

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council

MEMO: Agenda Item #5, Executive Director Report
DATE: March 26, 2024
SUBJECT: City of Rochester “Silver Lake Dam Fish Passage” HRE-10
PRESENTER: Executive Director, Mark Johnson

Summary:

Recent citizen input received by at least one legislator each in the House and the Senate have resulted in questions regarding the currently recommended OHF appropriation to the City of Rochester for the [Silver Lake Dam Fish Passage](#), HRE-10. In essence, citizen input has inferred that the proposal was not supported by the city of Rochester.

After telephone conversations with Rochester Mayor Kim Norton and Rochester City Administrator Allison Zelm, it is quite evident that the [Silver Lake Dam Fish Passage](#) project is an official submission from the City of Rochester and has the authorized and official support of the local government unit.

Review of the proposal submission materials confirm that due diligence was followed by the City with regards to public notification and public meetings. Likewise, the LSOHC followed its due diligence in vetting the proposal per LSOHC procedures and LSOHC’s Call For Funding Requests process.

It is the opinion of LSOHC’s Executive Director that the indications of public disagreement are items for the local government unit to address. That said, there are procedures and safeguards that protect OHF appropriations. In this case, should the legislature approve the [Silver Lake Dam Fish Passage](#) appropriation, and should politics on the local level reverse and eventually decide that the Silver Lake Dam Fish Passage proposal is not in the best interest of the City, standard operating procedures followed by the LSOHC and by DNR Grants Management will provide the local government unit the ability to decline and return the funds.

Attachments:

- Letter of Support from Rochester Mayor Norton to Rep. Lillie and Sen. Hawj
- Email of Support from Rochester City Administrator Zelm
- Rock Arch Rapids (RAR) Info from MN DNR Fisheries Habitat Manager Jamison Wendel