

**Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Meeting
Meeting Summary
March 11, 2016**

Members Present

Bob Anderson, Chair
Julie Blackburn
Jane Kingston

Rep. Leon Lillie
Rep. McNamara
Sen. Tom Saxhaug

Ron Schara
Barry Tilley
Elizabeth Wilkens

Members Absent

Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen, Susan Olson, David Hartwell

Call to Order: Call to order at 8:05 a.m. A quorum was present.

Review and Approve Agenda

Motion by Ms. Blackburn to approve the agenda for March 11, 2016 as presented. Motion adopted.

Review and Approve Minutes – February 11, 2016

Motion by Ms. Kingston to approve the minutes. Motion adopted.

Conflicts of Interest:

No new conflicts were noted.

(00:02:30) Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Mark Johnson provided the start and end dates for the 2016 legislative session, referenced weekly session updates that will be provided by staff and a MyBills account that will be maintained for members to track the Outdoor Heritage Fund (OHF) bill and related legislation. Mr. Johnson informed members the Conservation Legacy Partners Grant Program discussion regarding the exclusion of taking of game "unless prohibited by law" as outlined in the constitution, originally slated for this meeting, will appear instead on the next council meeting agenda, June 29, 2016. Mr. Johnson outlined staff outreach activities since the February 11, 2016 council meeting.

Sandy Smith, Project Analyst Manager, presented status updates on OHF programs which were due February 1, 2016. Members discussed the updates. Greg Hoch testified before the council regarding late status updates for multiple appropriations and answered questions from members. Ms. Wilkens called attention to several programs for which final reports have been submitted, but not approved. Ms. Smith testified that some have been approved recently by staff and others have federal funding matches providing an extension availability for the program. Bill Penning, Conservation Easement Section Manager for the Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources, provided testimony regarding the status of restoration work for several appropriations with federal match dollars. Jon Schneider of Ducks Unlimited testified that final reports for two appropriations will be submitted by mid-March.

(00:29:30) Minnesota Management and Budget PILT study

Michelle Mitchell, Executive Budget Officer for Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) reviewed a

Payments in Lieu of Tax (PILT) study mandated by ML 2015 1st Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 10. Members discussed the report.

(00:41:15) Outdoor Heritage Fund Statement and Availability – February Forecast

Treasurer Blackburn introduced the discussion, referring to the council’s decision at the December 3, 2015 council meeting to recommend allocation of an additional \$3,945,000 based on MMB’s November forecast. Ms. Mitchell reviewed MMB’s February forecast. While sales tax receipts are growing, they are doing so at a slower rate than expected. The forecast therefore, shows a decline in sales tax receipts resulting in a potential deficit in the OHF of \$617,000, based on the council’s FY 2017 recommendation to the legislature. The decrease totals \$5.975 million over the biennium for the OHF eliminating the 5% reserve recommended by MMB. When asked about the reliability of the November vs. February forecasts, Ms. Mitchell stated that the February forecast may be higher or lower than the November forecast issued each year while the council is making their recommendations. Members discussed the issue.

(00:45:20) Potential Allocation Reductions ML 2016/FY 2017 OHF Bill

Mr. Johnson reviewed the actions of the council regarding FY 2017 allocation recommendations since October, 2015.

(00:47:40) Motion by Ms. Kingston to reverse the increases to the council’s allocation recommendation made at the December 3, 2015 council meeting as follows:

- \$1,974,000 additional to CPL Grant Program, Phase VIII: Statewide and Metro Habitat
- \$657,000 addition to HRE 01, MN Trout Unlimited Coldwater Fish Habitat Enhancement, Phase VIII
- \$657,000 addition to PA 04, Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR Land Acquisition, Phase VII
- \$657,000 addition to WA 01, Accelerating the Waterfowl Production Area Program, Phase VIII

Members discussed the motion. Members decided to wait for additional council members to arrive before taking a vote on the motion.

(00:58:30) Rep. McNamara introduced a concern about The Nature Conservancy acquiring land with OHF in Kittson County. Members discussed the issue. Rich Johnson provided testimony on behalf of The Nature Conservancy regarding the issue. Members discussed the topic further.

(01:30:50) Roll call vote requested on Ms. Kingston’s motion:

Bob Anderson, Chair - Yes	Rep. Leon Lillie - Yes	Ron Schara - Yes
Julie Blackburn - Yes	Rep. Denny McNamara - Yes	Barry Tilley - Yes
Jane Kingston - Yes	Sen. Tom Saxhaug - Yes	Elizabeth Wilkens - Yes

Motion adopted (9-yes, 0-no).

(01:32:35) 97A.056 Subd. 8. Revenues

Assistant Director Joe Pavelko presented OHF requirements regarding program revenue and potential concerns with the current revenue language in MS 97A.056. Members discussed the matter. Ms. Kingston requested staff prepare a report on OHF programs generating revenue and the amounts to be presented at the June 29, 2016 council meeting.

(01:54:12) Accomplishment Plan Amendment ML 2015, First Sp. Session, Ch. 2, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(e), Sand Hill River Fish Passage

Jamison Wendel, MN DNR, and Aaron Snyder, US Army Corps of Engineers testified in support of an accomplishment plan amendment. Members discussed the amendment.

(02:03:05) Motion by Ms. Kingston to approve the accomplishment plan amendment as presented. Motion adopted.

(02:03:50) Extension of Availability, ML 2013, Ch. 137, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(b), Dakota County Habitat Protections/Restoration, Phase IV

Al Singer, Land Conservation Manager, and Lisa West, Senior Project Manager, Dakota County Environmental Resources Department reviewed the county's request for the extension. Members discussed the request.

(02:22:10) Motion by Mr. Tilley for the council to recommend to the legislature a one-year extension be granted to this program in the ML 2016 OHF bill, extending their appropriation to June 30, 2017. Members discussed the motion at length. Motion withdrawn.

(02:44:10) Motion by Ms. Kingston to deny the extension recommendation.

(02:44:45) Motion to amend the motion by Mr. Tilley to recommend the council executive committee meet, given cause, before the end of the 2016 legislative session and consider recommending to the legislature an extension of availability for the program beyond the current end date of June 30, 2016. Amendment adopted.

Rep. McNamara stated for the record Dakota County would need to approach the council to request further action on this issue for the executive committee to consider an extension recommendation as outlined in Mr. Tilley's adopted amendment.

(02:48:25) Motion to deny the extension as amended adopted.

(02:52:08) Review of FY 2018 OHF Call for Funding Request

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Pavelko introduced the final version of the FY 2018 Call for Funding Request drafted during council working sessions.


(02:53:45) Motion by Ms. Kingston to approve the FY 2018 Call for Funding Request, allowing staff to make technical changes. Motion adopted.

(02:55:45) Opportunity for Public to Address the Council

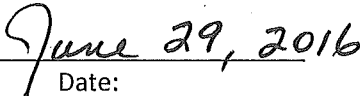
Bob Quady, retired MN DNR forester and representative of the Sand Dunes State Forest Work Group, provided public comment to the council regarding the DNR's management plan for the Sand Dunes State Forest. The Sand Dunes State Forest Work Group is made up of Anoka County residents concerned about the conversion of pine forest to oak savanna in the State Forest. Members discussed the issue.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

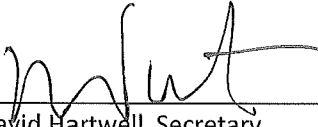
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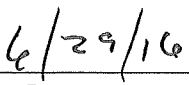
Bob Anderson, Chair



Date:



David Hartwell, Secretary



Date: