

Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council (LOHC)
Wednesday, December 17, 2008
1:00 p.m.
Room 500 N, State Office Building

Members Present: Michael Kilgore, Interim Chair, Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen, Bob Schroeder, Rep. Rick Nelsen, Sen. Ellen Anderson, David Hartwell, James Cox, Lester Bensch, Wayne Enger, Scott Rall, Darby Nelson, Acting Executive Director Bill Becker

Members Absent: Rep. Bob Gunther

Call to Order

Interim Chair Kilgore called the meeting to order 1:05 p.m. A quorum was present.

Review and Approve Agenda

Interim Chair Kilgore moved to approve the agenda for December 17, 2008. **Motion Prevailed.**

New item added to the agenda. Item 11. Public Comments. Interim Chair Kilgore made a motion to adopt the agenda as modified. **Motion Prevailed.**

Approve Minutes from December 1, 2008

Interim Chair Kilgore moved to approve the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council December 1, 2008, minutes as drafted. **Motion Prevailed.**

Update on Administration and Budget

Bill Becker reported that progress is being made on the getting a budget together. \$135,000 has been identified to finance administration.

Job descriptions have been drafted, based on LCCMR staffing.

Report of the Chair

Interim Chair Kilgore will meet with the Rep. Mary Murphy, Chair, of the new House Finance Division Committee for Cultural and Outdoor Resources to get a better understanding of how they see their committee role with the work of the council.

Interim Chair Kilgore suggested appointing a personnel committee very soon. He would also like to have an election of interim officers at the next meeting in January.

Adopt Operating Procedures

Bill Becker reviewed the draft operating procedures adopted by the Governance Committee on December 7, 2008.

Comments and proposed changes to the Operating Procedures:

Bob Schroeder suggested the concept of a dual position of treasure and secretary. The committee decided it was inappropriate.

Bill Becker as Acting Executive Director is authorized to sign off on reimbursement for travel expenses. Bill will draft some language authorizing travel, which reflects the existing policy in the House and Senate

Bill Becker will research the definition of “recorded” in the Opening Meeting Law to make sure the law is being followed.

David Hartwell suggested for consideration to refer to the per diem amount as the approved amount in lieu of a specific dollar amount.

Discussion took place on changing the name of the Executive Director.

Bob Schroeder moved to change the title of executive director to director. **Motion Does Not Prevail.**

Scott Rall moved to change the title executive director to council coordinator. **Motion Does Not Prevail.**

Interim Chair Kilgore moved to adopt the operating procedures, as amended. **Motion Prevailed.**

January Roundtable Related Listening Session Invitation

Tom Landwehr of the Nature Conservancy extended an invitation for the council to sponsor a meeting with stakeholders on Thursday, January 8, 2009 to hear priorities for council recommendations. The council declined the invitation. Members can attend the DNR session on their own.

The council suggested The Nature Conservancy prepare written summary of discussion regarding the priorities and strategies and present it to the council.

Council Strategy Discussion

Interim Chair Kilgore asked what type of information was needed to put recommendations together.

Lester Bensch suggested splitting the state by the geographic regions; identify the committees/organizations within those regions to bring forward their project proposals. NRCS has the administrative procedures for implementing permanent and conservation easements.

James Cox suggested creating the framework for the different programs prior to identifying strategies or getting input.

David Hartwell suggested establishing principles on how the council will operate, e.g., permanent easement vs. temporary easement. How the allocation of money is going to be

governed. How to allocate around the state in a fair way, given the priorities to protect, enhance, and restore.

Sen. Ellen Anderson suggested a strategic plan defining the council's job for the next 25 years. What do we want the state to look at 10 years, etc., regarding habitat, how much riparian land can be protected. Set some numeric goals about how many miles of river and ditches need to be protected by buffers and how do we prioritize for habitat protection, prairie acquisition or restoration.

Rep. Rick Hansen suggested a Web page and an 800 number to take public input. Recommendations may need to be submitted prior to April 1 to meet legislative committee deadlines. The council needs to look for projects ready to go and seek projects that will help our economy in addition to helping the resource. Balance is important, regionally and ecologically. We are going to have to be clear on supplant or supplement as we move forward.

Lester Bensch suggested the need to make some financial projections on funds available for the next year. They probably won't be available in time to do any major construction projects next year, but available funds can be used for easement projects in CREP and RIM. The watershed, river districts, and counties already have detailed plans for sensitive areas.

Bob Schroeder suggested the need to know how much money are we going to spend; and be mindful, of the administrative cost and establishing a reserve account. The council needs to establish a budget, then set an assets allocation model.

Sen. Bill Ingebrigtsen suggested bringing staff in from Missouri talk about their model. There might be some benefit to keep a log on what has been looked at for potential projects.

Wayne Enger would like to hear from LCCMR staff on what they have developed and how it is working.

James Cox suggested having a process for the public to enter projects into a system to forward to the council.

Interim Chair Kilgore asked the members what their thoughts are regarding public input, recognizing the deadline.

David Hartwell said the LCCMR field trip model is a good one. The plans out there have had public input.

Wayne Enger suggested having a narrative of all the plans and deciding what will be expended and having some carryover for the next year. BWSR is willing to help coordinate listening sessions.

Interim Chair Kilgore suggested looking at the proposal request process LCCMR uses.

David Hartwell suggested it would be better to have priorities and set criteria for selection rather than use a request for proposals process.

Bob Schroeder said we need to figure out how much money there is, possibly on a categorical basis, make those decisions by early January; solicit and begin to review ideas in the month of February for final decisions by mid-March.

Rep. Rick Hansen said we should think of these projects as capital investments. We might want to ask the investment committee to talk about their rolling cycles for projects.

Dave Hartwell opined that we need to be aware of existing grant programs that we can allocate money to and create criteria directing funding.

Bob Schroeder emphasized the need to look for projects that have clearly articulated outcomes consistent with habitat for game, fish and wildlife.

Timelines

Interim Chair Kilgore asked for volunteers to help: 1.) Create the framework for outcomes or goals, principles for the framework, criteria by which the council will evaluate outcomes as well as identifying priorities; 2.) Information needs, more specifically public input; 3.) Set timelines. The Governance Committee will meet to put this information together.

Interim Chair Kilgore would like to establish a personnel committee to get an executive director selected and identify a staffing plan. Bob Schroeder, James Cox, Rep. Rick Hansen volunteered to be on the Personnel Committee.

Future Meeting Schedules

Bill Becker will organize a meeting for the Governance Committee on January 7, 2009, 1:00 p.m., in St. Paul.

Bill Becker will put together a meeting schedule of the Lessard Outdoor Heritage Council starting on January 12, 2009, then every second and fourth Monday, from 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., until June.

The Personnel Committee will meet December 23, 2008, in the morning.

Public Comments

Robert Austin from New Prague, Executive Director Gary Leif of the Sportsman for Change, and Former Senator Bob Lessard addressed the council.

Adjourn

Interim Chair Kilgore adjourned the meeting at 4:20 p.m.