



Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission

Sherburne History Center
10775 27th Avenue SE, Becker, MN 55308

Minutes for August 24, 2022

APPROVED

Commissioners Present: Rick Anderson, Barry Wendorf, Bryan Pike, Jonathan Wolf, Jen Foley, Beth Pierce (virtual), Brad Bonk, Peg Furshong, Tim Engrav
Commissioners Absent: Tom Ryan, Tom Stoa

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

1. **Call to Order by Chair Anderson at 10:00 am**
2. **Acknowledge Members of the Public in Attendance**
Gina Hugo, Sherburne County Parks Director
Bruce Nolan, Commissioner Sherburne County
Bruce Messelt, Sherburne County Administrator
Bob McGillivray, Trust for Public Land
Karen Umphress, Up! Outside (Virtual)
3. **Approval of Agenda for August 24, 2022, Minutes from July 27, 2022 and Treasurer's Report through July 2022.**
Motion by Engrav to approve Agenda, Minutes and Treasures Report
Second by Pike
Motion Approved
4. **Executive Director's Report as submitted**
5. **System Plan Coordinator's Report as submitted**
6. **Items from Members and Letters to the Commission**
Bonk - nothing
Engrav - nothing but did visit Lake Washington with his son who enjoyed the park
Pike - nothing

Wolf - nothing

Furshong– comments on Memorial Park updates, lots of energy around the park

Wendorf – three states represented at Springvale Park

Foley – attended the site visits at Quarry Park, Kraemer Lake Park and Springvale Park

Pierce – Mesabi Trail had annual tour event, registrations were down but people loved the trail and had a great time.

Anderson – attended the site visit at Plum Creek Park

7. Old Business:

7.1 Review of FY24 Funding Applications

- 19 Funding Applications
- Legacy requests of \$14,617,799 for projects totaling \$22,147,419.
- Last year, applicants requested \$ 18,640,815 in Legacy funds for \$22,404,646 in total on 21 projects.
- Potentially \$10,500,000 in funds available, including \$750,000 for CPO projects

By District (preliminary)

- D1 – 3 applications, \$2,643,434 requested, 24% local match
- D2 – 2 applications, \$1,049,505 requested, 34% local match
- D3 – 4 applications, \$2,964,462 requested, 42% local match
- D4 – 4 applications, \$2,483,450 requested, 21% local match
- D5 – 4 applications, \$3,176,947 requested, 15% local match
- D6 – 2 applications, \$2,300,000 requested, 35% local match

Analysis By Classification

- Natural Resource Based Parks: 9 applications, \$5,227,497 requested, 15.9% local match
- Special Features: 4 applications, \$4,293,522 requested, 43.5% local match
- Trails: 6 applications, \$5,033,779 requested, 39.5% local match
- Applicants for Connecting People to the Outdoors funding need a complete assessment for eligibility; amounts to be determined
- Number of applications is slightly down, as is average size of the request. Overall similar to, but smaller than last year
- Two applicants submitted substandard resolutions (Gull Lake Trail, Glacial Edge Trail Fergus Falls)
- Ineligible match or budget items needs be removed (Fergus Falls, Ottertail County, Gull Lake, Stearns County, Detroit Mountain, Redwood County)

Review of Process

- Application cycle began April 1, 2022
- Applications closed on July 29, 2022
- Staff review of applications and site visits during August and September; will start the adjustment and clarification process
- Provide Commission initial overview of applications in August (no scoring available)

- ETeam review and comments only, ETeam does not score, in September
- Staff scores applications and compiles project comments
- Present detailed project review for Commission discussion and initial prioritization in September
- Commission typically finalizes prioritization in November
- Notify applicants of recommendations in December
- Priority listing and annual report is provided to the Legislature by January 15, 2023

22-001F Lake of the Woods County Northerly Park Master Plan Update

- \$70,000 request, \$2,000 County match
- Provide additional professional technical assistance to solidify the recently adopted/designated Master Plan

22-002F Olmsted County Oxbow Park Campground

- \$2,050,000 request, 37% match
- Relocation and expansion of (from 30 to 42) campground due to flooding
- Includes full amenities, playground, and camper cabins

22-003F Sibley County Henderson Scenic Byway Trail

- \$1,400,000 request, 22% match
- Builds 7.3 miles of grade for the main section of the new trail, in conjunction with the road raising and reconstruction
- Match includes DNR local trail grant funds which need to be removed

22-004F Stearns County Quarry Park

- \$170,250 request, 25% match
- Rebuilds one heavily eroded quarry access trail, resets the granite block pile, and installs a small picnic area.

22-005F Stearns County Kraemer Lake Park

- \$1,178,845 requested, 25% match
- Builds a new main central use/access point for the park. Entry road and lot, picnic areas, restrooms, fishing piers, playgrounds, boat launch, access trail
- May include some ineligible items that may need to be removed

22-006F Benton County Great River Park Complex

- \$797,555 requested, 15% match
- Parking lot improvements, new picnic shelter, canoe access trail improvements, new paved and natural surface trails, nature play area, wayfinding, and interpretive signage

22-008F Detroit Mountain Recreation Area

- \$1,477,522 requested, 21% local match
- Land acquisition for a new “skills development” single track trail, plus new multi-season trail to the southwest
- Reconfigures nature play area access, parking and adds new treehouse
- Purchases adaptive mountain bike equipment
- Budget contingency will need to be removed

22-010F Lincoln County Hole in the Mountain Park East Campground

- \$953,608 requested, 10% match
- First component of East Campground expansion, from 12 to 36 sites, adds full services, trails, etc.
- Completion of unfunded component of last year’s request

22-011F Redwood County Plum Creek Park

- \$818,539 requested, 10% match
- Waterfront improvements, from parking lot and trail to nature scape playground, redesigned beach and retaining walls and bathrooms
- A contingency will have to be removed from the budget

22-012F Mesabi Trail

- \$750,000 requested, 25% local match
- 2.4 mile segment from Tower to the West Two River. Segment will be rural, paralleling sections of the Prospector Loop ATV trail
- If funded, this is the last segment of the Mesabi Trail currently envisioned to be built

22-013F Duluth Waabizheshikana – The Marten Trail

- \$1,493,434 requested, 26% local match
- Upgrade existing Section 0 (3.3 miles), build Sections 1, 2, and 3 (3 miles). Includes trailheads and interpretive elements
- Restored trail will be reconstructed to an unpaved 10' standard

22-014F Fairview Township Gull Lake Trail

- \$979,505 requested, 67% match. Or 13%, we're not sure
- Completion of last section of Phase III in Fairview Township. 3.7 miles of new, road adjacent construction, completing project we funded design for in 2021
- Budget and application narrative match discussions are not consistent, needs to be sorted out.
- Resolutions from both the Township and County do not appear to qualify.

22-015F Isanti County Springvale Park

- \$336,800 requested, 20% local match
- Core facility improvements, including nature playscape, 3 miles of new single track trail, vault toilet, enlarging/improving parking lots, wayfinding

22-016F Frazee Wannigan Park

- \$714,900 requested, no local match
- Purchase the core property (3 parcels) of 174.55 acres
- Transaction will be facilitated by the Parks and Trails Council, who will buy it from the owner then sell it to the City of Frazee

22-017F Greater Mankato River Valley Trail System

- \$4,800 request, No local match
- Purchases 6 new (replacement) metal wayfinding signs and kiosks in the City of Mankato which staff will install

22-018F Cook County Mountain Bike Trail System

- \$400,000 requested, 16% local match
- New skills park at the Community Center; rehab 4.9 miles of an intermediate singletrack trail; programming component to train youth and adults in mountain bike skills

22-019F Ottertail County Phelps Mill Park

- \$366,000 requested, 82% local match which includes ineligible match
- 1400 feet of wetland boardwalk construction and restoration, plus viewing platforms
- LCCMR and property acquisition will need to be removed as match

22-020F Fergus Falls Glacial Edge Trail

- \$406,040 requested, 24% local match
- 1.11 miles of new multi-use trail through a reclaimed industrial site along the Otter Tail River with 3 trailheads and wayfinding
- The City Resolution omits substantial required language and does not qualify
- Property ownership is not assured at this time

22-021F Austin Jay C. Hormel Nature Center

- \$250,000 requested, 17% local match
- Replacement of two failed bridges on the trail system (6 and 9)

Gull Lake Trail Fairview Township Section

Motion by Furshong to remove Gull Lake Trail from requests due to non-approved resolution

Second by Foley

Motion Approved with one nay and no response from Commissioner Pierce

Commissioner Pike requested there be an opportunity for them to submit the proper resolution

Fergus Falls Glacial Edge Trail

Motion by Bonk to remove the Glacial Edge Trail from requests due to non-approved resolution

Second by Furshong

Motion Approved

8. New Business:

8.1 Gina Hugo - Big Elk Lake Property Acquisition

Presentation – Sacred Land as Public Space

Definition of Park ...implies fun and celebration but that may not be appropriate for all the space. Land was purchased in 1917. In 1887 burial grounds documented. New home plots disturbed burial grounds. Phase 1 Archaeological survey began in 2020 found arrow, pottery piece, tools. Nine sites were identified of which six are eligible for the national registry. Based on what was found it was a trade area debris originated in six different states, prehistoric and received \$10,000 grant to get it curated. Phase 2 survey into 2021. Master planning-Eco-tourism with cross cultural exchange and drew lines to protect the most sacred spaces

8.2 Approve Additional Expense for Winona Bluffs Traverse Survey

Motion by Wendorff to approve \$1,395 request of Mattson to extend survey for an additional three weeks with work done by the Parks and Trails Council

Second by Engrav

Motion Approved

8.4. Track Wheelchairs

Mattson and Czapiewski tried out chairs at the GMP&T July meeting and recommend using the remaining CPO funds to make a chair available at one of the designated facilities. \$14,280 remains.

Discussion on logistics. Renee will check into State Parks that have them to get background, but now asking to move forward. We need a chair to loan out to facilities who have staff on site to check out the chairs.

Motion by Furshong to approve \$14,280 for Greater Minnesota Shared Track Wheelchair Pilot Project

Second by Foley

Motion Approved

9. Approval of August Expenses

Some minor errors for mileage rate 62.5 cents per mile, not .652 center per mile. Mattson will correct on the reimbursement vouchers prior to submittal to the county

August Expenses

Consultants \$23,516.57

Commission \$1,814.99

Total \$25,331.56

Motion by Bonk moved to accept the August Expense Report.

Second by Engrav

Motion Approved

10. Next Meeting and Agenda Items

September 28, Big Falls City Hall - Legion Room

Following the meeting there will be a tour of Big Falls Campground and Horse Camp.

Tour of Big Elk Lake Park property following the meeting

Meeting adjourned at 1:35pm

The Commission "is created to undertake system planning and provide recommendations to the legislature for grants funded by the parks and trails fund to counties and cities outside of the seven-county metropolitan area for parks and trails of regional significance"

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission
Director's Report for August 2022

Partner Meetings

- GMPT Newsletter Article
- GMPT Membership Committee
- PTLAC Liaison's Calls
- Liaison's Benchmark Call
- StreetLight Research Call with Raven McKnight and Ellen Esch. Discussed concerns related to accounting for group visits at parks, specifically school groups who are a major component of visitor numbers to certain parks in the spring. Working on a methodology to account for these visits.

Site Visits

- Cannon Valley Trail, close out visit August 10. CVT has done a great job with the signage grant, including a new color palette and a sign manual. They're also painting all the kiosks on the trail and have installed the two new vault toilets. DNR grant manager Dan Golner was responsible for this grant and was duly impressed with the projects. CVT has received their close out documentation and the grant is complete.
- Mesabi Trail – Funding site visit on August 12. Joe and I walked the proposed trail alignment with Sarah Ciochetto. The application for this section is to build the FINAL 2.4 miles of the 165 mile Mesabi Trail.
- August 15-17, Joe and Renee's funding site visits to:
Stearns County Kraemer Lake Wildwood County Park, Stearns County Quarry Park (Commissioner Foley joined us for the Stearns County visits), Benton County Great River Park Complex, Isanti County Springvale Park, Redwood County Plum Creek Park (Commissioner Anderson joined us for Plum Creek Park), Fergus Falls Glacial Edge Trail and Otter Tail County Phelps Mill Park.

Karen Umphress joined us for our Glacial Edge and Phelps Mill tours. Karen's experience provides a good perspective, and we want to include Karen in our activities so she can continue gaining knowledge about Commission scope.

The site visits have been great, very informative and always good to see the projects in person. I can also report that from the three days of driving through farm country, the crop report for 2022 looks very favorable.

Mountain Bike Trail Count and User Survey Summer 2022

The survey and count is coming into the final weeks. Big numbers are being reported at Tioga Recreation Area. Lake County trail count didn't start until July 16 and is lagging compared to

what we expected. We may want to conduct another survey there in 2023 once the trails have been fully opened for a year. Winona Bluffs Traverse continues to really lag in both count and surveys completed. Andrew and I discussed continuing the count through September which will allow us to get a better feel for trail usage when Winona State University is back in session.

Commission Appointments

I've had a phone call with the new appointments' director Jacki Congello. I expressed our concern that the District 2 position has been open for almost a year, we have another vacancy in District 5 and we can't continue to operate effectively with vacancies. We did have a productive call and I expect to see an appointment to D2 in mid-September. The D5 seat vacated by Commissioner Suss has been posted. Jacki did have our history and the calls and emails I had previously with Madelyn Nelson. I'm confident we will not wait as long for the D5 seat to be filled.

GMRPTC
System Plan Coordinators Report
August 2022

FY24 Funding Application

As of the July 30, 2022 deadline, we had received 19 funding applications requesting \$14,617,799 in Legacy funds. This is within shouting distance of the numbers we saw last year. The largest request is \$2,050,000, and the smallest is \$4800. I haven't calculated the match yet, but it appears to be healthy, with the highest being about 50%, and only two applications with no match. We will be presenting our initial overview of the funding applications at this month's meeting.

Our reviews are still in process, so our reports will be initial only. Most of the funding applications are now available for your review in the DMS portal. However, be aware that as reviews continue, some may be taken down temporarily as adjustments to errors and omissions are completed. This is normal. If you have any questions about an application, please do not hesitate to ask!

Site visits are well underway. Thank you to Commissioners Jen Foley and Rick Anderson who have joined us on visits so far. Keep an eye on the updated site visit list I send out periodically for additional chances to visit projects in your District. Note that not all projects will be visited in person, due to recent site visits before the application deadline where staff were able to review the project in person. Those applications will likely be reviewed in a Zoom meeting with our regional partners. To date we have visited:

Mesabi Trail – District 1
Stearns County Kraemer Lake Park – District 4
Stearns County Quarry Park – District 4
Benton County Great River Regional Park – District 4
Isanti County Springvale Park – District 4
Redwood County Plum Creek Park – District 5
Fergus Falls Glacial Edge Trail – District 3
Ottertail County Phelps Mill Park – District 3

Reviews and Technical Assistance

Most of our technical assistance time this past month has been in support of funding applicants. That said, we are happy that several of our master plan and designation application partners continue to make progress and check in regularly!

No site visits were conducted this month. We have received a Designation Application for Deep Lake Park in Hubbard County. This is a follow-up application from a previous Medium ranking they received. The Evaluation Team will rank this app when they conduct their advisory review of the funding applications in September.

District Outreach

Due to the hectic August funding review schedule, I have not conducted significant district outreach beyond our regional partners. We do continue to get project updates and friendly contacts from many Greater Minnesota partners. Again, thank you to GMPT for the fantastic online forum series discussing a wide variety of Master Planning topics!