



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
3rd Quarter Meeting
August 15, 2024 • 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.
Virtual via Zoom

DRAFT AGENDA

2:00 p.m.	Welcome & Introductions	Housley/All
2:10 p.m.	Approve Today's Agenda & Minutes from 5/30/24	Housley/All
2:15 p.m.	Informational Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Region 5 & 7E Long-Range Transportation Plans	Tad Erickson/Austin Hauf
2:30 p.m.	Commission Business <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Budget – FY 24 Report, FY 25 Allocations- MN-MRPC Classification in Transportation Funding Statute- Interpretive Center Ambassador Outreach	Packet/Miller LCC Ambassador Team
2:45 p.m.	National Great River Road <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Review of Committee Voting Process- Communications & Marketing- Culture & Heritage- Environment, Recreation & Agriculture- Transportation	Miller/All Miller Anfinson Karnowski MacDonagh
3:00 p.m.	2024 MRPC Annual Meeting, Winona <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Overview- Requests for Assistance/Participation- Panel Details	Planning Team/All
3:30 p.m.	Drive the Great River Road Month <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Overview- Requests for Assistance/Participation	Wilson/Planning Team/All
4:00 p.m.	Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">- MN GRR Program Record Archive Project- Northland Reliability Transmission Line Project	MacDonagh/Zoff Miller
4:10 p.m.	Commission Member Updates	All
4:25 p.m.	Other Business	
4:30 p.m.	Wrap Up and Adjourn	



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
2nd Quarter Meeting – May 30, 2024
State Capitol Room 123/Zoom Hybrid
MINUTES – Draft

Commissioners Present

Sally Fineday – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Karl Samp – Brainerd to Elk River
John Anfinson – Elk River to Hastings
Kate Carlson – Hastings to Iowa Border
Sen. John Hoffman
Paul Hugunin – Agriculture Appointee
Lisa Havelka – Explore Minnesota Appointee
David Kelliher – Historical Society Appointee
Grant Wilson – Natural Resources Appointee
Marni Karnowski – Transportation Appointee
Anne Lewis – At-Large Member

Diane Henry-Wangenstein – LCC
Megan Voelke - LCC
Chris Miller – MN-MRPC Staff

Members Absent

Sen. Karin Housley
Rep. Sydney Jordan
Rep. Leigh Finke
Megan Christianson – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Peter MacDonagh - Transportation
Tucker Blythe – National Park Service

Technical Advisors/Staff Present

Kelli Bruns – Natural Resources
Carol Zoff – Transportation

Partner/Guest Present

Lauren Peck – Natural Resources

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 p.m. by Vice Chair John Anfinson. A quorum was present.

Approve Agenda and Minutes from 2/9/24 Meeting: Motion by Senator Hoffman and seconded by Karl Samp to approve the draft agenda and meeting minutes as presented. Motion carried.

Budget Report: The year-to-date budget report in the meeting packet was reviewed and discussed. It was noted that \$2,500 in funds from the National Meetings category have been designated for the MRPC Annual Meeting, to cover facility rental fees at the Minnesota Marine Art Museum and Winona County History Center. Treasurer Anne Lewis recommended approval of the budget report. Motion by Karl Samp and seconded by John Anfinson to approve the budget report as presented. Motion carried.

Archiving/Historical Records Process: Carol Zoff reported on the process to review and archive historical records related to the Great River Road, which have been in storage at MnDOT. Thanks were noted to all who have been involved. A meeting was held recently to go through the materials including records, art, and foundational reports. Minnesota Historical Society archivists are guiding a process to determine long term storage and access for partners and the public.

MN-MRPC Classification in Transportation Funding Statute: Marni Karnowski explained current statute definitions related to transportation funds and the MN-MRPC. 2023 Minnesota Statute 161.045 includes the MN-MRPC on a list of organizations that do not fulfill a transportation purpose, and this could impact the technical resources and staff time that MnDOT is able to provide the MN-MRPC. Statute 161.142 defines the Department of Transportation's responsibility related to the Great River Road itself. The MN-MRPC was created under Statute 161.1419 which specifically references the Great River Road. The Minnesota Great River Road Corridor Management Plan addressed past statute language stating that the MN-MRPC does not serve a transportation purpose, and recommended removal of the MN-MRPC from that list due to the Commission's definition statute and mission focused on the Great River Road. Members discussed the statutes, LCC provided history on past efforts to revise statute language and noted that they will be putting forward a housekeeping bill in the 2025 session that could potentially include MN-MRPC language. It was also recommended that the MN-MRPC seek counsel advice on moving forward, to be coordinated through LCC.

Motion by David Kelliher and seconded by Sally Fineday requesting that the MN-MRPC work with LCC and the Department of Transportation including government relations and general counsel, to seek housekeeping legislation to remove the MN-MRPC from the list of organizations not fulfilling a transportation purpose. Motion carried. Vice Chair Anfinson asked LCC to coordinate with the Executive Committee as needed and bring the topic back to one of the remaining 2024 MN-MRPC meetings.

Sally Fineday mentioned her seat on the Region Five Economic Development Commission and a ten-year highway/roadway plan under development. She recommended that scenic byways be recognized in this planning. Following discussion, motion by Anne Lewis and seconded by Sally Fineday to make contact with the ten-year planning organization to call their attention to byways including the Great River Road, requesting that they be considered in the planning process. Motion carried.

National MRPC 2024 Annual Meeting – September 18 – 20 in Winona: The Planning Team provided an overview of current plans and the draft agenda. All members were encouraged to attend the Annual Meeting in Winona. The lodging block is open and meeting registration will open soon. Details are available at <https://mrpcmembers.com/meeting/2024-national-mrpc-annual-meeting/>. The planning team will continue to reach out with requests for assistance and participation. Members discussed the draft agenda and provided feedback.

- Recommended including welcome from and history of Sioux nations in the area.
- A welcome from the MN-MRPC will be needed at the welcome reception – the home state hosts the reception.
- Include all five MN-MRPC member agencies on effective partnering panel, limit time of each speaker, use prepared questions and assign a facilitator to keep things moving. Karl Samp volunteered to facilitate.
- Consider discussion of a possible Mississippi River Compact at Annual Meeting and/or a future MN-MRPC meeting.
- Requested photo and bio from Department of Natural Resources Commissioner Strommen, who will be the keynote speaker.
- New member orientation was discussed and more outreach to new or sporadic attendees was recommended. Nametags could identify new attendees and long-time attendees to help match people up, place someone from the host state at each banquet table, MN-MRPC members could help staff the registration table and provide additional conversation.
- Discussed welcome bags and asking MN-MRPC members for items to include.
- Need to more clearly weave transportation and byways into session descriptions.

National MRPC Board Update: A recent newsletter from the National MRPC was included in the meeting packet and was referenced. The newsletter included updates on current MRPC topics and committee priorities.

MRPC Communications and Marketing Committee: Chris Miller reported on the Summer Fun on the Great River Road campaign and online events listing available through the National MRPC. The newsletter in the packet includes marketing data from the most recent quarter.

MRPC Culture and Heritage Committee: John Anfinson reported that after recent work on a model Interpretive Center nomination and updates to the Interpretive Center checklists, the committee will be discussing new initiatives to pursue.

MRPC Environment, Recreation and Agriculture Committee: Marni Karnowski reported that the next meeting is coming up in June.

MRPC Transportation Committee: The latest meeting was postponed and there will be a report at the next MN-MRPC meeting.

Drive the Great River Road Month 2024 (September): Grant Wilson introduced Lauren Peck, MN Department of Natural Resources Central Regional Information Officer, who shared the proposed plan for the 2024 Drive the Great River Road Month Campaign being led by the DNR. The overall theme is "GO with the Flow on the Great River Road" (GO – Get Outdoors). Lauren reviewed goals, proposed communication channels/tools, a possible kick-off event, and next steps/items for discussion.

Goals for the campaign –

- Promote traveling the Great River Road and engage with the amazing variety of outdoor recreation opportunities along the Mississippi and Great River Road in Minnesota.
- Promote the variety of ways to recreate and different modes of accessibility – travelers can engage with recreation in the manner and at the pace that works for them.
- Include easy and less expensive ways to get outdoors.
- Build partnerships between the commission members.

Commission members thanked DNR partners and offered comments –

- Consider purchasing a "Cameo" endorsement from someone like Jessie Diggins

- Like the theme and inclusion of less expensive and variety of accessible options
- Consider the different regions of the river
- Add a “come back in winter” section with examples
- Free parks day would be a nice connection but dates are already set for 2024
- Explore Minnesota has an outdoor recreation newsletter and industry partner newsletter that could help get the word out in August-September. Lisa offered to serve on the subcommittee and noted that Explore Minnesota has website content that might be helpful.

A Zoom meeting will be scheduled soon for the DNR workgroup and MN-MRPC members that volunteered to assist with this.

Northland Reliability Project Update: The Environmental Impact Statement for this project is expected in June, with a public comment period in July. Information will be forwarded to Commission members when available.

Commission Member Updates:

- David Kelliher shared a copy of the “Making Minnesota” kids activity book currently available from the Minnesota Historical Society. Copies are free thanks to Legacy funding. Members recommended providing the activity books at the MRPC Annual Meeting.
- Senator Hoffman noted the great accessibility initiatives being implemented by the DNR and David Kelliher suggested this could be a theme for Drive the Great River Road Month 2025.
- Karl Samp announced events coming up, promoted through the Mississippi Headwaters Board, including Paddle Your Glass Off in Aitkin. He also noted the beautiful riverfront amphitheater in Brainerd.
- Lisa Havelka called out Winona in the news as celebrations took place on the first trip of the new Borealis train. Kate Carlson noted that Visit Winona has been receiving frequent calls from people interested in a Borealis day trip.
- Grant Wilson reported that the Upper Mississippi River Basin Association Board will be meeting in St. Paul on August 6 – open to the public. Chris will provide Great River Road items to share at the meeting.
- Sally Fineday raised a question about invasive carp deterrence and John Anfinson described Legacy funding for a bioacoustics barrier at Lock & Dam #5. Grant Wilson mentioned a new invasive carp plan and offered an update for the MN-MRPC at a future meeting.

Next Meeting: August 15, 2024; 2:00 – 4:30 p.m.

Adjournment: There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

MN-MRPC FY 24 Activity Budget - Status as of 7/19/24

<u>Activity/Item</u>	<u>FY 24 Allocation</u>	<u>Spent 7/17/24</u>	<u>Pending</u>	<u>Remaining</u>	<u>% Spent</u>
Quarterly Meetings	\$5,500.00	\$2,284.24		\$3,215.76	42%
Other meetings including travel & per diem	\$1,500.00	\$1,315.99		\$184.01	88%
Dues & Memberships (MRPC - \$15,000; NSB Foundation \$150)	\$15,150.00	\$15,150.00		\$0.00	100%
National Meetings	\$10,000.00	\$5,162.94		\$4,837.06	52%
Communications including website hosting, phone, Zoom, Constant Contact, etc.	\$1,300.00	\$1,319.56	\$69.74	-\$89.30	107%
Website Regular Maintenance Updates & New Arts Page	\$2,400.00	\$1,550.00		\$850.00	61%
Shipping (incl. Ambassador kits and maps)	\$1,000.00	\$1,044.41		-\$44.41	104%
General Material Printing & Supplies	\$750.00	\$143.87		\$606.13	19%
Admin Contract	\$38,400.00	\$35,200.00	\$3,200.00	\$0.00	100%
Professional-Technical Services - including additional staff hours, web services, graphic design services, etc.	\$2,000.00	\$3,900.00		-\$1,900.00	195%
Total Operating Budget	\$78,000.00	\$67,071.01	\$3,269.74	\$7,659.25	90%
Notes:					
Approx. \$4,200 should remain in the National Meetings line item, which could be utilized for other commission activities.					
\$2,500 of the \$4,200 from National Meetings line designated for 2024 MRPC Annual Meeting Sponsorship - facility rental fees					
Limited supply of maps (3,000) remains on hand for individual mailings, meetings and partner distribution. No plan for a new print run at this time but something to consider					

Allotment of FY25 Funds

Legal Citations: ML 2023, Ch 62, Art 1, Sec 2, Subd 4 (approp to LCC). MS 16A.281 (CFD). Expires 6/30/25 and then rolls to LCC CFD. General Funds/1000 Fund.

FY: **COMMISSION NAME:**

budget allocation

2025	Mississippi River Parkway Commission Operations (MRPC)	78,000.00	notes
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Object Code **Description**

41000 Full-time
 41030 Part-time, Seasonal, Labor Services
 41070 Other Benefits
 41100 Space Rental, Maintenance, and Utilities - Non-State Owned Space
 41110 Printing & Advertising
 41130 Professional and Technical Services - Outside Vendor
 41145 IT Professional and Technology - Outside Vendor Services
 41150 Computer and Systems Services
 41155 Communications
 41160 Travel & Subsistence - Instate
 41170 Travel & Subsistence - Outstate
 41180 Employee Development
 41190 Agency Provided Prof/Tech Service
 41300 Supplies
 41500 Repairs to Equipment and Furniture
 42010 Statewide Indirect Costs
 43000 Other Operating Costs
 47060 Equipment

3,500.00	Member per diems
2,500.00	Annual Mtg Sponsorship - facility rental fees
500.00	
38,800.00	
2,000.00	
1,700.00	
11,000.00	incl MRPC Annual Meeting - Winona
2,500.00	Registration fees incl Annual Meeting
350.00	
15,150.00	National MRPC Dues, NSBF Dues
78,000.00	

TOTAL*

**Total must be equal to:*

78,000.00

Need to yet allot:

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<https://mrpcmembers.com/meeting/2024-national-mrpc-annual-meeting/>

2024 NATIONAL MRPC ANNUAL MEETING

September 18 – 20, 2024

Winona, MN

[Register Now](#)

Join commissioners, members, interpretive centers, and partners from the 10-state Great River Road region September 18-20, 2024, in Winona, Minnesota, for the 2024 MRPC Annual Meeting – **Arts, Outdoor Recreation and the Mississippi River: Bringing it Together on the Great River Road National Scenic Byway & All-American Road.**

This meeting will engage attendees on topics related to economic development and tourism along the Great River Road. We'll learn from each other as we see and hear examples from Winona and throughout Minnesota. Find engaging sessions with ideas to take home and time to network and collaborate across the four technical committees. Together, we'll celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge and the best of what has been accomplished across the Great River Road states.

Hotel Reservations Are Open

Riverport Inn & Suites

riverportinn.com – Use code “MRPC24”

(507) 452-0606 – Refer to MRPC Annual Meeting block

King Rooms are \$139

Double Queen Rooms are \$149

**Room block ends on August 18.*

Travel Suggestions to Winona:

- Fly into Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport and rent a car (approximately 2 hour drive along the Great River Road) or use [GROOME Transportation](#)
- Fly into LaCrosse, WI Regional Airport serviced by American Airlines through Chicago O'Hare and rent a car (approximately 30 minute drive along the Great River Road) or use [GROOME Transportation](#)
- Fly into Rochester, MN Airport and rent a car (approximately one hour drive) or use [GROOME Transportation](#)
- Amtrack services Winona from Chicago's Union Station (approximately 5.5 hours)
- Drive the Great River Road

Agenda (Working):

Wednesday, September 18

- 2:30 – 4:30pm: MRPC Board of Directors Meeting



- 5:30 – 8:00pm: Opening Night Welcome Reception at [Minnesota Marine Art Museum](#) (800 Riverview Drive, Winona) – Heavy hors d'oeuvres and education at galleries and pollinator garden

Thursday, September 19

- 7:30am: New Member Orientation
- 8:00am – 4:30pm: Plenary and Working Sessions, Lunch and Technical Committee Sessions
- 5:30 – 9:00pm: Educational Field Session, Banquet and Awards at [Winona County Historical Society](#)

Friday, September 20

- 7:00am: Breakfast and State Commission Meetings
- 8:00 am – Noon: Plenary and Working Sessions

Topics and Speakers Include:

Keynote: Sarah Strommen, Commissioner, MN Department of Natural Resources

Panel – Keys to Effective Partnering for the Byway

Minnesota technical partner representatives will describe how they effectively partner with Minnesota's Mississippi River Parkway Commission and each other to achieve common goals for the byway.

Takeaways:

- Forging mutually beneficial working relationships.
- How to maximize the resources of the commission and those of the technical partner for measurable shared outcomes.
- Having fun while working to bring more people to the River on the Great River Road!

Panel – Events that Build Regional Tourism for Great River Road Byway Communities

Hear from Minnesota communities that host or participate in events highlighting the arts and nature to draw visitors from a wide region, thereby boosting their local visitation and economies.

Takeaways:

- Arts and nature events can draw visitors to your community from a broad region.
- Some events only require your participation.
- New events can take time to become established.

Panel – The Growth of Outdoor Recreation and its Economic Impact on Winona, Minnesota

Winona stakeholders will discuss how a Minnesota river town came to embrace and enhance its outdoor assets through dreaming, planning, implementing, and promoting.

Takeaways:

- Byway communities of any size can maximize outdoor opportunities for the benefit of residents and visitors.
- Outdoor Recreation activities and organizations show substantial economic impact year-round.
- Collaborations across communities can enhance the feasibility and success of new outdoor recreation endeavors.

U.S Bike Route

Looking at steps ahead and what the designation brings

Operation Pollination

Learn more about efforts and how to get involved

Working with Great River Road Interpretive Centers

Improving communication and partnerships

Updates will be made to the agenda as speakers are confirmed.

What: Drive the Great River Road Month Kickoff Event

Who: speakers, DNR staff organizing, commission members attending

- DNR staff: Grant Wilson, Kelli Bruns, Lauren Peck, Amelia English (DNR state fair coordinator)

Where: DNR Building stage at the Minnesota State Fair, corner of Carnes and Nelson

When: Thursday, Aug. 29, 3-3:45 pm

Event Goals

- Celebrate the start of Drive the Great River Road Month
- Build partnerships between commission members
- Promote the amazing outdoor recreation opportunities that MN has to offer
- Publicize Drive the Great River Road Month with media and public attending the state fair

Event Schedule

3-3:05 pm	Welcome from Grant Wilson, DNR, brief overview of what commission/Drive the Great River Road Month is
3:05-3:10 pm	Overview of outdoor recreation theme this year – why outdoor recreation is so important to MN Speaker: John Anfinson, retired NPS and vice chair
3:10-3:15 pm	Governor's proclamation – legislator on commission Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chair Sen. Karin Housley
3:15-3:20 pm	Time for questions from audience/media
3:20-3:45 pm	MN outdoor recreation trivia <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sen. Karin Housley• John Anfinson• Randolph Briley, Explore MN• Anne Lewis, MN-MRPC member-at-large• DNR host: Kelli Bruns

Gear Needs

- Table/chairs for small giveaway station – Amelia English
- GRR swag to giveaway and printed itineraries people can grab – Chris Miller/Lauren Peck
- DNR swag or handouts to add to table that are already at the fair/easy to bring –Lauren will talk to Amelia
- Mic/speaker setup – will be at stage
- Podium