



MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING APPROVED MINUTES

Location: East Bay Township Hall
1965 North 3 Mile Road
Traverse City, MI 49696

Date: August 14, 2024

Time: 9:00 AM

Chair Rustem called the meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Board of Trustees (Board) to order at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 14, 2024, and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

Present for the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board (Board):

Mr. Bill Rustem, Chair; from Alameda Township, Ingham County

Mr. Steve Hamp, Vice-Chair; from the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County

Ms. Chris MacInnes; from the Village of Beulah, Benzie County

Mr. Scott Bowen, DNR Director; from the City of Grand Rapids, Kent County

Absent:

Dr. Brandy Brown, Vice-Chair; from the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County

Present for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR):

Clay Summers, Grants Management Section Manager; Jon Mayes, Recreation Grants Manager;

Mike Chuff, Financial Specialist; Scott Whitcomb, Office of Public Lands; Grant Coordinators:

Charamy Cleary, Merrie Carlock, Riley Millard, and Kelsey Dietz.

Also participating were other interested parties.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF JUNE 12, 2024

Chair Rustem called for adoption of the minutes for the June 12, 2024, MNRTF Board meeting.

**MOVED BY MR. BOWEN, SUPPORTED BY MS. MACINNES, TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF
THE JUNE 12, 2024, MNRTF BOARD MEETING.**

MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR MEETING OF AUGUST 14, 2024

Chair Rustem called for adoption of the agenda for the August 14, 2024, MNRTF Board meeting.

Mr. Hamp requested the agenda for the August 14, 2024, meeting be amended to correct Item V. (h.) to read "Houghton County" where "Emmet County" is shown.

MOVED BY MR. HAMP, SUPPORTED BY MR. BOWEN, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA FOR THE AUGUST 14, 2024, MNRTF BOARD MEETING AS AMENDED.

MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Chris Bunch, Executive Director, Six Rivers Land Conservancy

Mr. Bunch thanked the Board and DNR staff for attending the MNRTF tour on Tuesday, August 13, 2024, and showed appreciation to the tour host committee.

- b. Melissa Prowse, Planning & Development Manager, Oakland County Parks and Recreation

Ms. Prowse provided a status update on the Turtle Woods Acquisition application (TF24-0047).

- c. Tom Nelson, Executive Director, Leelanau Conservancy

Mr. Nelson thanked the Board for their work and showed appreciation for the August 13, 2024, MNRTF tour. He requested that the Board consider the possibility of amending MNRTF statute to allow land trusts and federally recognized tribes to be eligible applicants.

- d. Stacy Bare, Executive Director, Friends of Grand Rapids Parks

Mr. Bare spoke in support of allowing federally recognized tribes to be eligible applicants to the MNRTF. He also requested the Board consider ways to increase participation of projects containing natural surface trails and noted the importance of these types of trail systems.

- e. Jill Sill, Executive Director, Norte Cycling

Ms. Sill expressed her gratitude to the Board for their support in the expansion and investment of all types of cycling infrastructure.

- f. Jonathan Jarosz, Executive Director, Heart of the Lakes

Mr. Jarosz thanked the Board and DNR staff for attending the August 13, 2024, MNRTF tour. He noted the importance of recognizing the increase in outdoor participation since 2020 and stressed that "casual" users of the outdoors are increasing while "core" users are declining. He also stated that lag-time in passing of the MNRTF appropriation bill continues to increase costs of projects.

Chair Rustem noted that the Board sends representatives to meet with the legislative Appropriations Committee every year and continued outreach to legislators is important.

g. Susie Grace, Founder, Valor Skincare

Ms. Grace noted that partnerships between the private sector and public sector are essential to supporting natural resource conservation and education.

Chair Rustem asked for any additional public comments.

None were offered.

V. PRESENTATIONS FROM 2024 GRANT APPLICANTS

Jon Mayes asked the presenters to adhere to their ten-minute presentation time limit.

Questions from the Board were addressed during each presentation.

- a. TF24-0100 City of Munising, Munising Bay Overlook Acquisition (Alger County), Devin Olson, City Manager; Alex Kolton, Alger Conservation District; Will Cooksey, Trust for Public Land

MNRTF Grant Request: \$639,000

Matching funds: \$600,000

Total Project cost: \$1,239,000

- b. TF24-0185 City of Manistee, Man-Made Lake Property Acquisition (Manistee County), Bill Gambill, City Manager

MNRTF Grant Request: \$94,000

Matching funds: \$60,000

Total Project cost: \$154,000

- c. TF24-0174 Pere Marquette Township, Pere Marquette Conservation Entry and Trail Project (Mason County), Kelly Smith, Township Supervisor

MNRTF Grant Request: \$400,000

Matching funds: \$435,000

Total Project cost: \$835,000

Chair Rustem called for a 10-minute recess at 10:15 a.m.

Chair Rustem called the meeting back to order at 10:27 a.m.

- d. TF24-0091 Presque Isle County, Ocqueoc Outdoor Center Development (Presque Isle County), Mary Ann Heidemann, County Commissioner and Susan Radka, Friends of the Ocqueoc Center

MNRTF Grant Request: \$144,300

Matching funds: \$62,100

Total Project cost: \$206,400

- e. TF24-0095 City of Au Gres, Au Gres Riverfront Campground Improvements (Arenac County), Dale Wiltse, City Manager and Rick Freeman, City Engineer

MNRTF Grant Request: \$400,000

Matching funds: \$200,000

Total Project cost: \$600,000

- f. TF24-0096 Grand Traverse County, Ottaway Crossing Footbridge (Grand Traverse County), Koffi Kpachavi, Executive Director, Grand Traverse Conservation District; Rod Kivell, Chair, Grand Traverse County Parks and Recreation Commission; Jon Chase, Director, Grand Traverse County Parks; Steve Largent, Program Coordinator, Grand Traverse Conservation District

MNRTF Grant Request: \$400,000

Matching funds: \$400,000

Total Project cost: \$800,000

- g. TF24-0131 and TF24-0132 East Bay Township, 3-Mile Trail Segments 1 & 2 (Grand Traverse County), Beth Friend, Township Supervisor and Julie Clark, Executive Director, TART

TF24-0131:

MNRTF Grant Request: \$400,000

Matching funds: \$627,300

Total Project cost: \$1,027,300

TF24-0132:

MNRTF Grant Request: \$400,000

Matching funds: \$4,567,300

Total Project cost: \$4,967,300

- h. TF24-0150 Calumet Township, Swedetown Recreation Area (Houghton County), Jenifer Jennings Shaud, Swedetown Trails Club

MNRTF Grant Request: \$400,000

Matching funds: \$141,000

Total Project cost: \$541,000

- i. TF24-0049 Village of Thompsonville, Thompsonville Multi-Use Trailhead & Campground (Benzie County), Dr. Charles Kraus, President, Thompsonville Area Revitalization Project Board and Eugene Allen, President, Village of Thompsonville

MNRTF Grant Request: \$341,100

Matching funds: \$119,900

Total Project cost: \$461,000

Chair Rustem called for a 15-minute recess at 12:18 p.m.

Chair Rustem called the meeting back from recess at 12:31 p.m.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Department Priorities – Scott Whitcomb

Mr. Whitcomb provided an update on current DNR land strategies and priorities. He noted important considerations being lake and river access, wildlife and hunting access, winter deeryards, consolidation vs service expansion, and infrastructure repair vs removal.

b. Director's Update – Director Scott Bowen

Director Bowen stated that the Brandon Road Interbasin Project in Illinois is moving forward, and a project partnership agreement has been executed with the State of Michigan. He also emphasized the benefits for long-term funding that would result from the switch to an "Opt-Out" Recreation Passport model.

c. Update on MNRTF Staff Activities – Clay Summers

Mr. Summers provided an overview of current staff activities, including current scoring of the 2024 recreation grant applications and regular day-to-day business. He also introduced Ms. Kelsey Dietz, the new regional grant coordinator for the Southern Region.

d. Withdrawal of Project – Jon Mayes

a. TF16-0133 – Markin Glen Park Project (Kalamazoo County) \$192,000

Mr. Mayes provided an overview of the project being withdrawn.

Chair Rustem called to accept the withdrawal of TF16-0133.

**MOVED BY MS. MACINNES, SUPPORTED BY MR. HAMP TO ACCEPT THE
WITHDRAWAL OF TF16-0133.**

MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

e. Scoring Criteria Update – Clay Summers

Mr. Summers provided an update on the ongoing review of DNR's recreation grant programs' scoring criteria: including meetings with external partners and staff analysis of scoring categories.

Discussion:

Mr. Hamp asked that the Board consider adjusting eligibility requirements to the MNRTF grant program.

Chair Rustem requested that DNR staff review MNRTF statute and prepare information to the Board on how adjustments to eligibility requirements can be made.

f. Past Due Grants Discussion – Clay Summers

Mr. Summers discussed ongoing efforts to ensure that MNRTF grant projects are completed punctually within agreed upon project timelines. He discussed a potential policy or guideline that would facilitate and encourage timelier completion of projects that are overdue.

Chair Rustem requested that DNR staff draft clear policy language for the implementation of this effort.

VII. BOARD PACKET REFERENCE MATERIALS

Chair Rustem reminded the Board that all remaining reports are contained in the Board's packet of materials.

Chair Rustem asked the Board if they had any questions or discussion about the remaining meeting materials.

None were offered.

VIII. OTHER MATTERS AS PROPERLY BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

Chair Rustem asked for any other matters properly brought before the Board.

None were offered.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Chair Rustem announced that the next meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board is scheduled for 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, October 16, 2024, at the MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory in Lansing, Michigan. Information will be posted in advance on the Board's website.

Chair Rustem asked for any additional announcements from the Board.

None were offered.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Rustem called for a motion to adjourn.

MOVED BY MS. MACINNES, SUPPORTED BY MR. BOWEN, TO ADJOURN.

MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

Meeting adjourned at 1:06 p.m.