



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
2nd Quarter Meeting
June 8, 2017 • 2:30 – 5:00 p.m.
State Office Building Room 500 North
DRAFT AGENDA

- 2:30 p.m. Introductions** S. Johnson
- 2:35 p.m. Approve Today's Agenda & Minutes from 3/2/17** S. Johnson/All
- 2:40 p.m. Mississippi Multimedia Gallery – Informational Presentation** John Shepard & Tracy Fredin
<http://www.hamline.edu/education/cgee/missrivergallery> Hamline University
- 2:55 p.m. Commission Business**
- Budget Report Miller
 - Legislative Update Legislative Members/LCC
 - Officer Elections – Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer All
 - Executive Committee Meeting – Confirm Date Committee Members
- 3:15 p.m. National MRPC Updates**
- 2017 Semi-Annual Meeting & Committee Reports Samp/Lewis/Mulry/Zoff
 - 2017 Annual Meeting – Marquette, IA, Sept. 19-21 Samp
 - Interpretive Center Visits All
- 3:35 p.m. CMP Implementation/Commission Projects**
- Plan Your Project/Plan Your Trip Interactive Maps Update Zoff
 - MN GRR Wayfinding Signage Update Zoff
 - MN GRR Map Reprint Miller
 - MN GRR Sense of Place Presentation and Plan (Drive GRR Month, GIS/LIS Conference, Partner Update Event, Ambassador Development) Lewis/Zoff/All
- 4:05 p.m. New Business**
- Wildwood Community Solar Garden, Red Wing Mulry
- 4:15 p.m. Agency and Regional Updates**
- Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids Salminen
 - Brainerd to Elk River Samp
 - Elk River to Hastings Pierson
 - Hastings to Iowa Border Mulry
 - Agriculture Hugunin
 - Explore MN Tourism A. Johnson/Philipp
 - Historical Society Kajer/Kelliher
 - Natural Resources Parker/Bonsignore
 - Transportation Bradley/Zoff
 - National Park Service/MISS Anfinson
- 4:55 p.m. Other Business**
- 5:00 p.m. Wrap Up and Adjourn**



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
1st Quarter Meeting – March 2, 2017
State Office Building, St. Paul MN
MINUTES – Draft**

Commissioners Present

Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River
Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings
Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Adam Johnson – Tourism Appointee
Paul Hugunin – Agriculture Appointee
Sen. David Senjem (partial meeting)

Commissioners Participating by Phone

Scott Bradley – Transportation Appointee
Amanda MacDonald – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Anne Lewis – At Large Member

Technical Advisors & Staff Present

Carol Zoff – Transportation

David Kelliher – Historical Society
Millie Phillip - Tourism
Diane Henry-Wangensteen - LCC
Chris Miller – Staff

Commissioners & Technical Advisors

Absent

Rep. Sheldon Johnson
Sen. Patricia Torres-Ray
Andrea Kajer – Historical Society Appointee
Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border
Keith Parker – Natural Resources Appointee

Guests/Speakers Present

Boxuan Xia, MnDOT

The meeting was called to order at 2:35 by Acting Chair Karl Samp followed by introductions. A quorum was present. All welcomed new technical advisor Millie Phillip from Explore Minnesota Tourism, Boxuan Xia of MnDOT and Paul Hugunin of Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

Review of Agenda and Minutes from 11/10/16 and 1/5/17 Meetings

Motion by Cordelia Pierson and seconded by Nancy Salminen to approve the 3/2/17 agenda, 11/10/16 minutes and 1/5/17 minutes as presented. A roll call vote was taken by Acting Chair Samp. Yes – Nancy Salminen, Amanda MacDonald, Karl Samp, Cordelia Pierson, Paul Hugunin, Scott Bradley, Adam Johnson, Anne Lewis. No votes in opposition were recorded. Motion carried.

Commission Business

Budget Report: Chris Miller provided a summary of the budget report included in the packet followed by questions and discussion including clarification on line items that will fund the MN GRR map reprint.

Review/Edit Process for Letters of Support or Comment: The MN-MRPC approved process for letters of support and comment was referenced in the meeting packet, with a proposed addition that notes discretion of the Chair in determining whether a special meeting will be called. There was discussion about general practices that have been followed including reissuance of letters for different funding sources if previously approved by the Commission. It was noted that changes in funding sources could impact the support decision of the Commission and that this should be considered prior to provision of letters.

Motion by Cordelia Pierson and seconded by Nancy Salminen to approve the proposed addition to the process for MN-MRPC letters. A roll call vote was taken by Acting Chair Samp. Yes – Nancy Salminen, Amanda MacDonald, Karl Samp, Cordelia Pierson, Paul Hugunin, Scott Bradley, Adam Johnson, Anne Lewis. No votes in opposition were recorded. Motion carried.

Executive Committee Report: The MN-MRPC Executive Committee met on January 5, 2017 and addressed topics as approved by the Commission in the committee description. Minutes were referenced in the meeting packet. Statute revisions recommended in the Corridor Management Plan were recommended by the committee to address MN-MRPC sunset date, term length of MN-MRPC regional members, staggering of regional member terms, and an edit to a MnDOT statute that references the

MN-MRPC. MN Statute 161.20, subdivision 3 currently states that the MN-MRPC does not further a highway purpose. MnDOT is in support of changing this language but recommends that the request originate from the MN-MRPC. Carol Zoff and Scott Bradley provided additional background and confirmed MnDOT's support. LCC is working on a bill draft for consideration by MN-MRPC legislative members to amend MN Statute 161.1419 regarding details of the MN-MRPC structure and MN Statute 161.20 to remove the MN-MRPC from the list organizations not fulfilling a highway purpose.

National MRPC Updates

2017 Semi-Annual Meeting, Paducah, KY: Karl Samp reported that the 2017 MRPC Semi-Annual Meeting will be held April 19 – 21 in Paducah. He will be attending as MRPC Pilot and the MN-MRPC has requested out-of-state travel approval for Anne Lewis and Sheronne Mulry to attend. Carol Zoff will be attending as well, funded by MnDOT. The meeting will include technical committee working sessions along with field sessions highlighting Kentucky riverfront communities. Carol reported that the Transportation Committee will also have a conference call prior to the meeting and is working on a 10 state Corridor Management Plan and gathering historic documents to maintain planning and designation records. Anne reported that the Marketing Committee will be having a conference call as well and one of the priorities will be discussion on edits and process for a reprint of the 10 state Great River Road map this spring. Nancy Salminen reminded everyone that the Culture and Heritage Committee accepts new nominations for Great River Road Interpretive Centers annually (due Sept. 1) and encouraged consideration of additional nominations.

2017 Annual Meeting, Marquette, IA: The 2017 MRPC Annual Meeting is scheduled for September 19 – 21 in Marquette, Iowa. Headquarters will be the Cobblestone Inn and a great agenda is being planned by the Iowa MRPC. MN-MRPC members were asked to consider attending and more information will be shared as it becomes available.

Confirm/Update Technical Committee Membership: The MRPC's work is facilitated by four technical committees – Culture & Heritage; Communications & Marketing; Environment, Recreation & Agriculture; and Transportation. A list of MN-MRPC members currently on these committee rosters, along with the MRPC Board of Directors, was included in the meeting packet. Members were asked to review and consider participating if not already involved with a committee. Please contact the MN-MRPC office for more information or if interested in serving. Much of the committee work is handled via conference call. In particular, the Environment, Recreation & Agriculture Committee and Transportation Committee could use additional representation from Minnesota.

Old Business

Plan Your Project Interactive Mapping Update: Carol Zoff introduced Boxuan Xia, SEEDS student worker at MnDOT and University of Minnesota senior; and described work underway on the Plan Your Project Interactive Mapping Tool. Data gathered and recorded by Kimley-Horn during the CMP process is being expanded upon to result in a tool for use by local road management authorities and other project managers. Traveler resource information is also included in the database and will provide the basis for the Plan Your Trip Mapping Tool. Current work includes field checking and confirming Great River Road sign data for use in completing a system wide sign replacement estimate and seeking funding. Boxuan demonstrated sorts that can be used to display available data. The traveler resource data includes listings for over 750+ locations. Review of the listings will be helpful to provide additional local perspective and photographs as well as confirm the information to be included in the Plan Your Trip tool. MN-MRPC member, agency and partner participation will be needed as part of the process. A question was raised about whether video of the resources is or could be included. Although video is not currently included it was noted as a good idea for consideration as the tool continues to evolve. MN-MRPC member agency assistance will be needed as links to available state data are included in the tool, such as the Minnesota Grown directory with potential sort or filtering functions to show sites along the GRR and also provide promotion for Minnesota Grown.

National Advisory Council and Travel and Tourism Infrastructure: Carol Zoff reported on recent activities of this council. MnDOT Commissioner Charles Zelle is a member of the 25 member council along with one other state DOT Commissioner and a variety of other stakeholders including Diana

Threadgill of Tennessee, representing the MRPC. Carol provides staff support for Commissioner Zelle and participates in the meetings. The council is charged with development of a strategic plan for the US DOT on how to incorporate the needs of tourism and tourists into transportation plans and projects. Council members have been asked to provide lists of shovel ready projects that would enhance tourism and transportation. Minnesota was asked to narrow their list to three projects, which are – 1) I-94 lane expansion from St. Michael to Albertville; 2) Hwy 14 improvements between Dodge Center and Owatonna; and 3) Rail crossings in the Moorhead area. The National Park Service was also asked to provide recommendations and those include Natchez Trace road construction and Blue Ridge Parkway road and bridge reconstruction – both projects would result in improvements to iconic byways.

Mississippi River Trail (MRT) Update: Thank you to Liz Walton for the update included in the meeting packet.

MN GRR Map Reprint Status: Chris Miller reported that plans are underway for a spring reprint of the MN GRR Map/Travel Planner, with costs to be covered by the MN-MRPC operating budget. Printing quotes have been obtained and quantity information has been requested from partner distribution sites. The project is likely to be completed in April or early May.

New Business

Mississippi River Connections Collaborative (MRCC) Update: John Anfinson provided an update on the MRCC after attending their most recent meeting in New Orleans. He is now the Midwest Region representative to the MRCC. The MRCC was formed by representatives from the National Park Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and other federal agencies to enhance communication and leverage efforts of entities and promotions along the Mississippi River. Over time other partners have signed on, including the National MRPC. The MRCC coordinates "Year of" initiatives along the full length of the river, such as Year of Fishing, Year of Birding and currently Year of Trails for 2017. 2019 will be Year of the Great River Road. Recently much of the MRCC's focus has been on development of the Mississippi River Geotourism Program in partnership with National Geographic. Discussion is taking place on how to sustain the Geotourism Program over time and how leadership should be handled. The MRCC itself will also be looking at its own focus moving forward and John will be involved in drafting a position statement for the organization. A sponsorship plan is being developed to provide long term funding for the Mississippi River Geotourism website and a Geotourism Stewardship Council will oversee the project long term. Sponsors would purchase ads on the website with inaugural sponsorships to begin in 2017. At least one sponsor from each state will likely be sought for the inaugural effort. Anne Lewis reported hearing similar information at the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (Mississippi River mayors) meeting this week. She also noted discussion on the possibility of community nominations being accepted for inclusion on the website. There was discussion on ways to encourage more participation from Minnesota on the website, including whether a meeting focused on Minneapolis and Saint Paul nominations would be beneficial.

Report on Meetings with US Senators and Members of Congress: As discussed at the Executive Committee meeting, letters highlighting the recent 25th anniversary of National Scenic Byways and the importance of the Great River Road were sent to Minnesota's US Senators and Representatives. A sample letter was referenced in the meeting packet. Since Anne Lewis was planning to be in Washington for the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative meeting, she offered to set meetings with congressional staff while there. Anne reported on meetings with staff from the offices of Senator Klobuchar, Representative Lewis, Representative Walz and Representative Nolan. She also delivered an information packet to Senator Franken's office. Main takeaways from the visits – staff members are very aware of the work of the National Advisory Council on Travel and Tourism Infrastructure and are keeping an eye on it; ideas, suggestions and identification of needs are welcome; and the information about the MN Great River Road was appreciated. Acting Chair Samp expressed thanks to Anne for making these visits.

MN GRR Ambassador Development Pilot: Anne Lewis and Sheronne Mulry volunteered to work on a plan to begin implementation of a GRR Ambassador Development initiative as described in the CMP. The CMP includes recommendations for a comprehensive program that would likely require significant resources including member time. A smaller initiative on an experimental basis would allow for feedback,

partnership development and then refinement prior to large scale implementation. An outline was included in the meeting packet for discussion. Anne shared background and asked for feedback. In general, the approach would be to identify someone willing to serve as MN-MRPC liaison to each MN GRR region, and then make visits to approximately 3 locations in that region (GRR Interpretive Centers and/or Convention and Visitor's Bureaus or Chambers of Commerce). A discussion outline and toolkit would be provided. The toolkit would include GRR information for use by local sites as appropriate. The MN-MRPC is asked to visit GRR Interpretive Centers annually as part of the 10-state MRPC process as well, and some of the Ambassador Development visits could help address this requirement. Future applications could also include confirmation and refinement of the 750+ site listings in the traveler resource database. Amanda MacDonald noted that she'd be happy to be involved and would like to learn more. Karl Samp also offered to help. Karl also raised the idea of having ambassadors present at schools in the future. Cordelia Pierson asked about the role of social media in the plan and Anne responded that the toolkit will include resources that can be utilized by local partners on their social media platforms. Anne asked members to review the Ambassador Development outline, send feedback and indicate if interested in participating. A cost estimate will be prepared by staff for consideration as part of the FY '18 budget.

Partnership Request – Source Song Festival: A request for partnership from Source Song Festival was received by the MRPC and forwarded to the MN-MRPC. Members reviewed the request in the packet, asked for additional details to be gathered by staff, and generally approved posting of information on MN GRR social media. Posting on National MRPC social media platforms was also suggested.

Agency and Regional Updates

Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids: Nancy Salminen shared information about the Mississippi River Pedestrian Bridge Project, which is on both the Lady's Slipper Scenic Byway and Great River Road. Houston Engineering has been contracted for bridge design and public meetings have been held as well as meetings with the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. A final design will be complete in April and funding will then be sought for construction. As noted in the MRT report, the 3rd Annual Headwaters to Hills Bicycle Ride is planned for August 23 – 30. The route has changed a bit this year, with the end point in La Crosse and Amtrak transportation back to Saint Paul.

Tourism: Adam Johnson reported on attending the Meet Minneapolis Annual Meeting, and noted the Destination Transportation 2030 initiative which includes a strong focus on the Mississippi River. Information is available at <http://www.minneapolis.org/partners-and-community/meet-minneapolis/destination-transformation-2030/>. The new Saint Paul Visitor Guide is out and covers 15 months including the 2018 Super Bowl. There is a two page spread about the Mississippi River and river focus throughout the publication. Discussions are underway to redevelop the site of the River Centre Parking Ramp, potentially to include a riverfront hotel that would help serve convention needs. The Twin Cities is in the running to host the 2023 World's Fair – with the site announcement expected later this year. Millie Phillip provided an overview of upcoming international outreach to promote Minnesota in Germany and Denmark.

Grand Rapids to Brainerd: Amanda MacDonald is planning to visit other communities in her region this spring. Aitkin is excited about the upcoming opening of the Mississippi Showboat. The Showboat is located about a ½ block off the Mississippi, will host performances and also be featured during Riverboat Days. Both Grand Rapids and Aitkin have been featured in the press related to the Showboat including a recent story by KBJR Duluth. Amanda noted that she's been reviewing websites for Mississippi River information to link to and share, since the Aitkin Chamber of Commerce doesn't have maps on its site and travelers are interested in this information. The GRR Ambassador Development Program will likely help provide this type of information for Aitkin and other river communities and could also help facilitate sharing of local information, events, etc. via social media. Anne Lewis mentioned the new Grand Rapids Visitor Guide and its focus on the Mississippi River along with lakes and forest. Copies of the guide were distributed, courtesy of Visit Grand Rapids.

Brainerd to Elk River: Karl Samp reported that the Cuyuna Lakes Trail Association continues to work toward expansion of the Cuyuna Mountain Bike Trail to result in 75 miles of trail options. Partners are watching the bonding bill where the project is currently included. 15 new businesses have opened in the

area since the mountain bike trail was created. The Brainerd Riverfront Committee is meeting today and continues to move forward toward a suspended trail project on the riverfront, with SEH under contract for the third year to coordinate. The St. Cloud Riverwalk Committee is meeting tomorrow to review preliminary designs for the riverfront from downtown north to St. Cloud hospital, which will connect to the recently completed trail extension downtown and provide increased focus on and access to the river. Karl is a member of the committee representing the MRPC/MN-MRPC. The St. Cloud area also continues to plan for their role hosting the 2017 Governor's Fishing Opener on the Mississippi River.

Elk River to Hastings: Cordelia Pierson recently spoke to the Northeast Business Association regarding the National Geographic Mississippi River Geotourism Program. Cordelia has also been working with downtown employers and reported an increased interest in volunteerism. She will be involved in upcoming meetings of the Superbowl Sustainability Committee. Work is underway to address missing links for the MRT in Minneapolis with partners including the University of Minnesota and Burlington Northern. Cordelia also announced that she will be running for Minneapolis City Council, in an area where 8 of 10 neighborhoods are on the Mississippi River.

Hastings to Iowa Border: Karl Samp congratulated Red Wing on being selected as a finalist in the Small Business Revolution Main Street competition. They narrowly missed winning in a very close competition and had wonderful community involvement throughout the process.

Agriculture: Paul Hugunin reported that the newly updated print version of the Minnesota Grown Directory will be available in April. The popular publication lists over 1,000 sites – including farmers markets, nurseries/landscaping, Christmas trees, specialty foods/beverages and more. The Minnesota Grown website features recent improvements with additional work planned. There were over 325,000 unique visits to the website last calendar year.

Minnesota Historical Society: David Kelliher noted that historic site season is approaching and sites are ready for visitors. Thanks were expressed to the MRPC for designation of two MNHS sites as new GRR Interpretive Centers. The new visitor center at the Oliver Kelley Farm will host a grand opening event on May 6 including a breakfast and ribbon cutting. The MN-MRPC is invited to hold an upcoming meeting at this newly renovated site, which features trails along the river in addition to showcasing the theme of agriculture over time. The MNHS capital budget request includes funding for Historic Fort Snelling, and thanks were noted to Sen. Senjem for introducing the bill and the MN-MRPC for their letter of support.

Transportation: Scott Bradley provided an overview of Transportation Alternatives Program status. In the current solicitation, applications were due January 13 with funding to be announced April 17. 14 byway projects had submitted letters of interest, including three for wayshowing, one bridge project and 10 trail projects. Not all submitted applications. In the previous year, nine byway applications were submitted with six receiving funds. MnDOT continues to work internally on options to make byway funding more stable and predictable. An effort has been underway to map all MN Scenic Byways and a web map is now available in the MnMap system. A bill has been introduced to clarify that MnDOT has the authority to continue ownership of scenic easements and also regulate billboards in scenic locations. There are over 300 scenic easements that were purchased with federal dollars. Carol Zoff reported that a Scenic Byway Advisory Committee has been created, based on suggestions received at last fall's MN Scenic Byways Workshop. A variety of byways and agencies are represented and an overall strategic direction will be developed and provided for MN Byways. The timeline will be completion for presentation at the 2017 MN Scenic Byways Workshop, scheduled for October 3 – 4 in Duluth. The Mississippi Headwaters Board is updating their comprehensive plan and Carol is serving on the committee to represent the MN-MRPC and MnDOT. She will be reviewing the MN GRR Corridor Management Plan to identify strategies that align with or leverage Mississippi Headwaters Board efforts. MN GRR sign data and historical information on installation is being reviewed to develop a plan with the goal of a completed signage project before 2019's Year of the Great River Road promotion.

Mississippi National River & Recreation Area/NPS: John Anfinson shared that recent renovation of the MNRRA Visitor Center has resulted in increased visitation – from 17,000 visitors in the first quarter of 2016 to 34,000 in the first quarter of 2017. The Paddle Share Program will be expanding to Brooklyn Park and Saint Paul during 2017. A process is underway to position NPS at the Upper St. Anthony Falls

Lock for the long term. NPS took over operation of the Visitor Center following the closure of the lock. The center traditionally had 2,000 visitors per year. NPS recorded 15,000 visitors between Memorial Day and Labor Day 2016, along with 300 tours involving 3,500 participants. Friends of the Lock has developed preliminary ideas for the visitor center and there is tremendous potential for increased visitation moving forward. John mentioned the possibility of this also functioning as a Great River Road visitor center.

Other Business

Karl Samp reported on status of the Mississippi Northwoods Project in Crow Wing County. An agreement has been reached between the county and the state, which will keep all previously designated motorized trails but designate all other areas as non-motorized use only.

Last summer, Karl served as a step on guide for two Shore Excursions tour groups from the American Queen. The groups spent a night in St. Cloud followed by a trip to Itasca State Park to see the source of the Mississippi River. One trip is planned for 2017 and scheduled to take place in August. Karl has also started conversations with Shore Excursions regarding potential for Great River Road bus tours that would utilize the Shore Excursions buses while their groups are on the river boats.

Anne Lewis noted that American Cruise Lines has built new river boats that will be going into service. Viking Cruise Lines is also continuing with plans to begin Mississippi River cruises.

Senator Senjem announced the Grand Reopening Event for the Minnesota State Capitol, to be held August 10 – 12.

Next Meeting

2017 2nd Quarter Meeting
Thursday, June 8, 2017
2:30 – 5:00 p.m.
State Office Building Room 500 North

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m.



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Agency & Regional Updates
March 2017**

Department of Natural Resources – Keith Parker

- DNR is hosting an eastside strategic landowner planning session tomorrow. The goal is to ensure communication and coordination when appropriate, for projects along the river on the east side of St. Paul. Attendees include National Park Service, Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary, the City of St. Paul, Met Council and MN DNR. This is a follow up to a larger meeting held at the Science Museum in January that included Mississippi River stakeholder organizations/entities from both Minneapolis and St. Paul.
- The Governors Fishing opener will be hosted in St. Cloud MN this year by the St. Cloud Convention and Visitors Center. Fishing will take place on the river which is a little different in that typically the event is on a lake. The MN DNR will be working in support of the event.

MN-MRPPC FY '17 Budget
6/2/17

MN-MRPPC FY '17 Operating Budget						
Obj Code	Description	FY '17 Budget	Spent	Pending	Remaining	Comments
41070	Other Benefits (Per Diem)	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 1,045.00		\$ 2,955.00	Commissioner Per Diems. MN-MRPPC quarterly mtgs. MRPPC Annual Mtg & Semi-Annual Mtg, committee mtgs, commission representation at meetings and events, CMP project
41100	Space Rental	\$ -	\$ 100.00		\$ (100.00)	
41110	Printing & Advertising	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 244.72	\$ 6,565.99	\$ (3,310.71)	Commission meeting copies, materials. Reprint of MN GRR Map (28,000)
41130	Prof/Tech Services	\$ 38,461.20	\$ 29,135.57	\$ 2,200.00	\$ 7,125.63	Admin contract, website design services, additional staff time for projects, other services as needed
41150	Computer & System Services	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 899.07	\$ 6.99	\$ 93.94	Website hosting, stats and email
41155	Communications	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 555.61	\$ 640.03	\$ 304.36	Postage/deliveries, MN MRPPC phone line and conference calls, shipping costs, Constant Contact email marketing service. Shipping of 10-State GRR Maps.
41160	In-State Travel	\$ 4,500.00	\$ 3,061.93		\$ 1,438.07	Commissioners/Advisors/Staff. quarterly mtgs, committees, events, CMP project
41170	Out-State Travel	\$ 6,000.00	\$ -	\$ 2,252.40	\$ 3,747.60	MRPPC 2017 Semi-Annual Meeting - Paducah, Kentucky
41180	Employee Development	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 450.00		\$ 1,050.00	Meeting and conference registration fees, including MRPPC Annual and Semi-Annual Meetings
41300	Office Supplies		\$ (151.00)		\$ 151.00	General office supplies for Commission projects. Donations for GRR maps are placed in this line item.
43000	Other Costs (MRPPC Dues)	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 15,000.00		\$ -	MRPPC 2017 Dues
TOTAL		\$ 75,461.20	\$ 50,340.90	\$ 11,665.41	\$ 13,454.89	

Mississippi River Parkway Commission
April 20-22
Paducah, Kentucky
Anne Lewis

Background on Meeting:

Kentucky's MRPC has a unique structure, mission and funding. It is established and supported primarily by the five river counties for economic development purposes. County economic development authorities support it and its staff, along with some state funding. Rural and economically depressed as a region, not unlike much of our River Road, the visits were to new businesses, parks and attractions that the MRPC is nurturing for new business and tourism development. They are having some inspiring successes. An interesting twist.

Key Take-Aways:

- Tourism is viewed as important economic development tool and MRPC is key to the change that's happening in this part of Kentucky.
- Kentucky Trail Town Program being used to benefit Great River Road towns using model of horse trails and bourbon trails that have been so successful for Kentucky tourism. Could be replicated.
- Fits well with eco-tourism, agri-tourism and adventure-tourism now trends in US tourism nationally.
- Two organizations working on Asian Carp: USFW and local company working together to harvest carp for export: Job growth + invasive species control. They are ramping this up because there is high investor interest.

Additionally, presentation by Diana Threadgill re: National Advisory Committee on Transportation and Travel Infrastructure:

- Please submit shovel-ready projects on Great River Road to Diana. First meeting asked for these and is likely to happen again. We should be poised.
- Minnesota's Great River Road is represented in two ways: Diana is the 10-state MRPC representative and Minnesota's Transportation Commissioner is a representative also.

Annual meeting Sept. 19-21 Marquette, IA

MRPC Marketing Committee
Report
Anne Lewis

1st Quarter

- Over 2,000 maps sent out
- Over 16,000 email newsletter subscribers – 25% open rate
- Birding Bonanza promotion – runs through May
 - Goal 1,750 entrants/ 1,342 entrants in first 10 days
- Facebook Top Posts:
 - “Plan your next Great River Road adventure”
 - 27,000 views
 - “Did you know the longest stretch of the Great River Road can be found in Enjoy Illinois? Get out and explore this spring!”
 - 12,500 views
 - “A state quarter depicting an Iowa Great River Road interpretive center – how cool!” (Effigy Mounds)
 - 10,500 views
- Website
 - Nearly 37,000 unique users with average session over 2 minutes
 - Minneapolis/St. Paul second highest metro area: Nearly 3,000 pageviews @ 2.5 minutes
- Mobile App – now in test phase
- Social Media marketing – the 10-state MRPC will apply a Snap-Chat filter at one Interpretive Center site per state during the Labor Day weekend launch of Drive the Great River Road month. While a marketing tool for the Drive promotion, it is also a test of Snap Chat Filter for future Great River Road promotion.



Out of State Travel Trip Report

(Complete and submit within 30 days after travel.)

Fiscal Yr:	2017
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Attendee Name:	Carol Zoff	Date:	5/16/17
Office/District:	Environmental Stewardship - Trip #14		
Meeting/Conference Name:	Mississippi River Parkway Commission Semi-Annual Meeting		
Location:	Paducah, KY		
Dates of Trip:	April 18 - 21, 2017		
Short Meeting Description:			
<p>Meeting included committee work to develop a ten-state corridor management plan (CMP) for the Great River Road, including the Mississippi River Trail bicycle route. A mobile workshop provided onsite learning showcasing Kentucky's newly installed Great River Road way showing, amenity and multi-modal trails guide signage. Local intrinsic resource site visits included state historic sites, a state park, a ten-state Great River Road Interpretive Center (Minnesota has 12), a fishery and a nut factory tour which provided important context for those managing the byway in all ten states. General sessions highlighted Kentucky's proactive fight against the movement of non-native Asian carp into Kentucky's waterways, in keeping with, but very different from, the actions in Minnesota to close the upper St. Anthony Lock and Dam. Upstart private sector businesses utilizing Asian carp and the affect on carp populations were discussed, as were the ups and downs of business development/public policy support. Samples of carp food products were presented.</p>			
Key Topics/Benefits including how this trip increased MnDOT's financial effectiveness:			
<p>This trip helped enhance MnDOT financial effectiveness by coordinating MnDOT's 1) Great River Road, 2) state byway program and 3) NACTTI membership, with the ten Mississippi River states, including fellow NACTTI member Diana Threadgill. Committee work includes a ten-state corridor management plan, ground truthing a mobile app which is now using GIS data from each state, preparation for the 2019 Year of the Great River Road promotion by NPS, USFWS and MRPC, and coordination to assist Diana with her NACTTI responsibilities.</p> <p>The CMP will build upon historic and current plans for byway road management, interpretation, marketing and intrinsic resources along the byway, as well as organizational sustainability and management. This parallel effort with nine other states can help inform MnDOT's Scenic Byway Program Strategic Plan by providing other state's perspectives and directions so MnDOT's work is in alignment and coordinated to achieve greatest results without duplication of effort.</p>			
Actions/Next Steps (Who will you share this information with and what needs to take place?):			
<p>Actions include 1) beta testing the phone app to assure the GIS and functions are ready to go for pushing out the app update, 2) continue identifying historic and current GRR management docs, as well as examples of other byway management guidance, 3) identify the relevant passages to bring forward into the CMP as well as what remains to develop, and 4) work with Diana and Commissioner Zelle related to providing information related to each of the committees they represent on NACTTI. Passing along info and contacts from the KY FWS and carp businesses to the NPS/MNRRRA, a MnMRPC member, will also extend the benefit of this meeting.</p>			

Great River Road Network of Interpretive Centers Visit Checklist

State commissioner visits annually or bi-annually by making an appointment with the I.C. Director or other appropriate personnel.

The goal is to develop a stronger relationship between the Interpretive Centers (I.C.) and the MRPC.

During the visit, the commissioner will review the checklist and share new or ongoing information about the MRPC. These talking points should include benefits of being an I.C. (e.g., featured on website, printed maps, social media, itineraries and more.)

Comments

What other Interpretive Centers do you communicate with regarding Great River Road activities?

Name of interpretive center

Visiting commissioner's name

Date of visit

Name, title, email and telephone number of I.C. personnel interviewed

What are your regular hours?

What is your admission pricing?

How many visitors do you see annually?

Does I.C. have a website?
Please provide the url link.

Do you have a button on your website with the Great River Road logo and link to the experiencemississippiriver.com website?
Please provide url link to page where it is located. If not, when will you be adding logo and link?

Does your I.C. have a Facebook page?
Please provide url link.

Do you carry GRR maps or rack cards for sale, distribution or on display? Yes No

Do you display a Great River Road banner or other signage? Yes No

Are your frontline personnel knowledgeable of the Great River Road? Do they receive any formal training? Yes No

Do you have photos or video of your I.C. to share for promotional use? Yes No
Please send photos, video or other media to the National Office.

Commissioner's Signature

I.C. Personnel Signature



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Mississippi River Parkway Commission
701 East Washington Avenue, Suite 202
Madison, WI 53703

MN GRR Interpretive Centers
March 2017

Last	First	Organization	Address	Email	Phone
Cox	Ms. Connie	Itasca State Park	36750 Main Park Dr, Park Rapids, MN 56470	constance.cox@state.mn.us	218-699-7259
Johns	Mr. Jeff	Forest History Center	2609 County Rd 76, Grand Rapids, MN 55744	jeff.johns@mnhs.org	218-327-4482
Salveson	Ms. Laura	Mill City Museum	704 South 2nd Street, Minneapolis, MN 55401	laura.salveson@mnhs.org	612-341-7495
Pfannenstiel	Mr. Tom	Historic Fort Snelling	200 Tower Ave, St. Paul, MN 55111	tom.pfannenstiel@mnhs.org	612-725-2430
Prose	Ms. Merry	Minnesota History Center	345 W Kellogg Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55102	merry.prose@mnhs.org	651-259-3411
Marketing Department		Science Museum of Minnesota	330 W Kellogg Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55102	info@smm.org	651-221-9444
Stiteler	Ms. Sharon	NPS/MNRRRA Visitor Ctr	120 W Kellogg Blvd, St. Paul, MN 55102	sharon_stiteler@nps.gov	651-293-8408
Hahn	Mr. Ed	National Eagle Center	50 Pembroke Ave, Wabasha, MN 55981	marketing@nationaleaglecenter.org	651-565-4989
Casey	Mr. David	Minnesota Marine Art Museum	800 Riverview Dr, Winona, MN 55987	dcasey@minnesolamarineart.org	507-474-6626
Weaver	Ms. Jennifer	Winona County History Center	160 Johnson St, Winona, MN 55987	assistdir@winonahistory.org	507-454-2723
Peterson	Ms. Melissa	Charles A Lindbergh Historic Site	1620 Lindbergh Drive S, Little Falls, MN 56345	melissa.peterson@mnhs.org	320-616-5421
Olson Bercher	Ms. Ann	Oliver Kelley Farm	15788 Kelley Farm Road, Elk River, MN 55330	ann.bercher@mnhs.org	763-441-6896



Proposal
MN-MRPC Partner Progress Report Invitational Event
Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
June 8, 2017 Quarterly Meeting

Purpose of Proposal: In order to raise awareness of the role of the Mississippi River Parkway Commission and the importance of the Great River Road to Minnesota and to river communities, the Corridor Management Plan will be the focus of an open house and presentation highlighting the innovative and inclusive ways the MnMRPC is addressing the plan's goals.

In the spirit of reaching as many stakeholders as possible, we ask commissioners, partner agency representatives and Interpretive Center representatives to agree to attend, identify key individuals for invitation, and volunteer to do their part in this effort.

Background and Planned Activities for FY 18:

Minnesota's Great River Road Corridor Management Plan (CMP) was completed in 2016. To help implement three of its four initial implementation tasks in February 2017 the Minnesota Department of Transportation hired a University of Minnesota Masters student with GIS expertise, Boxuan Xia. Boxuan has worked closely with Carol Zoff, Great River Road Program Coordinator, to refine the Plan-Your-Project and Plan-Your-Trip interactive internet maps initiated during the planning process and to address byway wayfinding needs. In addition they are working on incorporating the stories of the river using a story map format which incorporates the interactive mapping data.

- The MRPC committed to provide an October 5th, 2017 statewide conference of planners and GIS professionals with its keynote presentation for their annual conference in October. Anne Lewis and Carol Zoff volunteered to make this address together, and now Boxuan will also participate. They will use National MRPC interpretive themes and CMP strategies as the talking point framework and the story maps as basis of the presentation. The theme of the conference is Navigating the North. The title of the keynote is "Follow the Great River Road to Find Minnesota's Sense of Place"
 - Budget: Travel money for speakers, booth and booth servers. Hand out materials are already printed. Mn GRR booth signage stored at MnDOT.
 - Commissioner requirements: At least one additional volunteer to serve in booth.
- Following last September's successful "Drive-the-Great-River-Road-Month" promotion, the MnMRPC agreed to use the same model again this year, but to start rolling it out earlier in August. The program used multiple news releases and social media highlighting events and venues along the whole state's Great River Road to involve many byway partners in the promotion. In designing the Bemidji talk, we think its main storymap provides the material for this year Drive promotion.
 - Budget – already anticipated in 2018 budget. Primarily staff time and material shipping.
 - Commissioner requirements: follow up with agency communications staff, local papers and ICs. Staff will request Governor's proclamation promoting the byway and Drive.
 - Partner requirements: Approve use of featured locations. Push release out via social media and internal channels.

- As a result of events during the 2017 legislative session, MnMRPC gathered an immense amount of background information and research material documenting our value and the results of our work.
- The fourth initial implementation task of the CMP is to launch an Ambassador Program at the grassroots level. To do this Anne Lewis and Sheronne Mulry created an outline for the program that rested primarily on creating a tool kit and an initial-phase orientation for Interpretive Centers and selected CVB partners. The recently developed organizational background material and the Bemidji presentation lend themselves to an Ambassador orientation program.

Proposal: To build upon these efforts we propose that the Sense of Place presentation be the basis for a MN-MRPC Partner Progress Report Invitational Event in conjunction with the November MnMRPC Quarterly Meeting with the following goals:

- Unveil the GIS and wayfinding accomplishments to all MnMRPC member and partner organizations – MnDOT, MnDNR, MNHS, MN-Dept. of Ag, Explore Minnesota Tourism, National Park Service, GRR Interpretive Centers, selected CVB execs, travel writers, all legislators along the Great River Road, and all Mississippi River mayors.
- Solicit potential Ambassadors for the Great River Road Ambassador Program.
- MN-MRPC Partner Progress Report – *working title*
 - Nov. 9 Qtly meeting expanded
 - Present portion of GIS talk: Minnesota’s Sense of Place
 - Update on Wayfinding signage progress
 - Orient potential ambassadors
 - Serve refreshments
 - Invitations and social media ARE the opportunity. Getting the news out on this event is as important as the event itself. Expands the opportunity to tell MnMRPC’s story
- Introduce Mississippi River mayors and legislators to the priorities of the CMP that can positively affect their towns and districts.
- Introduce shared opportunities to MnMRPC member agencies and National Park Service staff beyond those who attend meetings and provide direct support.
 - Budget: Materials available. Labor – in-house. Some additional travel. Food and beverages. Miscellaneous give aways.
 - *Commissioner requirements – follow up email invitations with personal invites. Attend and be available to talk about the CMP priorities and implementation needs.
 - Partner request: Expand the invitee list to others in your organization. Follow up invitations and encourage attendance. Attend event.

Post Event and Ongoing:

- At the three annual MRPC regional meetings, repeat the presentation through the full three-year cycle of meetings.
- Use the regional meetings to recruit and orient Great River Road Ambassadors at a local level.
- Host a training session in conjunction with the meeting and/or during IC annual site visits.

Wacouta sinks Wildwood Solar

By [Kit Murray](#) on May 18, 2017 at 3:00 p.m.

5



Residents listened while Wacouta Town Board members discussed the future of the Wildwood Lane Solar Garden. Kit Murray / Rivertowns Multimedia

WACOUTA — After much scrutiny, the Wildwood Community Solar Garden was denied a conditional-use permit by the Wacouta Town Board.

On Monday, May 15, the Wacouta Township Planning Commission recommended the Town Board deny a permit for a solar garden on Wildwood Lane between Highway 61, southeast of Red Wing. The board agreed in a 3-0 vote.

The project would entail installing 22,410 solar panels within a 43.1-acre wetland in Wacouta Township.

After over a year of the project being in the works, Wacouta Township residents were concerned with the consequences of the proposed solar garden. Howard Stenerson and Minnesota-based solar developer, GreenMark, argued that the work done at the site would provide a list of benefits, including improving the overall quality of the area as well as providing tax benefits to the township and the county.

Goodhue County Board first approved the request for a conditional-use permit from Stenerson on May 3, 2016. The township, however, also has jurisdiction.

With five conclusions total, the Town Board decided that the Wildwood Lane solar garden would not fit the intent of the township zoning ordinances. Rather than being an agriculture-related project, as stated by GreenMark, Town Board members determined it was not primarily intended to serve that community.

"The gist of it was, it didn't intend to put agriculture community first. The other one was the compatibility," Chairman John Schueller, said.

Residents stated during a variety of public hearings at the county and township levels that the solar garden would compromise the existing wildlife within the wetland area.

From here, Stenerson and GreenMark can look into alternative options by requesting a change in zoning. As far as Wacouta Town Board is concerned, last night's meeting was the end of discussion.

"We followed their recommendation. I don't know what their next step will be. As far as I'm concerned, the application has been turned down. There are some options for them, I would suppose," Schueller said.

GreenMark and Stenerson did not state at the meeting whether the Wildwood Solar Garden team will request any more changes.



Kit Murray

Kit Murray joined Red Wing Republican Eagle in August 2016, covering county government, news and local events. She is a graduate of Minnesota State University Moorhead with a degree in photojournalism.

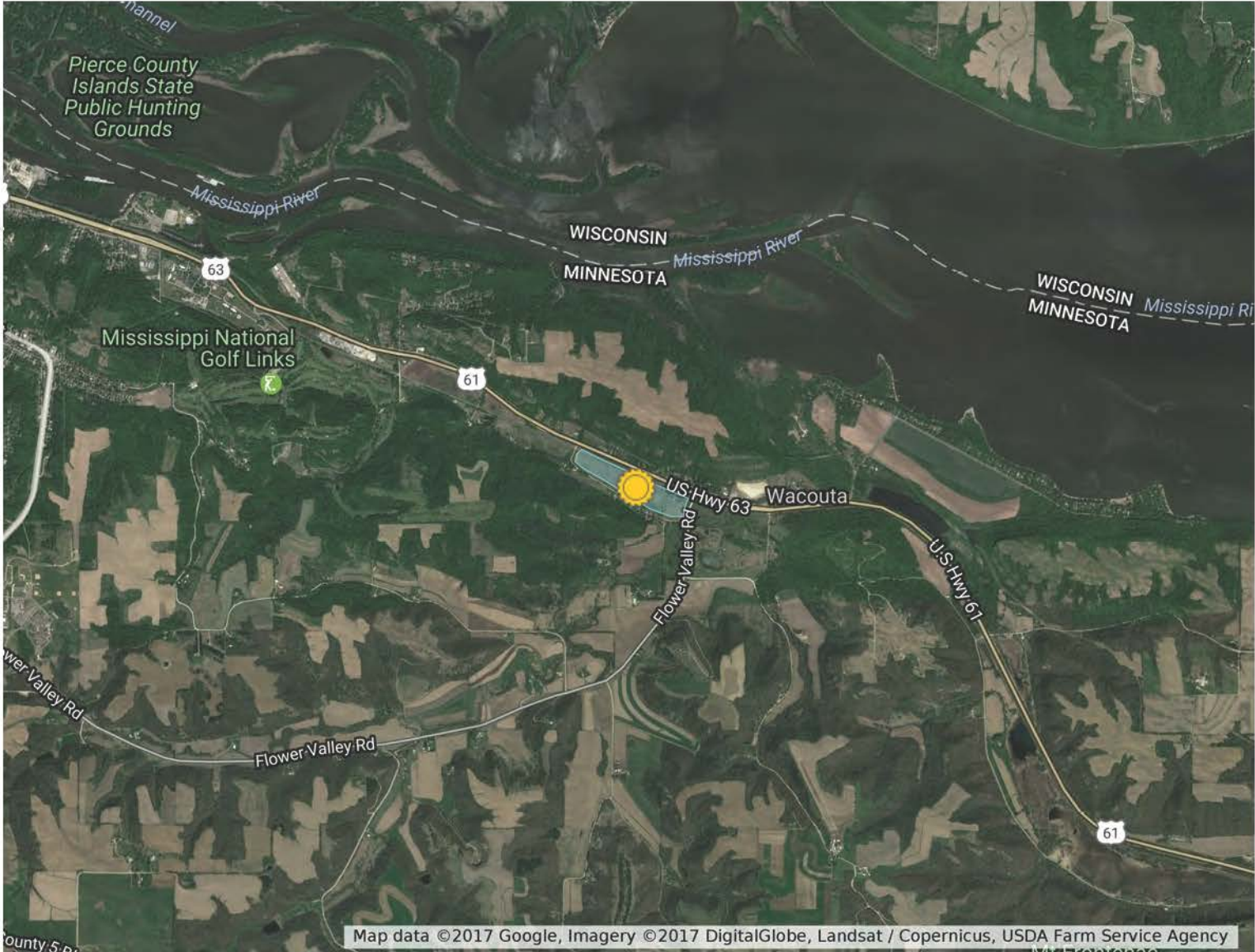
kmurray@rivertowns.net

(651) 301-7874

Site of proposed solar garden in Wacouta Township

Untitled layer

- Proposed solar garden
- Land for proposed solar garden



Map link taken from Red Wing Republican Eagle article (April 27, 2016)

Work of Art, Selfie Station Installed Along the Mississippi River



By Jim Maurice May 11, 2017 11:23 AM



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St. Cloud Mayor Dave Kleis via Twitter

ST. CLOUD – Now you can stop and take a picture at a brand new “selfie station” along the Mississippi River in downtown St. Cloud.

Mayor **Dave Kleis** says the artwork was installed Thursday morning along the new extension of the Beaver Island Trail.

He says he got the idea while on vacation.

“ Miami Beach is actually where I got the idea. I was sitting at a restaurant and I saw a sign that says “Miami Beach”, and everyone who walked on that sidewalk stopped and took a selfie.

Kleis first brought up the idea two years ago during his “State of the City” address.

It was installed Thursday so it would be ready for all the guests in town for the Minnesota Governor’s Fishing Opener. He says we have the world famous Mississippi River in our own backyard, so we need to show it off.

The cost for the work of art was factored in to the Beaver Island Trail extension project. It is made of steel and features historic pictures of St. Cloud.