

**Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Meeting
Meeting Summary
June 29, 2017**

Members Present

Bob Anderson, Chair
David Hartwell
Jamie Swenson

Jane Kingston
Julie Blackburn
Denny McNamara

Ron Schara
Rep. Dan Fabian
Barry Tilley

Members Absent

Rep. Leon Lillie, Sen. Andrew Lang, Sen. David Tomassoni

Call to Order: Call to order at 9:08 a.m. A quorum was present.

Review and Approve Agenda

Motion by Ms. Kingston to approve the agenda for June 29, 2017 as presented. **Motion adopted.**

Review and Approve Minutes – April 28, 2017

Motion by Mr. McNamara to approve the minutes. **Motion adopted.**

Conflicts of Interest:

No new conflicts were noted.

(00:01:46) Chair's Welcome and Comments

Welcome and thanked individuals involved with the June 28th site tour. Chair Anderson yielded time for Council member's to comment on the tour. Members expressed interest in doing more tours.

(00:06:27) Executive Director's Report

Executive Director Mark Johnson provided an overview of a minor Ducks Unlimited conveyance request of .14 acres of a 58.83 acre land parcel acquired in Blue Earth County with Outdoor Heritage Funds under ML 2016, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Subd. 4(b). This conveyance request has been given preliminary approval. No objections were noted by Council, approval stands.

Mr. Johnson introduced Janelle Taylor, Legislative Analyst, and Greg Knopff, Lead Analyst, who provided a review of the final 2017 Legacy bill. Ms. Taylor pointed out key changes between recommendation made by the Council and the final bill. Council member's discussed.

Executive Director Mark Johnson announced that the Council has received an invitation from Ducks Unlimited to attend the Anderson WPA dedication celebration taking place on July 8, 2017.

Mr. Johnson provided a handout and brief overview of the Outdoor Heritage Fund questions in the 2016 MN State Survey conducted by the University of Minnesota.

Mr. Johnson yielded time to Commission Assistant Becky Enfield who reminded Council member's that the current fiscal year (FY 2017) ends June 30, 2017 and requested all reimbursement forms be submitted by Friday, July 14, 2017.

(00:18:19) Update: Outdoor Heritage Funds Outcomes Workgroup

Council member Julie Blackburn provided a description of the Outdoor Heritage Fund Workgroup's intention. The Workgroup's focus is on how to best tell the story of how Outdoor Heritage Funds have made an impact and determine how to report those accomplishments to the public.

Ms. Blackburn provided a status update, and noted challenges related to tying outcome statements to indicators with strong sources of data.

The Outdoor Heritage Fund Outcomes Workgroup has one meeting left. The Workgroup anticipates reporting back to the Council at the July 31, 2017 meeting.

(00:24:35) Action: Accomplishment Plan Amendment – ML 2016, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Sec . 2, Subd. 5(c) Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project

Chair Anderson introduced Tim Terrill, Executive Director of the Mississippi Headwaters Board, who provided background information regarding the Mississippi Headwaters Habitat Corridor Project and explained the reason for the budget change request. This amendment request deletes the MHB program coordinator position and adds \$51,000 under the line item "Contracts" to hire a contractor for the coordination work. Executive Director Mark Johnson noted this shift also affects the ML 2017 draft accomplishment plan and what was presented before the Council.

Motion by Mr. Hartwell to approve the accomplishment plan amendment request as presented. **Motion adopted.**

(00:30:54) Status Update: Appropriation Summaries

Project Analyst Sandy Smith summarized the programs funded during ML 2017/FY 2018. Ms. Smith noted that the report is a snap shot in time. Program manager's report twice per year and so the report may not reflect the total amount spent. Ms. Smith indicated there were no major items of concern. Member's discussed.

(00:37:48) Action: ML 2017 Accomplishment Plan Approval

Ms. Smith reviewed the final accomplishment plans for ML 2017/FY 2018. Council members discussed plans and directed specific questions to program managers.

3(g) Bushman Lake – In their accomplishment plan, The Conservation Fund (TCF) stated they would seek local government approval. Mr. Hartwell questioned whether local government approval was sought. Per Emilee Nelson with The Conservation Fund (TCF), they (TCF) have had conversations with county commissioners and received one letter of support from Commissioner Jewell, St. Louis County. Ms. Nelson stated a formal county board resolution for approval will not be sought. Mr. Hartwell suggested having conversations and receiving one letter of support from a county commissioner does not constitute as getting local government approval. Ms. Kingston stated TCF had "sought" local government approval. Members discussed what it means to "seek" local government approval at length. Staff member Pavelko noted that the Council may want to consider revising the language related to county board approval within the proposal/accomplishment plan.

4(b) Shallow Lake & Wetland Protection Program – Phase VI – Ms. Blackburn requested Jon Schneider, Ducks Unlimited (DU), explain the budget shifts. Mr. Schneider explained that in some cases instead of DU buying seed for restoration it would shift the money to the Department of Natural Resources (MN DNR) to obtain the seed mix. Rep. Fabian questioned if the MN DNR planned to work with the Department of Agriculture on seed procurement, noting issues with specific seed sources. Mr. Schneider detailed the seed requirements of DU and did not believe there would be issues with the seed sources being used.

2(g) RIM Buffers for Wildlife and Water – Phase VII – Ms. Kingston asked Board of Water & Soil Resources (BWSR) staff to address costs in the contract line as restorations costs are included in the easements acquisition line. Bill

Penning and Dave Rickert, BWSR, noted that BWSR includes restoration costs in the easement line because BWSR does not contract out restoration work. The money in the contract line is used for costs associated with entities BWSR contracts with.

2(k) Anoka Sand Plain Habitat Conservation – Phase V – Minnesota Land Trust (MLT) removed language indicating habitat enhancement would be completed by 2022. Ms. Kingston requested justification regarding why restoration/enhancement work will not be done on properties where easements are acquired. Wayne Ostlie, Minnesota Land Trust, explained that with the reduced appropriation MLT determined it would be best to focus on acquiring easements.

5(f) St. Louis River Restoration Initiative – Phase IV – Grant Wilson, MN DNR, indicated the MN DNR is waiting on the federal budget. Mr. Wilson addressed the reduction in professional services and an increase in contracting costs noting that a shift from professional services to contracts usually means the MN DNR is contracting with an external entity. Staff noted the questions being raised are very minor issues.

HRE 05 Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program – Phase VI – Ms. Kingston asked the Shell Rock River Watershed District to explain the reduction in acres. There was not a representative from the Shell Rock River Watershed District present to address the reduction in acres. Members discussed the significance of the reduction of acres.

2(j) DNR Grasslands – Phase IX – Ms. Swenson asked for clarification on the reports of work completed. Staff explained that due to the way the MN DNR Grasslands reports work accomplished it is difficult to determine what work is being completed on a specific parcel. Staff is working with the MN DNR to get a more thorough report.

Mr. Hartwell requested a budget comparison report to be generated when reviewing the accomplishment plans. Staff provides budget comparison reports for Council members to reference when reviewing the draft accomplishment plans in the fall. Mr. Hartwell requested the reports also be included with the final accomplishment plans.

3(a) Carnelian Creek Conservation Corridor – Mr. Schara expressed frustration that the Hunting & Fishing Management Plan requirement was removed by the legislature despite Council recommendations. Council members noted the Hunting & Fishing Management Plan submitted lacked detail. Mr. McNamara discussed challenges with hunting and fishing plans in the metro area. Mr. Tilley noted many OHF easements do not typically allow public access and added that given the challenges with hunting and fishing plans in the metro, the plan submitted does provide something that was available before. Mr. Hartwell referred to the constitutional language and questioned if it is acceptable to require a hunting and fishing plan. Members discussed the constitutional language.

Wayne Ostlie, Minnesota Land Trust (MLT), responded to concerns voiced by Council members. Mr. Ostlie noted that the landowners are working to address the desires of the Council while having the flexibility to manage the nature center in a way that is align with their mission. Mr. Ostlie pointed out some concerns of the landowner regarding having an annual hunting and fishing plan.

Rep. Fabian noted that MLT had signed onto a letter during the legislative session encouraging the legislature to keep the OHF recommendations intact which included the hunting and fishing plan language.

Conversation between Ms. Blackburn and Mr. Ostlie regarding property ownership involving the Manitou Fund, Wilder Foundation, and a nonprofit yet to be determined.

Motion by Mr. Hartwell to approve all accomplishment plans subject to: 3(g) Bushman Lake contingent to their effort to seek local government approval, and H RE 05 Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program – Phase VI until the program manager comes before the Council to explain the reduction in 17.5% acres.

Mr. Tilley requested clarification 5(b) Fisheries Habitat Protection on Strategic North Central Minnesota Lakes – Phase III noting that on the final accomplishment plan they (Leech Lake Watershed Foundation) answered “Yes” to land plan to acquire free of permanent protection whereas on the draft accomplishment plan they answered “No”. Lindsey Ketchell indicated that the land will have permanent protection and the land being acquired is not already protected.

Members discussed Mr. Hartwell’s motion.

Motion by Ms. Blackburn to amend Mr. Hartwell’s motion to approve all accomplishment plans with the exception of 3(a) Carnelian Creek and direct them to return with an improved Hunting and Fishing Plan. Members discussed amendment. Chair Anderson ruled Amendment out of order.

Motion by Mr. Hartwell to approve all accomplishment plans with the exception of HRE 05 Shell Rock River Watershed Habitat Restoration Program – Phase VI until the program manager comes before the Council to explain the reduction in acres. Chair Anderson called division on the vote. Motion failed (4 – yes, 5 – no).

Motion by Ms. Kingston to approve all ML 2017 accomplishment plans as presented. **Motion adopted.**

(02:30:41) Information: FY 2019 / ML2018 Proposal Overview

Ms. Smith reviewed the proposal evaluation process and informed Council members that the proposal evaluation and conflict of interest form are due by Thursday July 20, 2017.

Ms. Kingston requested staff send additional questions to program managers. Program managers report twice per year, the next round of reporting is due August 1, 2017. Staff will review the information program manager’s report in August and compile the information for Council member’s prior to the ML 2018 / FY 2019 proposal hearings.

(02:44:32) Opportunity for Public to Address the Council

Lindsey Ketchell with the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation invited Council members to a celebration ceremony on Woods Bay on Roosevelt Lake taking place on August 5, 2017. Ms. Ketchell indicated a formal invitation is forthcoming.

Ms. Ketchell also invited Council members to stop by the educational center in the Leech Lake Area Watershed Foundation new office located in Walker, MN.

Meeting adjourned at 12:09 p.m.

APPROVED:

Robert (Bob) W. Anderson

Bob Anderson, Chair

August 1, 2017

Date:

Ron Schara

8/2/2017

Ron Schara, Secretary

Date: