



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

**Virtual meeting**

**Minutes for November 22, 2023**

**APPROVED**

**Commissioners Present (virtual):** Jen Foley, Brad Bonk, Jonathan Wolf, Reid Huttunen, Beth Pierce, Tim Engrav, Rob Mason, Barry Wendorf, Peg Furshong and Karlin Ziegler.

**Commissioners Absent:** Tom Schmitz, Tom Stoa and Rick Anderson

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

**1. Call to Order Vice Chair Engrav at 10:04am**

Meeting goals are to review key items and complete action items.

**2. No Members of the Public in Attendance**

**3. Approval of Agenda for November 22, 2023, Minutes from October 25, 2023, and Treasurer's Report through October 2023**

**Motion** by Mason

**Second** by Foley

**Motion Approved**

**4. Executive Director's Report**

Mattson and Czapiewski's reports will be delivered at the end of the month. Outreach to SHPO to build relationship as the state archeologist is looking at things differently and it's just important to know them all and build a good rapport.

**5. System Plan Coordinator's Report**

Much more information will be covered during the master plan and designation application review later in the agenda. There will be intensive final reviews and tweaking of the funding application. He's excited by the number of contacts, current

and potential designees, working on master plans and thinking about the upcoming funding cycle. Also expecting a wave of master plans being submitted over the winter, that's exciting. We do have the workshop coming up on January 23 for this year's funding recipients. We expect DNR and SHPO to be in attendance. There was a funding application subcommittee meeting in November and another one scheduled for December. The new application will be brought to the Commission at the January meeting for approval. Foley asked what constitutes a wave; that would be three to four plans coming in during a quarter.

## **6. Items from Members and Letters to the Commission**

*Wendorf, Pierce, Foley, Bonk, Huttunen, Furshong*- Nothing new to report  
*Mason*-Asked if we had reached out to tribal organizations to form a partnership or understanding since we now will be working with them on designations and funding in the future. Both Mattson and Czapiewski indicated we have a plan for outreach to tribal governments. We will cooperate with non-profit organizations as we have been instructed.

*Wolf*-Acknowledgement of our letter by the DNR is encouraging. Notes that there are some good historical acknowledgements and interpretations in our system. The Beaver Island Trail comes to mind, the new segment there does relate the history and does a nice job with it.

*Engrav*-Election of officers will take place at the January 24, 2024 meeting. Please let Mattson know if you have any interest in serving or continuing to serve.

Furshong opened a discussion about the return of the Upper Sioux State Park to tribal government, with federal funds of \$4.5 million to transition the park. Furshong has been involved in the discussion with the DNR and public and thinks we might be of assistance with getting grant dollars out to appropriate partners. The Park is not in good condition due to lack of attention and maintenance. The park has gone from being a full annual park to a seasonal park. Several buildings were condemned and torn down. Working out of a trailer now with porta potties. The road into the park now has limited access due to road issues that require maintenance. Furshong said the money is to provide a replacement for outdoor recreation to mitigate the perceived loss. There is a lot of inventory around the area that could replace the loss of amenities within the park. The funds that Greater Minnesota have put into Granite Falls Memorial Park have made a positive impact on the area. Mattson also thinks we could be more efficient with the funding. We have experience in this process, maybe we could offer our system to do that transition in place of DNR. Engrav said we can mull it over and discuss the topic at the January meeting.

## **7. Old Business:**

### **7.1 FY25 Grants Final Review of Adjusted Budgets**

Mattson went over changes in budgets that occurred after she and Czapiewski had further conversations with grantees.

**Motion** by Bonk to accept revised slate as recommendation for funding.

**Second** by Wolf

**Motion Approved**

**Red Lake River Corridor Budget Revision removing the Crookston bathhouse request**

**Motion** by Bonk to approve revised budget number

**Second** by Foley

**Abstention** by Huttunen

**Motion Approved**

11:02 Karlin Ziegler joined the meeting

**8. New Business:**

**8.1 Hiawatha Pageant Park Designation Application 23-002D**

The application is for a supportive partnership. The park is 41-acres on the site of the former Hiawatha Pageant. The Pipestone National Monument which is adjacent to the pageant grounds cannot be part of our system but the pageant park would be.

**Motion** by Bonk to accept the ETeam ranking of low

**Second** by Foley

**Motion Approved**

**8.2 Pine Valley Recreation Area Master Plan 19-015D**

Discussion included duplication of facilities due to the close proximity to Spirit Mountain only 15 minutes away. Ski jumping is the unique feature in the park, along with Nordic skiing and mountain bike trails. The ETeam scored it at 413.75 points with a Grade of A. There is a senior center and hockey facility on site, but not part of this application. The ski/hiking trail is on Fond du Lac tribal property by agreement and presents an opportunity for further partnership.

**Motion** by Bonk to approve the designation application

**Second** by Wolf

**Motion Approved**

**8.3 Roseau River Water Trail Master Plan 21-02**

Discussion regarding designation application which scored 400 with a Grade B and a C in Operations and Programming which is a non-passing grade. The ETeam recommends this as a Supportive Partnership classification. A joint management and operations agreement is required before designation can happen.

No action needed yet as there is work yet to be done by the applicant.

**9. Approval of November 2023 Expenses**

Consultants \$35,770.57

Total \$35,770.57

Note: Per diems for this meeting will be approved in January meeting.

**Motion** by Mason

**Second** by Furshong

**Motion Approved**

**10. Next Meeting and Agenda Items**

January 24, 2024 at the Sartell Community Center

Mandatory meeting for grant awardees the day before meeting, January 23, 2024 from 1:00-3:00pm.

Mattson thanked the Commissioner for their time and talent this past year, both she and Czapiewski are grateful for the work.

Meeting adjourned a 11:38am