



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
4th Quarter Meeting
November 17, 2022 • 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Historic Fort Snelling
200 Tower Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55111

DRAFT AGENDA

Informational Tour – Historic Fort Snelling Visitor Center & Grounds

- 2:00 p.m.** Tour will include a brief outdoor component (weather permitting), please dress accordingly. No Commission business or decision making will take place during the tour.
- 2:45 p.m.** Tour concludes/break prior to meeting start

4th Quarter Meeting Agenda

- 3:00 p.m. Welcome & Introductions** Senjem/All
- 3:10 p.m. Approve Today’s Agenda & Minutes from 8/11/22** Senjem/All
- 3:15 p.m. Commission Business**
- Budget Report See Meeting Packet
 - Regional Meetings/Elections Miller/LCC
 - 2023 Quarterly Meetings Miller/LCC
 - Election of At-Large Member Senjem/All
 - Member Updates See Meeting Packet
- 3:35 p.m. National MRPC**
- Annual Meeting, Memphis See Mtg Packet/Attendees
- 3:45 p.m. Drive the Great River Road Month 2022** Christina Iliev, MDA/All
- Report & Discussion
- 4:00 p.m. Letter Requests**
- Transportation Alternatives Projects – Letters of Support Zoff/Miller/All
 - Lower St. Anthony Falls/Lock & Dam #1 Scoping Letter See Meeting Packet/All
- 4:20 p.m. Other Business**
- Historic Fort Snelling Closing Comments
- 4:30 p.m. Wrap Up and Adjourn**



**Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
3rd Quarter Meeting – August 11, 2022
Zoom Virtual Meeting
MINUTES – Draft**

Commissioners Present

Sally Fineday – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Megan Christianson – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River
John Anfinson – Elk River to Hastings
Sen. David Senjem
Sen. Patricia Torres Ray
Rep. Kristin Robbins
Rep. Emma Greenman
David Kelliher – Historical Society Appointee
Grant Wilson – Natural Resources Appointee
Lisa Havelka – Tourism Appointee
Marni Karnowski – Transportation Appointee
Anne Lewis – At Large Member

Technical Advisors/Staff Present

Kelli Bruns – Natural Resources
Tim Wilcox – Transportation
Carol Zoff – Transportation
Diane Henry Wangensteen – LCC
Carol Bisbee - LCC
Chris Miller – MN-MRPC Staff

Members Absent

Paul Hugunin - Agriculture Appointee
David Kelliher - Historical Society Appointee
Marni Karnowski - Transportation Appointee
Jennifer Weaver - Hastings to Iowa Border
Tucker Blythe – National Park Service

Meeting was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chair Senjem. A quorum was present.

Approve Minutes from 6/2/22 Meeting: Motion by Karl Samp and seconded by Sally Fineday to approve the June 2, 2022 meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Informational Presentation – Land and Water Conservation Fund: Senator Senjem welcomed Audrey Mularie, PAT Grant Coordinator from the Department of Natural Resources. An overview of the Land and Water Conservation Fund in Minnesota was provided. There are two types of grants available; 1) National Outdoor Recreational Legacy Partnership Program (ORLP) – grant application information is now available. This program is for cities with a population of 30,000+, or other entities abutting a city of 30,000+. Full details are available at - https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/national_outdoor_rec.html; and 2) Local Parks and Trails Grant Program – application details will be available in early December. Information is available at - https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/grants/recreation/outdoor_rec.html. Commission discussion followed. A suggestion was made to send information on these grants, especially the Local Parks and Trails Program, to MN GRR partners and stakeholders. Regional members could also share with partners in their regions. MnDOT noted that these funding sources could be mentioned during their project meetings with local partners.

Budget Report: The budget reports in the meeting packet were referenced followed by discussion and consensus approval.

Regional Meetings/Elections: Chris Miller reported that since regional commissioner terms remain at two years, regional meetings and elections will be due for the Elk River to Hastings and Hastings to Iowa Border regions before the end of 2022. There was discussion about in person or virtual meetings, with benefits noted to both approaches.

National MRPC Annual Meeting and Updates: Anne Lewis provided an overview of the agenda and plans for the Annual Meeting, Sept. 7 – 9 in Memphis. The MN-MRPC will have four members attending. There will be a “State Dialogue Day” with each state assigned either a topic to present on, or to seek feedback on, followed by discussion and sharing to build the capacity of all state commissions. Technical committees will meet and will consider priorities and common projects. The National Caucus of Environmental Legislators will have a presence at the meeting as well. More details about the meeting agenda are available at <https://www.mrpcmembers.com/>.

MRPC Culture & Heritage Committee: John Anfinson reported that Culture & Heritage Committee topics will be focus areas at the Annual Meeting.

MRPC Transportation Committee: Tim Wilcox reported that the committee is discussing United States Bicycle Route designation for the MRT in all ten states (MN already holds this designation); maintaining updated GIS files for the GRR route; online mapping of traveler resources; and supporting the Environment, Recreation and Agriculture Committee's efforts on pollinator habitat. Tim also announced that he will be leaving MnDOT to become a full-time firefighter. Sen. Senjem and commission members thanked Tim for his work with the MN-MRPC and wished him well in this new position.

Drive the Great River Road Month 2022: Mallory Forseth from the MN Department of Agriculture provided an update on plans for Drive the Great River Road Month, referenced the materials in the meeting packet and requested Commission member involvement. Members were asked to share the Facebook post announcing the Drive the Great River Road Month Kits available to the first 250 people who sign up on the special web form. Thanks were noted to all partners that provided the great items for the kits. There has been a lot of interest and 189 orders have already been received.

- Great River Road/Mississippi River trivia questions are needed.
- Prizes for the social media photo contest (#MNGRR) are needed. The prizes should be a little more than items in the travel planning kits but also not too expensive. Suggestions include things like a book, shirt, gift card or small collectible of some sort.
- MN-MRPC members are asked to watch the Minnesota Grown Facebook page for Great River Road Month posts, share and add information on their own regions, districts or agencies.
- An overview of Fall Harvest on the Great River Road and themed itineraries will be available at <https://minnesotagrown.com/great-river-road/>.
- A press event will be held at the Minnesota State Fair on August 30 at 10:00 a.m. A PR firm will be covering the press event, promoting stories and tracking media coverage.
- A news release will be going out to media and Great River Road partners and will also be shared with MN-MRPC members. Members were asked to help spread the word about the Fall Harvest/Drive the Great River Road Month campaign.

Commission Members Updates/Other Business:

- Karl Samp reported that the Brainerd Mississippi Trailhead Park is now under construction, including the amphitheater.
- John Anfinson reported that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will be kicking off a disposition study in September. The Corps will be seeking comments for their "scoping" of the disposition study and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock & Dam and Lock & Dam No. 1. During the scoping phase, the Corps asks the public to weigh in on all they think the Corps should address in the study and EIS
- Sally Fineday shared information on the video link that was provided to members with the meeting materials and encouraged members to watch it and discuss with others. The video on river conservation was done in 2021 when river levels were extremely low.
- Marni Karnowski announced transitions at MnDOT. She is in a new position as an Assistant Division Director for up to a year or longer. The Office of Environmental Stewardship position she left has not been filled yet, and Marni will continue on in her MN-MRPC role until a new appointment is made. She noted her appreciation for fellow Commission members and has enjoyed her time with the group. Chair Senjem and members thanked Marni for her service and look forward to continuing to work with her and others.
- Carol Zoff noted thanks to Marni Karnowski and Tim Wilcox and provided updates from MnDOT. A vendor that produced replacement interpretive panels for two locations along the Great River Road developed a case study that provides information about the Great River Road along with showing their panel product. The piece will be emailed out to members with the follow up from today's meeting. Boxuan Xia, a past student worker in the SEEDS program at MnDOT, is now studying for a master's degree, has used the MN Great River Road for a project and will be providing information on the results.
- Diane Henry-Wangenstein reported on MN-MRPC staffing. A new two-year agreement for services will soon be finalized with The Odyssey Group and Chris Miller will continue as the service provider.

Next Meeting: November 17, 2022, from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment: There being no further business, meeting was adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

MN-MRPC FY23 Activity Budget

11-8-22

<u>Activity/Item</u>	<u>Original Allocation for FY 23</u>	<u>Carry Fwd from FY 22</u>	<u>Total FY 23 Budget</u>	<u>Spent 11/7/22</u>	<u>Remaining</u>
Quarterly Meetings	\$4,000.00		\$4,000.00		\$3,786.11
Commission Members - other meetings travel & per diem	\$1,000.00		\$1,000.00	\$213.89	\$1,000.00
MRPC Dues	\$15,000.00		\$15,000.00		\$15,000.00
National Meetings	\$10,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$5,514.31	\$6,485.69
Communications including website hosting, phone, Zoom, Constant Contact, etc.	\$1,400.00		\$1,400.00	\$280.42	\$1,119.58
Website General Updates	\$1,200.00		\$1,200.00	\$217.50	\$982.50
Shipping (including 10-state maps to 14 locations, MN GRR Maps 1-1-23 to 6-30-23)	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$65.68	\$2,934.32
General Material Printing & Supplies	\$500.00	\$323.88	\$823.88		\$823.88
Admin Contract	\$38,400.00		\$38,400.00	\$7,600.00	\$30,800.00
Professional-Technical Service including additional staff hours, web services, graphic design services, etc.	\$5,500.00	\$1,500.00	\$7,000.00		\$7,000.00
Ambassador Program*		\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00		\$5,000.00
Access-Welcoming Environment*		\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
GRR Info/Promotion*		\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00		\$3,000.00
Total Operating Budget	\$78,000.00	\$16,823.88	\$94,823.88	\$13,891.80	\$80,932.08
Notes:					
Carry forward = remaining funds from FY 22, the first year of the biennium					
Remainder of map storage/shipping agreement (ends 12-31-22) will be covered by LCC carry forward funds					
New map storage and shipping agreement likely to be needed					
* Carry forward funds tentatively placed in recent Commission priority areas					



MN-MRPC Member At-Large Report – Anne Lewis
Nov. 17, 2022 Quarterly Meeting

- MN MRPC Drive Month Kick-Off: Worked on task force with MN Dept. Of Agriculture and our MN-MRPC representatives. The ideas were amazing. The execution was even more amazing. The energy worked and came out throughout the campaign. A report is in today's meeting agenda.
- Represented MRPC at the State Fair Kick-Off for the Drive Month Campaign. Was impressed with the participation of so many of our state partners. Leaders from Transportation, Tourism, DNR, MNHS and Agriculture were on hand and participated in a good-natured contest, "Fun Facts about the Great River Road and Mississippi River". I don't remember who won, but I think John Anfinson was disqualified and David Kelliher may have walked away with the prize.



- Proud to attend MRPC National Meeting in Memphis and be both an executive officer, but also a member of the esteemed Minnesota delegation. Leading up to the Memphis meeting, I worked with MRPC staff and the staff of the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators' Mississippi River Caucus to co-locate our respective meetings and was able to award the caucus with the MRPC's Stewardship Award. The goal of networking more with NCEL fits our CMP and that of the 10-state organization and was first suggested by Minnesota's Chair Sen. Senjem.
- Led an American Queen Mississippi River Extension bus tour to the Headwaters Sept. 26. Two interesting things about this trip: This became an orientation for the whole river since it was at the beginning of the cruise. The tour boat on Lake Itasca failed to show up. I was able to suggest the group go to Bemidji where they were entranced with Babe and the Blue Ox , which I plugged as one of America's top-ten selfie locations. We were treated to a brief tour of the Watermark Art Gallery right across the street. Neither the driver, nor the tour director were aware of Bemidji and both commented positively on the selection, which took no time off the trip and added to the experience of the River.

Brainerd to Elk River Report – Karl Samp

Photos of the Brainerd Riverfront Trailhead Park project that is well underway. The first picture is the stage and looking up at the amphitheater seating and overlook. The project will be completed and park open next summer. The planning was made possible by a Brainerd Lakes Area Community Foundation Grant and construction funded by State Legacy Funds.





Member Update to MN Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Member: Carol Zoff

Quarter: 4th Quarter 2022 Meeting – 11/17/22

MRPC – Ten-State

Ten-state Corridor Management Plan Implementation Support

MRPC Environment, Recreation & Agriculture Committee Meeting

November 3, 2022

Carol Zoff was in attendance, along with John Anfinson and Anne Lewis from Minnesota.

Committee Chair Sabrina Chandler confirmed the focus on Environment (native pollinators), Recreation (Pollinator week bike ride), and Agriculture (agritourism).

Future ERA To Dos:

1. Environment: The ten state MRPC will likely be asking state MRPCs to ask GRR communities to pass resolutions supporting efforts to establish native pollinator habitat in the corridor. To help National Office John shared this link:
https://us02st1.zoom.us/web_client/9zdhk1t/html/externalLinkPage.html?ref=https://mn.gov/governor/assets/06.21.21%252520Pollinator%252520Week_tcm1055-484338.pdf to consider for the community resolutions. No draft yet, but folks asked for one to be provided prior to the official ask.
2. Recreation: No ride for this year.
3. Agriculture: Committee was asked for success stories. I shared the Drive the Great River Road Month/Minnesota Grown story so there may be follow up questions. It appears National Office is going to continue to build the MRPC agritourism database. Information was shared on how Minnesota Grown locations are built into the MN GRR Plan Your Trip interactive map.

SUCCESSFUL ANNUAL MEETING

The 2022 MRPC Annual Meeting last month in Memphis, Tennessee was full of excitement. Here are some of the highlights:

- This was our first in-person meeting since 2019 and the first meeting since we were recognized as an All-American Road.
- We welcomed 20 new commissioners/first-time attendees.
- The board of directors participated in a full-day strategic planning session that will help shape the commission's next three years.
- We updated the MRPC mission statement as follows: "Promote, enhance and preserve the Great River Road and the Mississippi River."
- Minnesota Sen. Dave Senjem received the 2022 MRPC Distinguished Service Award.
- Anne Lewis was recognized for her two years of leadership as the Pilot. She now moves into the Pilot Emeritus role, and we thank past pilot Terri McCullough for her service.
- A new executive committee was elected at the Annual Meeting:
 - Norma Pruitt (KY) – Pilot
 - John Anfinson (MN) – Pilot Pro Tem
 - Holly Cain (IL) – Secretary
 - Derick Biglane (MN) – Treasurer



- The Annual Meeting was held in collaboration with the National Caucus of Environmental Legislators, and we awarded the organization with the 2022 MRPC Stewardship Award.
- We enjoyed some good Tennessee hospitality, including a Memphis Redbirds baseball game, the famous duck march (and duck cookies) at the Peabody Hotel, amazing views of the city from the rooftop during our evening banquet, and so much more. A special thank you to Mike McClanahan for his work and contributions to make this happen, along with the other Tennessee attendees, Missy Marshall and Edmond McDavis.



- Each state shared information on successes as well as struggles, which led to a robust dialog of support, questions and interest. Thank you to each of the states for your time and willingness to share.
- We identified project areas to focus our future attention, including byway funding, taking our All-American Road designation to the next level, ROI, outreach, electric charging stations, pollinators, the Mississippi River Trail, and Interpretive Centers. We will look to continue these discussions in committees and at the board level.
- Find pictures from our photo booth at the Pilot's Banquet and other photos from the meeting



here: <https://mrpcmembers.com/meeting/annual-meeting/>

Email susanne@pilchbarnet.com should you have questions or if you want to share your photos from the Annual meeting. We're also looking for beautiful fall foliage photos from all 10 states along the Great River Road. Be sure to identify the location of the photos too.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

2022 COMMITTEE AND BOARD MEETINGS

Collaborative

- Oct. 31 – 2-3PM

Environment, Recreation and Agriculture – First Thursdays quarterly at 10am Central

- Nov. 3

Marketing – Quarterly Second Thursday of the month at 9am Central

- Nov. 10

Culture & Heritage – Third Tuesday every other month at 10am Central

- Nov. 15 (Pending)

Board of Directors – Quarterly second Friday of the month at 9am Central

- Dec. 9



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission

56 33rd Avenue South, #283 • St. Cloud, Minnesota 56301

651-341-4196 • info@MnMississippiRiver.com

Members of the House: Emma Greenman (D-63B); Kristin Robbins (R-34A) **Members of the Senate:** David Senjem (R-25); Patricia Torres Ray (DFL-63) **State Agency Appointees:** Paul Hugunin – Agriculture, Marni Karnowski – Transportation, Lisa Havelka – Explore Minnesota Tourism, Grant Wilson – Natural Resources, David Kelliher – Historical Society **Regional Appointees:** Sally Fineday – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids, Megan Christianson – Grand Rapids to Brainerd, Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River, John Anfinson – Elk River to Hastings, Jennifer Weaver – Hastings to Iowa Border **Member at Large:** Anne Lewis

Date

Col. Eric Swenson, District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers St. Paul District
ATTN: Regional Planning and Environment Division North
180 Fifth Street East, Suite 700
St. Paul, Minnesota 55101-1678

Dear Colonel Swenson,

This letter is provided to share information about the Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission's (Commission) mission and how that mission relates to the potential opportunities and impacts coming from the Lower Saint Anthony Falls Lock and Dam and Lock and Dam No. 1 Disposition Study.

As established under Minnesota Statute 161.1419, the Commission's mission 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, which, in February 2021, received All-American Road status. The Commission promotes, supports, and advances actions, responsibilities, procedures, controls, operational practices, and strategies to maintain the intrinsic archaeological, cultural, natural, historic, recreational, and scenic qualities that support National Scenic Byway Designation. The Commission's interest in the Disposition Study relates to these intrinsic qualities.

The Great River Road/All-American Road runs adjacent to the Mississippi River from St. Anthony Falls to the Minnesota River confluence at Fort Snelling. At St. Anthony Falls, the Mill City Museum is a designated Great River Road Interpretive Center as is Fort Snelling, which is a National Historic Landmark. The St. Anthony Falls Historic District features the Pillsbury A and Washburn A Mills, both of which are National Historic Landmarks, and the James J. Hill Stone Arch Bridge, a National Engineering Landmark. Given their connection to the history of Mississippi River navigation, the Lower St. Anthony Falls Lock and Dam and Lock and Dam No. 1 have been determined eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. With all the planning and projects already built to turn the St. Anthony Falls riverfront into a world-class visitor destination, the opportunities to inform and educate visitor about the Great River Road are immense.

The Commission encourages your consideration of comments submitted or being submitted by our member agencies (noted above) during the Scoping Phase as to all the matters and issues that the Corps should address in your study, including in the National Environmental Policy Act report. The more comprehensive and complete the Corps' studies are, the better the public, other agencies and the Commission will be able to understand and weigh in on the future of the Mississippi River in the heart of the Twin Cities. We also ask that you consider how your studies, recommendations and decisions may affect the Great River Road's intrinsic qualities.

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact the Commission office at 651-341-4196. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Senator David Senjem, Chair