park and trail projects across the state.
2. **Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance**
Steve Dubbs, member Legacy Advisory Committee, Sarah Weed, Parks Operations Coordinator with Stearns County.
3. **Approval of Agenda for November 26, 2025, Minutes from October 22, 2025 and Treasurer's Report through October 2025**
Motion by Wolf
Second by Engrav
Motion Approved

4. Executive Director's Report

Mattson reminded the group of an upcoming MNPAiR virtual event on December 9th from noon – 1:30pm. The event is a wrap up of the project and will feature presentations from three of the 12 artists and a park director. The event will be recorded and available for those unable to attend. Mattson will send the link and information as soon as it becomes available.

5. System Plan Coordinator's Report

Czapiewski is looking ahead to next year's funding applications and the process to review the funding guidelines. The review won't need to be as extensive as last year since so much work was done then. Foley asked for an update on the Accessibility Forums. He noted a decrease in attendance for the most recent forum but 25-50 was more of an average attendance. We hope to collaborate with Bill for next year and are awaiting his decision as to whether he feels we want to continue with us or do less in his retirement.

6. Items from Members and Letters to the Commission

Stoa -no

Mason –reported on the progress of the East Gull Lake Park project building 10 pickleball courts. Excavation has been completed and construction will begin in mid-May.

Pierce – no

Foley –no

Bonk-no

Wolf-no

Zeigler- no

Wendorf– no

Schmitz – no

Furshong– no

Engrav – shared that Explore Minnesota reported a strong economic impact from Outdoor Recreation and that is also a trend for the National statistics.

Anderson - no

7. New Business:

7.1 Resolution 044 Austin Hormel Nature Center Project Scope Change

The commissioners discussed and approved a resolution for the Austin Hormel Nature Center, addressing concerns about the completion of an ADA accessible trail segment. They agreed to approve the project with amendments requiring the incomplete work to be included in future grant requests and emphasized the need for better communication and project management. Mattson will modify Austin Hormel resolution to include requirement that correcting the missing trail section must be part of scope if they apply for future grants and send to Chair

Anderson for signature. Motion to approve Austin Hormel Nature Center change of project scope.

Motion by Schmitz

Second by Wendorf

Motion Approved

7.2 Resolution 045 Stearns County Kraemer Lake Park Project Scope Change

Discussion and approval for a project scope change request from Stearns County for Kraemer Lake Park, allowing them to reduce project components due to higher than anticipated costs for construction.

Plans are to rebid and add back essential amenities within their revised budget.

Motion to approve Stearns County Kraemer Lake Park project scope change.

Motion by Wendorf

Second by Furshong

Motion Approved

7.3 Resolution 046 Hubbard County Deep Lake Park Project Scope Change

The original plan included restoring a building on site to serve as a trailhead building. Instead, the County seeks to construct a new picnic shelter due to the unsalvageable condition of the identified building.

Motion by Wendorf to approve the project scope change request

Second by Engrav

Motion Approved

7.4 Funding Application Review Committee

A committee is needed to help review the current funding application documents and recommend any changes to the Commission at the March meeting.

Commissioners Engrav, Foley and Wendorf volunteered to serve on the Funding Application Review Committee. They will meet virtually and have their recommendations previous to the March meeting.

8. Old Business

8.1 FY27 Funding Applications Review

Czapiewski presented two options for project funding, with both options exceeding the available grant dollars. Czapiewski discussed cost savings achieved by various projects including; a prebuilt bathhouse design at Grand Marais Recreation Area and a phased approach for bridge replacements in Olmsted County. The Mille Lacs County Soo Line Trail was proposed as an additional project under Option B, involving a \$600,000 segment of trail development.

The committee discussed funding options for various trail and campground projects, including the Mille Lacs County's trail redevelopment. They agreed to proceed with Option 1B, which includes \$600,000 for Sioux Line Trail improvements and funding for Detroit Mountain's acquisition, but not the campground construction, despite a \$23,000 shortfall. The committee decided to cover the shortfall by reallocating funds from environmental and accessibility grants, as no applications have been submitted for these categories yet. They also discussed the need for a future grant application to complete amenities at Detroit Mountain, and Engrav raised concerns about explaining funding decisions to other projects like Duluth Spirit Mountain.

The board discussed and approved funding option 1B for the 2027 fiscal year.

Motion by Stoa
Second by Mason
Motion Approved

9. Approval of November 2025 Expenses

Commissioners	\$ 505.72
Consultants	<u>\$30, 214.62</u>
Total	\$30,720.34

Note, there are additional expenses for attendance at the November meeting outstanding and Mattson will submit for payment.

Motion by Wendorf
Second by Anderson
Motion Approved

10. Next Meeting and Agenda Items

No meeting in December. Next meeting is January 28, 2026 at the St. Cloud Holiday Inn and Suites.

January 29, 2026 is the Mandatory Grantee Meeting at the St. Cloud Holiday Inn and Suites

Meeting Adjourned at 10:18 am