

Mississippi Headwaters Board (MHB)
November 30th, 2012
Blandin Foundation, Grand Rapids, MN
Meeting Minutes

Members Present: Tom Wenzel (Morrison County), Jack Frost (Beltrami County), Brian Napstad (Aitkin County), Lyle Robinson (Hubbard County), Davin Tinquist (Itasca County), Paul Thiede (Crow Wing County - CWC) and Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst. - Staff)

Members Excused: Dean Newland (Clearwater County) and Neal Gaalswyk (Cass County)

Others Present: Senator Tom Saxhaug, Bob Lessard (DNR / MHB Liaison), Dan Swenson (Itasca County Zoning), Jason Kuiken and Luke Rutten (United States Forest Service – USFS), Todd Holman and Kristen Blann (The Nature Conservancy - TNC), and Bob Shankland (Grand Rapids)

1:04 pm – Chairman Robinson (Hubbard) called to order the monthly meeting of the Mississippi Headwaters Board at 1:04 pm on November 30th, 2012, in Grand Rapids, MN. The meeting began with the pledge of allegiance.

1:05 pm - Agenda (Nov. 30th, 2012). Commissioner Thiede (CWC) **motioned** to have an Agenda item (UMFM Task Force) moved from the ‘Action/Discussion’ portion of the Agenda to the beginning to accommodate those that joined this meeting to hear more on the topic. Commissioner Wenzel (Morrison) seconded the Agenda amendment - 5 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Chair Lyle Robinson (Hubbard) asked Commissioner Napstad (Aitkin) to lead the following discussion and recap of the Upper Mississippi Flood Mitigation (UMFM) meeting that took place at 9 am this morning.

Commissioner Napstad (Aitkin) began by reiterating that he has agreed to temporarily Chair the MHB UMFM Task Force sub-com. until the Task Force gets formally organized. The Task Force will need to develop their organizational structure i.e. Directors, Chairs/co-chairs, Officers and members etc. The Task Force will retain minimal administration duties through the MHB office. He suggested that the Task Force also include interested citizens throughout the 8 counties as well as officials from various environmental groups i.e. SWCD, County Commissioners, Lake Associations. Some of the following points were also covered during this discussion:

- 1) The Task Force does not need to be formed as a Joint Powers Board; the MHB will serve as the LGU. The goal is to maintain citizen engagement through the entire process from the ground up.
- 2) Those interested in being on the Task Force should pull a meeting together to clarify their principle mission/direction and begin to identify and prioritize Study parameters.
- 3) Once the Study parameters have been established and agreed upon with the MHB, the Task Force will then ask the MHB to draft a Reconnaissance (Recon) Study request letter to be sent to the ACOE.
- 4) **Q** - Does the MHB become encumbered in any way by acting as the LGU in supporting specific area projects as a result of a Recon Study? – **A** – No, the MHB is just endorsing. The endorsement may also reflect positively on the MHB as the organization to spearhead the effort to bring 8 county water focused projects together. This is another important role for the MHB and could help support future funding for the MHB.
- 5) It was suggested that Com. Napstad (Aitkin) be charged with establishing the committee membership and bring framework details back to the MHB at an upcoming meeting.
- 6) Com. Napstad accepts the charge and would like to see the Recon Study request go to the ACOE by end of the 1st Q '13. His plan is to pull a Task Force meeting together to begin discussion on the 205 Study; followed by a 2nd meeting to develop an outline of what is needed from the Recon Study (with timeline); and lastly, a meeting with the MHB to discuss Study endorsement.

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Following discussion, **motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Tom Wenzel (Morrison) / Davin Tinquist (Itasca) to approve the action timeline as described by Com. Napstad (Aitkin) and the assignment of Com. Tinquist (Itasca) to act as the MHB sub-committee co-chair for the Task Force – 5 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

- 1:27 pm – Staff Report** (October / November '12). Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.) made note of a couple of items:
- **#8 (P/B)** – The office mailed & since received the 1Q '13 DNR reimbursement request for \$15,980.27.
 - **#9 (P/B)** - The office filled out and mailed back the US Census of Gov. Employee and Payroll report.
 - **#10 (P/B)** – The office received from MCIT a '12 Dividend check for \$1801.00.
 - **#3 (P/C)** – Reminder of an email invitation from Phil Votruba (MPCA) for a meeting in Bemidji Dec. 10th re: Watershed – Phase 1 updates.
 - **#5 (P/C)** – Reminder of an email invitation for Dec. 7th from Randy Thoreson (NPS) re: continued conversation about the National Water Trail Designation Program – as discussed at the Oct. MHB meeting. The time/location is TBD and will be forward when available. Jason Kuiken (US Forest Service) was able to provide additional details on meeting purpose. They seek MHB support and hope that there is no objection to the plan. Both Commissioners Frost (Beltrami) and Commissioner Tinquist (Itasca) suggested that they could attend the Dec. 7th meeting on behalf of the MHB and report back to the board members at the next MHB meeting.
 - Pam added that she had received a Chippewa National Forest Office letter re: proposed forestation/restoration on blow-down. Staff was directed to send a letter explaining the MHB position.
 - The board elected to cancel the December 21st MHB meeting. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Thiede (CWC) / Commissioner Wenzel (Morrison) to approve the November '12 Consent Agenda (Oct. '12 Minutes and Nov. Expenses of \$5,043.16) with the caveat that staff will still mail the Nov. expenses for prior review but will ask for approval at the January meeting along w/the Dec Expenses – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

1:45 pm – Zoning Actions – Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst) explained that the board should have received in their meeting envelopes an update on the BWSR Grant along with a detailed spreadsheet of work progress to this point. Staff is also asking that the board approve payment of an invoice from Mitch Brinks (CWC) for his work to-date on the BWSR Grant. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Thiede (CWC) / Commissioner Frost (Beltrami) to approve payment – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Chair Lyle Robinson (Hubbard) added that the DNR has forward to the office a License Agreement to be signed. This agreement is for MHB's use of proprietary on-line data from the DNR as part of the BWSR Grant. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners Napstad (Aitkin) / Commissioner Tinquist (Itasca) to approve Chair signature of the DNR Agreement – 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

1:50 pm – Side-bar conversation – Commissioner Thiede explained CWC's recent collaboration on AIS monitors at landings. To-date, the CWC Lake Associations in the area has been the central supporting entity w/only some DNR funding. It was determined however, that there must be a Grade 1 inspector to supervise the volunteer monitoring and they must be certified in order to obtain any DNR funding for the position. Also, if grant dollars are used, a Joint Powers Agreement w/the DNR must be signed. Commissioner Thiede suggested that this may be another area where the MHB could support an 8 county AIS Supervisor, once this program develops further and more grant money becomes available through the DNR. Further program discussion of the pros and cons ensued.

Commissioner Thiede reiterated that he was offering this information as an FYI and if there is interest from the board he would be willing to look further into it.

1:55 pm – Action Items –

► **2013 Officer Rotation** – Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.) advised the board of the pending rotation of the Executive Board for 2013. She gave each of the Commissioners a copy of the By-laws and the suggested rotation for the coming year. Davin Tinquist (Itasca) will become Chair; Neal Gaalswyk (Cass) will be Vice-Chair and Dean Newland (Clearwater) for Sec. /Treasurer. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioners (Morrison) / Commissioner Napstad (Aitkin) to approve the 2013 Executive Board positions as noted – 6 ayes, 0 nays. **Motion** carried.

► **Project Updates - Todd Holman (The Nature Conservancy - TNC)** – Todd provided introductions of several people that came with him to today's meeting. The following are examples of the conversation that ensued:

- A. Camp Ripley ACUB: The Lessard Sam Outdoor Heritage proposal has been submitted successfully. Per the process, it has been downsized however. The proposed area is located w/in the 3 mile buffer area of Camp Ripley and is designed to work w/willing land owners to purchase permanent conservation easements. He brings this forward today because this year's conservation easement focus will fall w/in areas near & adjacent to the Mississippi River.
- B. Gathering 5 – Oct 6th: Todd provided a recap of the meeting in Crosby. The meeting included a field trip of an old mine pit lake. The next meeting may be in March/April and will likely include the MPCA to cover updates on area initiatives
- C. North Central Conservation Round-table: This round-table has grown and now consists of Conservancy, Chip. Nat. Forest, BWSR and DNR representatives and the like. The group had recently been working to develop a river basin conservation/strategy plan for the watershed but the project did not get funding. This coalition is now continuing on their own with the initiative to develop this conservation blue-print for the 8 county area. TNC is hoping that the MHB will allow Mitch/Chris (contractors for the BWSR AI Grant) to participate in the planning mix.
- D. Other projects in queue: The MR Northwood's Land Acquisition has finally gone through. It is a bench mark for the LSOHC process because the acquisition of 2000 acres of land along the Mississippi River is not going to the DNR, it is going to CWC. There will be an Arboretum luncheon on Monday to celebrate, as well as an official event in '13.
- E. The TNC recognizes Counties, Legislators and/or individuals that stand out on Conservation successes. This year, CWC will be one of two recipients for the '12 Gov. Relations award. Com. Thiede also credited the local success to the support from DNR Com. Landwehr.

After discussion, Pam Kichler (Admin. Asst.) took a moment to bid farewell to Commissioners Robinson and Wenzel and thanked them for the support of the organization over the years. They both took the floor and said their Thank You's and shared some final thoughts as well.

OTHER: Staff reminded the board members to return their annual staff reviews if they have yet to. The review will be on the Jan. Agenda.

Commissioner Frost wanted to voice his concerns regarding staff's annual review. He wants the board members to consider a pay increase for staff. He offered examples to support this and although recognizing the board's budget concerns, he believes staff has shown continued commitment to the board and feels the board should mirror this commitment to her.

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Com Thiede (CWC) added that he recognizes as do other board members, the on-going budget concerns and the hope of increased funding to support the nec. staff to move this organization forward. If our funding improves w/the next legislative session this board must be focused and ready to move forward.

Senator Saxhaug was asked for his thoughts on the probability of obtaining increased funding this next Legislative session. He provided some insight on the topic after meeting adjournment.

There was no further business to discuss. **Motion** was made and seconded by Commissioner Napstad (Aitkin) / Commissioner Frost (Beltrami) to adjourn the meeting at 2:32 pm - 6 ayes, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned

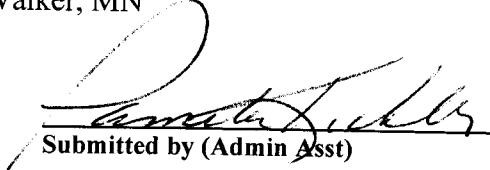
2:32 pm – Misc

☀ **Legislature Update – none**

☀ **County Updates – none**

Next MHB meeting: Friday, January 18th '13 – Walker, MN


Chair Approval


Submitted by (Admin Asst)