



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**  
**January 24, 2018 • 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**State Office Building Room 500 South**

**DRAFT AGENDA**

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- Welcome & Review of Agenda
- Commission Membership
  - Regional Meetings/Elections
  - Agency & Legislative Appointments
- National MRPC
  - Updates
- MN-MRPC Budget
  - Review FY '18 Status and Discuss Priorities to Year End
- Plan Your Trip Interactive Mapping Tool
  - Status Report
  - Discuss Plans/Needs/Timeline for Launch
- Partnership Opportunities – Discuss Next Steps
  - Mississippi Multimedia Gallery (Hamline University)
  - Minneapolis Upper Lock Coalition
- Consider Plans for Possible Legislative Presentations
- Next Meeting Date
- Adjourn



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
Executive Committee – July 10, 2017  
State Office Building, St. Paul MN  
MINUTES**

**Members Present**

Anne Lewis – At Large Member  
Rep. Sheldon Johnson – Chair  
Andrea Kajer – Historical Society Appointee

**Members Absent**

Sen. David Senjem  
Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings

**Technical Advisors & Staff Present**

Carol Zoff – Transportation  
Diane Henry-Wangenstein – LCC  
Greg Hubinger - LCC  
Chris Miller – Staff

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The meeting was called to order at 1:05 by Chair Johnson, followed by introductions. A quorum was present.

**Commission Membership**

**DEED Invitation:** There was discussion regarding inviting participation of the Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED), especially due to expertise defining and measuring economic impact. It would be very beneficial to the Commission's work to have DEED as a partner, whether in voting capacity, technical advisor capacity or other type of working arrangement. Rep. Johnson offered to contact DEED to get the process started. Committee members advised contacting the agency's legislative liaison. Diane Henry-Wangenstein could also provide contacts. Carol Zoff and Anne Lewis will work with staff on a request letter that could be sent in advance of a call, along with talking points defining the needs.

**Regional Member Elections – Review Plans for 2017:** Regional meetings and elections are due for the Itasca to Grand Rapids; Grand Rapids to Brainerd; and Brainerd to Elk River Regions. Tentative plans are to hold the meetings in late November – early December due to other commitments for the Commission earlier in the fall. The Grand Rapids to Brainerd position is currently open and will be held open until the election takes place. A sample agenda from 2016 was provided for discussion and revision. It was suggested that the sense of place presentation being developed for the GIS/LIS Conference and Drive the Great River Road Month also be used as part of the regional meeting agendas. Committee members agreed. The agenda will be updated to reflect this and other changes as needed to best reflect current conditions and needs. Email notices will be sent to regional stakeholder lists announcing the meetings and inviting applications for the Regional Member positions. Committee members were asked to help get the word out if they know of potential candidates.

**Agency Appointments – Timeline and Process for Renewals:** MN-MRPC agency appointments have not been renewed since prior to the CMP process and should be addressed. A sample letter was included in the meeting packet. The letter would be sent to agency commissioners requesting renewal of their appointment to the Commission, or a new appointment if appropriate. Current appointees would be contacted regarding their interest in continuing, and that information would be included in the letter. Committee members reviewed the draft letter, recommended addition of a thank you statement in the opening, and recommended proceeding with the process.

**National MRPC Responsibilities**

**Dues Status:** 2017 dues have been paid in full, and an invoice for 2017 dues has been received from the National MRPC. Funds remaining after payment of all FY '17 expenses will be applied toward the 2018 dues invoice.

**Upcoming National Meetings – Plan for Attendance:** The 2017 MRPC Annual Meeting will be held in Marquette, Iowa, September 29 – 21. The agenda and registration information were referenced. Past practice has included the following criteria for attendees representing the MN-MRPC – out-of-state travel allowability; available budget; committee/board coverage; and first time attendance. Executive Committee members agreed that these considerations should continue. Staff will send out information to Commission members, requesting indications of interest in attending and will then provide a list to the Chair for consideration. The 2018 Semi-Annual Meeting location and dates are being finalized and will be shared as soon as available.

**Drive the Great River Road Month:** Anne Lewis described the MRPC's Drive the Great River Road Month promotion, held annually in September. A report on 2016 activities were included in the meeting packet and an overview of the 2017 plan for the Minnesota Great River Road was distributed for discussion. The theme for 2017 will be taken from the presentation being developed for the GIS/LIS Conference – "Drive the Great River Road to Find Minnesota's Sense of Place." A press release will be developed and distributed to partners and media, information will be posted on the MN GRR website and social media and member agencies will be asked to help with promotion and sharing of information. A proclamation of September as Drive the Great River Road Month will be requested from the Governor. Six communities/attractions along the Great River Road will be featured, one from each destination area. Draft information will be sent out to MN-MRPC members for review and then featured communities/attractions will be contacted prior to the launch of the promotion. GRR Interpretive Centers will receive additional supplies of 10-State GRR brochures as needed and as inventory allows.

**Interpretive Center Visits:** The MRPC asks each state to complete annual visits of all GRR Interpretive Centers. The MN-MRPC should begin a regular cycle of visits and Zoff and Miller recommended that these take place when the Plan Your Trip mapping tool is ready for launch (likely in early 2018), which would provide a focus for the visits and new tools for sites to use. That timing would also fit well as follow up to the regional meetings/elections that will take place in late 2017. Regional members are welcome and encouraged to visit Interpretive Centers in their regions in the meantime. Committee members recommended proceeding with this plan and timeline. MN-MRPC will also consider suggesting revisions to the MRPC Interpretive Center visit form.

### **MN GRR Corridor Management Plan Progress**

Carol Zoff reported on initial implementation project progress.

Wayshowing signage – the Great River Road and five other MN byways will be re-signed between this fall and next fall. Project letting is scheduled for July 28 and there will be some work accomplished yet in 2017. Committee members discussed and recommended dual language signage in tribal areas if possible. Andrea Kajer noted that dual language signage will be part of the new visitor center project at Historic Fort Snelling.

Plan Your Trip/Plan Your Project Interactive Maps – work continues on development of story maps for each destination area to be included in the Plan Your Trip tool. ADA accessibility is a goal and so straight line maps will be available in addition to the story map format. The Plan Your Trip tool will come a bit later in the process and will incorporate GIS locations of all new GRR signs that will be installed.

Ambassador Development – implementation will begin when interactive maps are ready to go.

### **MN-MRPC Budget – FY' 18 Funding and Priorities**

Chris Miller referenced the FY '18 operating budget allocation form in the meeting packet. Budget priorities and estimates for the year were discussed, including quarterly meetings, potential special meeting, Executive Committee meetings, MRPC dues, MRPC national meetings, basic website and phone costs, map shipping, regional meetings/elections, GIS/LIS conference presentation and exhibit, partner update event and administrative contract. Projects dependent on available funds include map redesign/printing and website updates. Committee members discussed the need for maps and that other funding sources or sponsorships would likely be needed. Maps/brochures are important tools for promotion of the Great River Road and information about local/regional things to see and do, to draw

visitors and place a focus on the Mississippi River. The Minnesota Bicycle Map was discussed as an example of format and cost. It was suggested that sponsorships be included on the August 31 MN-MRPC meeting agenda.

### **MN-MRPC/GRR Partner Update Event**

**Event Purpose:** Purpose is to raise awareness of the role of the MN-MRPC and importance of the Great River Road to Minnesota and to river communities. The sense of place presentation currently will be an important tool and information about the GRR and MN-MRPC utilized during the recent legislative session could be updated and utilized as well.

**Target Audience/Invitations:** Committee members discussed target audience and identified legislators and their staff, especially those representing Mississippi River districts. Other groups and partners can and should be invited as well, as appropriate. MN-MRPC members would be asked to participate in the event and also to invite others, especially from partner state agencies, to help build understanding of the GRR and MN-MRPC. Invitations should go out 30 days in advance with a reminder one week out. House and Senate floor announcements would also be helpful.

**Potential Date:** Early to mid-March was discussed as the best timeframe, early in the legislative session. Possible dates identified – March 6, 7, 13 or 14. Time frame would likely be 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. A room in the Capitol was suggested. Diane Henry-Wangenstein will provide links to room information for the committee to review, and availability will be checked for the identified dates. MN-MRPC members should be notified as soon as a date is confirmed.

**Tentative Details:** Several stations would be available for attendees rather than a formal presentation. Greeters would be needed and conversations between MN-MRPC members and attendees would be a priority to individualize the experience. Show and tell items are important – a draw is needed so people want to attend. Suggestions included a map of the Great River Road where people could mark their favorite view or place. MN GRR videos are available for use. MN-MRPC member agency work impacting the Mississippi River and Great River Road could be featured on posters. Working titles for the event were considered – “Great River Road/Mississippi River Day at the Capitol” was the general theme with detailed wording to be confirmed. Mississippi River needs to be woven into the title to increase recognition. Feedback on the event plan and discussion on member roles will be sought at August 31 MN-MRPC meeting.

### **Mississippi Multimedia Gallery – Next Steps**

Carol Zoff reported on a presentation of this project to MnDOT Commissioner Zelle recently, with discussion on potential future application to properties including rest stops. Anne Lewis proposed that the MN-MRPC actively pursue placement of the kiosks and lead the way for GRR Interpretive Center involvement. This is a good example of providing value and information to Interpretive Centers. The National MRPC will also be reviewing the project and possible applications. Committee members recommended that the MN-MRPC consider a letter defining a partnership between the MN-MRPC and Hamline University to include topics such as facilitating connections/communications with GRR Interpretive Centers, providing letters of support for funding applications, etc. A draft will be developed for consideration at the August 31 MN-MRPC meeting.

### **Next Meeting**

January 2018 date to be announced

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.





## Mississippi River Parkway Commission of Minnesota

300 33<sup>rd</sup> Avenue South, Suite 101 • Waite Park, Minnesota 56387

Phone: 651-341-4196 • E-Mail: [info@MnMississippiRiver.com](mailto:info@MnMississippiRiver.com)

*Members of the House:* Sheldon Johnson (DFL – 67B) – Chair *Members of the Senate:* David Senjem (R – 25); Patricia Torres Ray (DFL – 63) *State Agency Appointees:* Paul Hugunin – Agriculture, Scott Bradley – Transportation, Adam Johnson – Explore Minnesota Tourism, Keith Parker – Natural Resources, Andrea Kajer – Historical Society *Regional Appointees:* Nancy Salminen – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids, Open – Grand Rapids to Brainerd, Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River, Cordelia Pierson – Elk River to Hastings, Sheronne Mulry – Hastings to Iowa Border *Member at Large:* Anne Lewis

September 1, 2017

Mr. John Shepard  
Associate Professor, Assistant Director  
Center for Global Environmental Education  
Hamline University MS A1760  
1536 Hewitt Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55104

Re: Mississippi Multimedia Gallery - Proposed Partnership

Dear Mr. Shepard,

The Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission (MN-MRPC) learned much from the demonstration and overview of the Mississippi Multimedia Gallery provided recently. We believe the project is a good fit with the Minnesota Great River Road Corridor Management Plan and mission of the MN-MRPC which is to promote, preserve and enhance the resources of the Mississippi River Valley and to develop the highways and amenities of the Great River Road. The MN-MRPC is interested in serving as a collaborative partner as the Gallery Project continues and develops.

The MN-MRPC has expertise regarding the Great River Road Route and Network of Great River Road Interpretive Centers (12 locations in Minnesota and 70+ locations along the full length of the Mississippi River designated for their remarkable river stories), established connections to local river communities and experience with Great River Road travel promotion.

The MN-MRPC potentially could contribute to the Mississippi Multimedia Gallery Project by –

- facilitating connections/communications with Great River Road Interpretive Centers,
- providing letters of support and collaboration on funding applications,
- providing cultural and historical expertise regarding the Mississippi River and individual locations,
- providing endorsement of kiosks as education tools and historic and engagement assets,
- providing content to enrich the product as appropriate (such as six regional Minnesota Great River Road videos),
- marketing these as new traveler resources when installed, and
- encouraging the ten-state Mississippi River Parkway Commission to consider adoption of a similar arrangement.

If the partnership parameters I've outlined here hold promise for you, as they do for the Commission, I would invite you to contact Chris Miller at the Commission office (651-341-4196). We would proceed to discuss this in greater detail once we hear from you. We look forward to your response and to working with you to further the Mississippi Multimedia Gallery Project.

Sincerely,

Rep. Sheldon Johnson, Chair

## Section from MN-MRPC Meeting Minutes – 11/9/17

### The Falls Initiative – A Shared Vision for the Upper Lock

Vice Chair Pierson welcomed Kjersti Monson who provided an overview of The Falls Initiative, in partnership with Chris Goepfert and John Herman. The Upper St. Anthony Lock is undergoing a closure to navigation which opened opportunity for development of a community vision for the future of the lock. The National Park Service has now been managing the site as a visitor center and has seen a tenfold increase in visitors to the lock.

In June 2017, a coalition of 25 organizations held a kick-off meeting on the topic of repurposing the Upper St. Anthony Falls Lock. The following Coalition Statement was adopted to guide future discussions and work – “We support the St. Anthony Falls Upper Lock as the centerpiece of an iconic civic and cultural destination, reflective of our shared history, for the use and enjoyment of all.” The lock and dam is at the heart of the Minneapolis Central Riverfront experience. A second coalition meeting was held on November 2, with many constituent organizations participating and sharing information. Cordelia Pierson participated on behalf of the MN-MRPC/Great River Road.

The vision for redevelopment aligns with plans and initiatives of major stakeholder organizations in the area. Chris Goepfert of the National Parks Conservation Association provided a booklet, “Transforming the Lock – A Vision for a National Park Visitor Experience.” The publication is available online at <https://www.npca.org/resources/3217-transforming-the-lock>. The vision focuses on the National Park, the park experience, and design/access. An overview of diagrams was provided including the existing condition, vision of new Visitor Center, and possible programming. The center could host revolving exhibitions, be used for evening events, include restaurant/café/catering, provide options for winter use and direct access to the water. The development could also include seamless pedestrian connection to the Stone Arch Bridge. The center has potential to be a significant destination and state/regional/ten state tourism asset; and would likely increase visitation to the National Park.

The Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board and City of Minneapolis have taken action to support pursuit of state bonding funds for lock redevelopment. The project currently has funds to continue planning but is seeking funds for predesign and eventually construction. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is moving forward with a disposition study. Tours could be arranged if MN-MRPC members are interested.

Member discussion followed on topics including historic integrity, hydropower, tourism impact, ten state Great River Road interpretation and context, and the MRPC’s network of interpretive centers. The lock and dam is within the Great River Road corridor and the vision indicates significant river interpretation which aligns with the MN-MRPC mission to preserve, promote and enhance the scenic, historic and recreational resources of the Mississippi River, to foster economic growth in the corridor and to develop the national, scenic and historic byway known as the Great River Road.

Next steps for the MN-MRPC could include endorsement of the Coalition Statement and participation on the Coalition. Cordelia Pierson reported on her observations from the November 2 Coalition Meeting including the national connections provided by the Great River Road. She suggested consideration of a letter of support, and opened discussion on member interest in Coalition participation. Kjersti Monson will provide information to Chris Miller for sharing with the MN-MRPC as the process continues. Carol Zoff noted the Great River Road Corridor Management Plan and offered to meet with Coalition representatives to discuss alignment. MN-MRPC members thanked Kjersti, Chris and John for the presentation and look forward to hearing more.