

CHISAGO COUNTY PARK BOARD OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS

Thursday, February 18, 2021

At 3:00 pm, Thursday, February 18, 2021 Chair Wille called the meeting of the Chisago County Park Board of Directors in a synchronous e-meeting due to Declaration of Local Emergency. The following members present: Dan Kaiser, Frank Storm, Jill Sicheneder, Gregg Carlson and Jolene Wille. Also present: County Commissioner Mike Robinson, Joe Tart; Park Director, Diane Sander; Support Specialist and Kurt Schneider; Environmental Services Director.

Meeting Summary:

- Unanimously the Board approved the agenda
- Unanimously the Board approved January 21, 2021 meeting minutes
- Unanimously the Board approved to submit a grant application to the DNR.

Meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Carlson.

Motion by Dan Kaiser to approve the agenda. Second by Frank Storm and carried unanimously.

Motion by Frank Storm to approve the January 21, 2021 minutes. Second by Dan Kaiser and carried unanimously.

Swedish Immigrant Regional Trail (SIRT) - Interstate State Park Update

Director Tart reported the work plan update needs to be completed by January 31, 2021. He is submitting the sixth project reimbursement. Director Schneider provided an update to the County Board on Segment C. All routes presented have unique challenges, the northerly route is however developing the least cultural and ecological constraints. The DNR has indicated support of the northerly routing as feasible and had discouraged further central corridor study. Discussion followed on challenges associated with each proposed route.

DNR Natural and Scenic Area Grant Application

Director Tart reported the Lutz property acquisition will qualify under this grant application. Application is due March 31, 2021. Qualified funding amount for this grant is approximately \$22,400 which is a 50/50 match. Director Tart indicated he would continue to look for grants to offset the acquisition cost. **Motion by** Dan Kaiser to approve to submit a grant application to the DNR. Second by Frank Storm and carried unanimously.

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Park Assessment

Director Tart reported as a recipient of the Outdoor Recreation Grant Program, the County has a binding agreement with the State of Minnesota to ensure program requirements are met. Site visits are conducted every five years to assure the parks and trails are maintained as a public outdoor recreation and open space into perpetuity. Grant requirements: managed solely for public outdoor recreation, funding signage must be present and accessibility. Taking Kost Dam as an example, in 1968 the county received \$1,400 to develop dam renovations and parking. Over 50 years later the state has continued their site visits to ensure requirements have been met. Board discussed various requirements for new signs.

Parks Strategic Planning - 2021

Director Tart provided a strategic planning list for 2021. Strategic goals outline: how to reach goals, specific tasks, time frame for completion, and how to monitor progress. First strategic goal: Sunrise Prairie Project – North Branch to Harris. Goal is to get this project complete, get approval from state legislators, select engineering firm for plan and design. Time frame: 2021 – 2023. Grant and project management status report updates to LCCMR, record keeping and budget tracking, Park Board updates, monitor project spending with ENRFT and auditor's office. Second strategic goal: Capital Improvement Items for 2021. Plan to receive quotes, select contractor and install by end of 2021. Third strategic goal: Online Parks and Recreation forms. Goal is to identify and implement forms to assist residents and staff using web based fillable forms with direct links. Time frame is to be completed by spring 2021 and provide shard links and forms on Parks and Trails website. Forth strategic goal: Parks & Trail Annual Report. Goal is to highlight projects

and work throughout the calendar year. Time frame: completed in February 2021. It will require data collection, record keeping and budget tracking. Fifth strategic goal: Fish Lake Regional Park Designation and Master Plan. Apply to GMRPTC for Regional Park Status Implement Fish Lake Master Plan that will be accommodate services and facility needs. Time frame: Complete by end of 2021. Receiving approval of Regional Park status and provide a completed and approved master plan for Fish Lake Park.

Staff Report

SIRT Crossing Permit – Proposed Conditions

Director Tart reported he has been in communication with the new homeowner at the Eichen property. Director Tart reviewed the thirteen conditions of the crossing permit and pointed out it was non-transferable and the County reserved right to amend this permit. Currently, the homeowners are considering farming the property. Director Tart will check with the City of Wyoming about issues of trail crossing. Upon review, perhaps an update is needed if they are farming with heavier equipment and ruining the trail.

2021 Capital Improvement Plan

Direct Tart highlighted the capital improvement projects that were approved for 2021. Very excited and thankful.

Legislative Action Day

One day out of the year meet with state legislators. This year, it was conducted by in an online Zoom format. One item discussed was the Legacy fund. The fund was started in 2011 and approaching the halfway mark of the Legacy Amendment bill. Reviewed funding breakdown. The meeting included Senator Rudd and Representative Lilly. The question was raised as to what to expect in the next amendment: more maintenance dollars for better user experience, accessibility for restrooms and trails, like to see unique things and strengths that represent your community, connections between systems, historical marks on trails, and art work in parks, and blending of funds. Erika Rivers, Director of DNR Parks and Trails discussed the following items: universal design, touchless features, single use, public space for everyone, media tools, multi-cultural equity advancement and economic benefits provided. Director Rivers indicated she does not support a bike trail fee. Bike trail fees are problematic for enforcement and not equitable for all users. Renee Mattison, Director of the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trail Commission discussed new ways to experience outdoors with water recreation, well-designed projects, trends, aging facilities, and looking beyond for more connections.

Adopt-A-Trail

Maklin Bike Shop adopted Segment 7 on the Sunrise Prairie Regional Trail (SPRT).

Athletic Reservations

First reservation came in last week for Lacrosse.

Annual Report

Board reviewed and discussed the 2020 Annual Report.

Adjourn – Motion by Dan Kaiser to adjourn the meeting. Second by Gregg Carlson and carried unanimously.