

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council Meeting
Meeting Summary
June 28, 2018

Members Present

Bob Anderson, Chair
David Hartwell
Jane Kingston
Jamie Swenson

Julie Blackburn
Denny McNamara
Ron Schara
Rep. Leon Lillie

Rep. Dan Fabian
Barry Tilley
Sen. David Tomassoni

Members Absent

Sen. Andrew Lang

Call to Order: Call to order at 8:06 a.m. A quorum was present.

Review and Approve Agenda

Motion by Rep. Fabian to approve the agenda for June 28, 2018 as presented. Ms. Blackburn requested an update on CREP during the ML 2018 Legacy Bill Review discussion. **Motion adopted.**

Review and Approve Minutes – December 12, 2017

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

Conflicts of Interest:

No new conflicts were noted.

(00:04:38) Executive Director's Report

Assistant Director Joe Pavelko briefly reviewed recent staff appearances.

Mr. Pavelko provided status update of the Great Northern Transmission Line (GNTL) conveyance approved by the Council on July 31, 2017. Mr. Pavelko explained that the appraisal concluded the value of the easement taking land for the Blandin portion of the GNTL was \$122,400. The State's share in the total funds was \$50,200, or approximately 41%. The Outdoor Heritage Fund contributed approximately 78% of the acquisition costs for the Blandin easement; and thus, the OHF is entitled to receive \$39,156 or approximately 78% of that State's compensation.

Mr. Pavelko summarized a partial vacation of a conservation easement located in Waterford Township in Dakota County. The interest in the land was purchased by Dakota County using Outdoor Heritage Funds (ML 2009, Ch. 172, Art. 1, Sec. 2, Subd. 5(d)). Notification was sent to House and Senate Leadership on March 20, 2018. No objections were received, and the partial easement vacation was approved on April 16, 2018.

Mr. Pavelko informed Council members they have been invited to attend the Eagle Lake dedication on July 14, 2018. The Council has also been invited to attend a field day hosted by the MN DNR on August 2, 2018 at the Swessinger WMA.

Council members discussed the 2018 LSOHC meeting calendar, noting conflicts with upcoming meetings. Chair Anderson tabled the conversation until later in the meeting.

(00:23:41) Action: Council Operating Procedures (updates)

Assistant Director Joe Pavelko provided a brief overview of updates made to the Council operating procedures. Mr. Pavelko explained that it had been a few years since the operating procedures had been updated. Mr. Pavelko added that there have been changes in law and LCC policies since that time that warranted the operating procedures to be updated. Members discussed.

Motion by Ms. Blackburn to approve the revised council operating procedures. **Motion adopted.**

(00:26:41) Information: 2018 Legacy Bill Review (ML 2018, Ch.208, Art.1)

Rep. Fabian provided a brief summary of the ML 2018 session relating to the ML 2018 Legacy Bill.

Mr. Tilley recalled a discussion the Council had relating to recommending enforcement language to the legislature for inclusion in the bill. Janelle Taylor, House Research, noted that nothing had been done in the House. Greg Knopff, Senate Research, noted that a broader discussion may be warranted as it could affect LCCMR as well. Members discussed.

Motion by Ms. Kingston to have staff research what has been discussed and provide options for moving forward to be presented at the next meeting. **Motion adopted.**

Per Ms. Blackburn's request, Angie Becker – Kudelka, Assistant Director of the Board of Water and Soil Resources, provided an overview of the ML 2018 session relating to CREP. Ms. Becker – Kudelka explained the relationship between Outdoor Heritage and Clean Water Funds, and provided an update on CREP. Council members discussed.

Assistant Director Pavelko noted two additions made to MS 97A.056. The first addition was made to Subd. 3 and requires the Council to provide notification to counties regarding project proposals that include fee title acquisition. The second was made to Subd. 4 and requires nongovernmental organizations to notify county and town boards 30 days prior to closing on an acquisition of land in fee title with money from the outdoor heritage fund. Mr. Pavelko informed members that on June 25, 2018 notification was sent to counties regarding ML 2019 / FY 2020 proposals that include fee title acquisition. Members discussed.

(01:09:11) Information: MN Bound OHF Special: Our Greatest Gift

Mr. Schara introduced the episode and provided some brief comments about the importance of telling the story of the impact of the Outdoor Heritage Fund. Members watched the MN Bound: Our Greatest Gift.

Council members discussed the episode and reiterated the need to display the work being done with OHF dollars. Members directed staff present options for improving communication relating to OHF outcomes at the next meeting.

(01:50:40) Discussion: Office of the Legislative Auditor report of the Board of Water and Soil Resources

Chris Buse, Deputy Legislative Auditor, reviewed the audit process specifically relating to Office of the Legislative Auditor report on the Board of Water and Soil Resources. Mr. Buse yielded time to Tracy Gebhard, Director, General Government Team, who reviewed the three findings in the report. Ms. Gebhard noted that the OLA's process is to look at things from an outsider's perspective and see if a stranger would come to the same conclusion, and explained that a poor finding could be the result of not being able to verify information given. Mr. Buse and Ms. Gebhard acknowledged steps BWSR has taken to address the findings in the report such as hire a new Controller and have an external agency review their procedures.

John Jaschke, Executive Director, and Angie Becker – Kudelka, Assistant Director, of the Board of Water and Soil Resources addressed the findings in the report. Ms. Becker – Kudelka noted that some of the findings in the report were related to how information is kept in various systems. Ms. Becker – Kudelka added that many of their projects are focused on both water quality and habitat improvement, making it difficult to code to the proper

fund. Mr. Jaschke spoke to the findings in the report and recognized specific areas of improvement. Members discussed.

(02:55:45) Information: Conservation Legacy Partners Legacy Grant Program – Expedited Project Cycle

Jessica Lee provided an overview of the Expedited Project Cycle. The ECP grant cycle was created to provide a simpler, faster way for nonprofit organizations and government entities to apply for and receive CPL grants for smaller (\$5,000 - \$50,000) tried and true conservation projects. Ms. Lee noted that there are specific activities that qualify for the EPC and added that only enhancement or restoration projects are eligible. Ms. Lee explained that the EPC grant cycle was intended to be open year round, with up to 5 grant rounds; however, in recent years EPC funds have been used up within the first few rounds. Members discussed.

(03:11:52) Outcomes Update: Fish and Wildlife HAPET model used on OHF data

Scott Glup, US Fish and Wildlife Service, explained that the HAPET (Habitat Evaluations and Populations team) was established as a result of several requests for reporting on outcomes. The HAPET model provides a scientific approach to reporting on the impact an action has on populations.

The Council approached HAPET to model predicted breeding duck response to tracts purchased and restored with Outdoor Heritage Funds. Mr. Glup explained the data used in the analysis, and provided an overview of the results. Council members discussed.

(03:41:00) Action: Request for Extension of Availability of Appropriation – ML 2014, 5(k) Evaluate Effectiveness of Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Strategies

Don Hickman, Executive Director, Environmental Initiative, briefly provided background information and explained that extending the availability of the appropriation by 1 year would allow for an additional season of data collection. Members discussed the program and recalled historical context of the appropriation.

Motion by Mr. Hartwell to include an extension of the availability of the appropriation by 1 year until June 2020 in the recommended language for the ML 2019 OHF bill. Chair Anderson called division on the vote. **Motion failed.**

(04:04:23) Action: ML 2018 Accomplishment Plan Approvals

Ms. Smith reviewed the ML 2018 / FY 2019 Accomplishment Plans. Ms. Smith identified the three programs that had significant changes to their Draft Accomplishment Plan and explained the nature of the changes made.

Motion by Mr. Hartwell to approve the ML 2018 Accomplishment Plans. **Motion adopted.**

(04:06:21) Information: FY 2020 / ML 2019 Proposal Review

Ms. Smith reviewed the proposal evaluation process and reminded members that their proposal evaluations and conflict of interest form are due by Thursday, July 19, 2018.

Member discussed the moving the proposal hearing dates. Hearings for ML 2019 Proposals will take place on September 6 – 7, 2018. Council members will have one week to complete the allocation selection; allocation selections are due September 14, 2018.

Motion by Ms. Blackburn to revise the 2018 LSOHC calendar. **Motion adopted.**

(04:13:20) Opportunity for Public to Address the Council

Bob Quady and Ron Guerts addressed the Council regarding the current quantity of oak savanna in Minnesota, the future of oak savanna, and the use of Native Plant Communities on determining goals. Mr. Quady and Mr. Guerts are part of the Sand Dunes Concerned Citizens group and spoke to their concerns about management practices at the Sand Dunes State Forest.

Meeting adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

APPROVED: August 3, 2018. Signed copy on file with LSOHC staff.

Bob Anderson, Chair

Date:

Ron Schara, Secretary

Date: