

CHISAGO COUNTY PARK BOARD
OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS
Thursday, March 24, 2016

At 3:00 pm, Thursday, March 24, 2016, Vice-chair Sicheneder called the meeting of the Chisago County Park Board of Directors with the following members present: Carlson, Sicheneder, and Sutcliffe, DuBose Kaiser arrived at 3:43pm and took over to Chair the meeting. Also present: Mike Robinson, Kurt Schneider, Park Director Laird Mork, Ken Roberts, Chisago County Planner.

Director Carlson offered a motion to approve the Agenda for the Board of Directors meeting, second by DuBose and passed.

Approval of Meeting Minutes from February 18th, following a clarification by Carlson regarding the paragraph relating to the discussion on the County Business Park land in Center City, he noted that the line should state the northerly 100' wide portion of the County Business Park in Center City, with that Director Dubose offered a motion to approve the minutes of February 18th, 2016. Second by Director Sutcliffe and **carried unanimously**

Overview and discussion regarding grants/projects currently open, awarded and or applied for.

List and status:

1. Swedish Immigrant Trail (SIT) East End Project (OPEN)
2. Sunrise Prairie Trail (SPT) Rehabilitation (OPEN)
3. Swedish Immigrant Trail East End Paving (Awarded) (Requires State Contract, related documents, paperwork)
4. Sunrise Prairie Trail (SPT) Rehabilitation Overlay (Awarded) (Requires State Contract related documents, paperwork, engineering, bidding, contract...)
5. (SIT) Federal Grant Application submitted for East End Paving and Amenity work. Pending Review by DNR Grants Staff, not awarded.
6. (SIT) LCCMR Natural Resource Trust Fund Application submitted, under review by LCCMR (For trail needed within Interstate State Park)

Swedish Immigrant Trail Construction Report:

1. Director Carlson provided a video that had been recorded by Parks and Trail Foundation Chair Joe Sausen and subsequently put into a short program developed by Jack Koepke of the Chisago Lakes Area. According to Director Carlson the mini production has been airing on cable TV in the Chisago Lakes viewing area.
2. Land acquisition report, Environmental Service Director has been assisting with land acquisition contacts and did not have anything to report, Director Dubose shared that he had an informal discussion with Loretta Anderson who indicated she would have no part

of any sale of her land for trail purposes, not on the former railroad grade, not around the south side.

3. LCCMR Natural Resource Trust Fund Grant application was submitted in an effort to secure funding for a project within Interstate State Park. There has been no response from LCCMR returned to Chisago County regarding this to date. Mr. Roberts noted that in relation to the funding application the state provided some preliminary design engineering work. Roberts noted that it shows that the State DNR has put some time into creating a plan which is a positive sign.

Meeting Scheduled with MN DNR Park and Trail Officials, the meeting will be held April 11th to consider details related to the SIT, the expired MOU and the current construction on the East End Project.

The Park Board Directors felt it important that the DNR State Parks and Trails recommit to the purpose and scope noted in the 2010 MOU document. That was to work in concert with Chisago County and Taylors Falls to achieve the goal of completing the Swedish Immigrant Trail in Chisago County through the City of Taylors Falls and Interstate State Park.

Park Board Directors believe the State Parks and Trails staff will recognize the trail currently ending at the State Park property boundary is not good for trail users and could present resource protection management issues within Interstate State Park. Park Board Directors would agree that in the long term absence of a trail through the Interstate State Park an interim route needs to be identified and improved as necessary.

An excerpt of the MNDNR Interstate State Park Plan has been attached to the end of this document to provide information regarding their policy documents reflection of this consideration.

Sunrise Prairie Trail

Park Director Mork shared information related to work completed to date in relation to the SPT Rehabilitation grant. An agreement for services with Prefer Seal Coat of Harris MN was entered into in 2015. Prefer Seal coat completed crack filling on part of the trail between North Branch and Stacy and some part beyond Stacy as well. They did complete seal coating and striping of the North Branch Parking area as well. The Company has been compensated for most but not all of the trail miles complete. The Park Board is reminded that the County has been awarded a larger rehab grant with the intent to repave the entire length of the trail. With that in mind on motion by Park Board Director DuBose, second by Carlson to end additional work related to crack filling at this time and to request to the DNR Grant Officials that remaining rehab funds be redirected and tied in with the new rehab grant and repaving project. Motion passed.

Kaiser also pointed out that as the trail condition is poor and has been generating many calls and e-mails, a sign should be posted at each of the trail heads alerting trail users that crack filling has been terminated as funding is now being directed to and repaving which is scheduled in the

spring of 2017. Director Kaiser also noted that it would be helpful if this could be posted on the County web site.

Nancy Hoffman from Chisago County HRA EDA shared an update regarding potential funding for Wi-Fi service at Fish Lake Park. She noted they had applied for funding for 10 spots in the county and that there may be funds to assist with equipment and service or a part of the service fees for one year at Fish Lake Park. The concept was not definite but under consideration. Follow up with Ms. Hoffman and Jon Eckel Director of Chisago County M.I.S.C. will follow.

Regarding use of Credit Cards, Kurt Schneider Environmental Services Director noted that County Treasurer Lee Olson indicated they could start doing some training for accepting credit card payments in April with Environment Service Staff.

Now other new business was brought forward.

The next meeting date was scheduled for Thursday April 21st.

On motion by Carlson, second by Sutcliffe the meeting was adjourned.

Dan Kaiser, Chair

Laird Mork
Parks Director

Trail Opportunities

The Willard Munger State Trail (formerly called the MN-WI Boundary Trail) is authorized by Minnesota Statute 85.015 Subd. 11 originating in Arden Hills, extending northeasterly to Taylors Falls, extending northerly to St Croix State Park, and terminating in Jay Cooke State Park.

The Gateway State Trail was originally part of the Willard Munger State Trail, but is now considered a separate state trail. Authorized by Minnesota Statute 85.015 Subd. 14, the Gateway State Trail originates 16 at the state capitol and extends northeast to Taylors Falls. The Gateway State Trail is a designated nonmotorized trail. Currently, the state trail is 18 miles long with a paved treadway for the entire length and a parallel unpaved trail on the eastern 9 miles open to horse use. The Gateway State Trail is the most heavily used state trail in Minnesota.

The DNR continues to collaborate with private landowners, local units of government, and trail supporters to develop the trail corridor from the end of the existing trail at Pine Point Park in Washington County to Taylors Falls in Chisago County. The goal is to take advantage of existing corridors as much as possible. In the Taylors Falls/Interstate State Park area this may mean that the trail connects with the Swedish Immigrant Trail to the west and enter the park in tandem on the abandoned railroad bed paralleling Trunk Highway 8. The railroad corridor is the most preferred and scenic route for the Gateway State Trail. Accommodating paved and unpaved treadways within the park will be challenging. An alternative may be to route the unpaved trail with horse use along Herberg Road.

The DNR often assists with the development of regional trails and is cooperating with Chisago and Washington counties on several trail projects. The Swedish Immigrant Trail is proposed to go from Wyoming, Minnesota to Taylors Falls, primarily on an old railroad grade. The proposed trail improvements through Taylors Falls will be a vital link to several major trail systems including:

- The Swedish Immigrant Trail. This connects with the Sunrise Prairie Trail in Wyoming.
- The Minnesota-Wisconsin Boundary Trail. This trail will eventually extend from the Metro Area into Duluth. An objective of this trail is to capitalize primarily on the magnificent scenic views of the St. Croix River.
- The Gateway State Trail. The trail is currently an 18-mile multiple use trail that extends from St. Paul to Pine Point Park in Washington County. This trail will eventually extend north to connect to Taylors Falls.
- St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin is the starting point for the Gandy Dancer Trail, the Ice Age Trail and an American Volkssport Trail.