



Minnesota Mississippi River Parkway Commission
February 20, 2026
Capitol Room 120/Zoom Hybrid
MINUTES – Draft

Commissioners Present

Sen. Karin Housley- Chair
Dr. John Anfinson- Co-Chair
Paul Hugunin – Agriculture
Marni Karnowski- MN Dept of Transportation
Anne Lewis- At Large
Megan Christianson – Grand Rapids to Brainerd
Karl Samp - Brainerd to Elk River
David Kelliher - MN Historical Society
Rep. Huldah Momanyi-Hiltsley
Sen. John Hoffman
Lisa Havelka - Explore MN

Technical Advisors/Staff Present

Amanda Dirnberger – Natural Resources
Peter MacDonagh – Transportation
Carol Zoff – Transportation
Diane Henry-Wangensteen – LCC
Megan Voelke – LCC
Andrew George - LCC

Members & Technical Advisors Absent

Grant Wilson - Dept of Natural Resources
Kate Carlson - Hastings to Iowa Border
Sally Fineday – Lake Itasca to Grand Rapids
Tucker Blythe – National Park Service

The meeting was called to order at 10:03 AM by MN-MRPC Co-Chair John Anfinson, followed by introductions. The meeting packet and recording are available at <https://www.commissions.leg.state.mn.us/mrpc/>.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion to approve amended minutes was passed.

Social Media Partnership Presentation

A presentation was given by Tim Terrell, Executive Director, Mississippi Headwaters Board on social media marketing and a potential partnership with the MN-MRPC.

Discussion on Colorado Scenic Byways

Anne Lewis led a discussion and presentation on Great River Road program metrics. Colorado uses surveys to collect data from travelers to measure use, reasons for traveling and modes of transportation and closes with asking how satisfied travelers were with the experience. This method helps to find the right partners and the byway's impact on the traveler. Delaware uses QR codes and promotes contests, much like Explore MN

Roadside Storybook Project

22 sites with 68 different panels. 23 panels are indicated to need replacement, 9 need cleaning and 42 need panel content updates. This is per a 2023 assessment. During the quarter management plan, 3 Native American tribes indicated interest in integrating content in the panels, which could be a strategy over time.

Budget Report

Anne Lewis gave an update on the budget. No motion necessary.

MRPC Committee Updates

The members gave updates on the committees of the MRPC

Transportation Alternatives Program

The MRT (Mississippi River Trail) logo is now owned by MRPC 10 state. MRT runs parallel to the Great River Road for pedestrians and bicycles. Minnesota is the most developed MRT of all 10 states. Parcel maps for Minnesota are completed and will be working on the GIS component for Google maps.

Drive the Great River Road Month planning:

David Kelliher reported that the MN Historical Society has just started planning promotion re: history tied to the sesquicentennial.

Formal/informal subcommittee to share ideas.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Next Meeting: June 18, 2026, 2:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.