



MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING

Minutes of August 16, 2023

9:00 AM

Lake Superior State University
Center for Freshwater Research and Education
Seminar Room, 100 Salmon Run Way
Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan

Chair Hamp called the meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Board of Trustees (Board) to order at 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 16, 2023, and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Chair Hamp expressed his gratitude and appreciation to the individuals that organized the tour.

I. INTRODUCTIONS

The following Board members were present:

Steve Hamp, Chair; from the City of Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County
Bill Rustem; from Alaiedon Township, Ingham County
Dr. Brandy Brown; from the City of Kalamazoo, Kalamazoo County
Chris MacInnes, from the Village of Beulah, Benzie County
Shannon Lott, DNR Acting Director; from the Village of Webberville, Ingham County

The following Department of Natural Resources (Department) Grants Management Section staff introduced themselves: Clay Summers, Section Manager; Jon Mayes, Unit Manager; Mike Chuff, Financial Specialist; Merrie Carlock, Alex Galloway, Charamy Cleary, Samantha Davis and Riley Millard, Grant Coordinators.

Also participating were various staff members of the Department and other interested parties.

Chair Hamp introduced Kieran Fleming, Director of Little Traverse Conservancy. Kieran welcomed everyone to Lake Superior State University and the eastern Upper Peninsula. Kieran stated that Whitefish Point to Mackinac City is incredibly unique in many ways including bird migration. Sault Ste. Marie has the highest migration of Golden Eagles east of the Mississippi! The Upper Peninsula is blessed with bears, wolves, and moose that signifies a significantly intact landscape. We need to make sure over the long term that we conserve these features. We also need to make these places accessible to the public so they can enjoy these splendid resources.

II. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF JUNE 14, 2023

Chair Hamp called for adoption of the minutes for the June 14, 2023, MNRTF Board meeting.

**MOVED BY RUSTEM, SUPPORT BY MACINNES, TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE JUNE 14, 2023, MNRTF BOARD MEETING.
MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.**

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR MEETING OF AUGUST 16, 2023

Chair Hamp called for adoption of the agenda for the August 16, 2023, MNRTF Board meeting.

**MOVED BY MACINNES, SUPPORT BY DR. BROWN, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA OF THE AUGUST 16, 2023, MNRTF BOARD MEETING.
MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.**

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Chris discussed the GREEN (Growing our Resilience Economy and Equity with Nature) initiative in southeast Michigan and taking that vision and moving it into an initiative to invest. The Department and Board were instrumental in creating this initiative. Chris stated that of the eight million acres of public land in Michigan only 200,000 acres of public land are in southeast Michigan where the population lives and works. The initiative calls for 30% of the land mass to be in some form of conservation by 2050. That would move the needle from 200,000 acres to 800,000 acres. Chris stated that the Board was critical in creating this initiative, and the Board will now be critical in driving the initiative forward.

b. Jeff Mikula, Public Works Director, City of Manistee and Shawn Middleton, Vice President Spicer Group

Jeff discussed a project in the City of Manistee. The City of Manistee is very fortunate to have tremendous natural resources. Located on Lake Michigan with the Manistee River and Little Manistee River feeding into Manistee Lake. This project is halfway between Manistee Lake and Lake Michigan on the north side of the river channel. The park was created in 1940 and named Riverside Park. The project was initially put on hold due to WWII but developed and dedicated after WWII in 1946 as Veterans Memorial Park. To this day local veterans cherish this park. In 1983, the city renovated the park with the youth corps. Forty years later, the park needs more help. The city has program money to repair broken items, but the community wants it to be more! With an investment from the Trust Fund, we could make this park sparkle again!

c. Heather Huffstutler, Development Director, Huron Pines

Heather shared that Huron Pines service area sits in between Little Traverse Conservancy and Six Rivers Land Conservancy. Heather voiced support for Alabaster Township's development proposal. In 2021, the trust fund approved the acquisition of this property. Alabaster Township is looking to move forward with development to combine natural area preservation with community engagement and getting people onto the land in safe and sustainable ways. Huron Pines fully supports the Alabaster Township project.

d. Wayne Koppa, Chair, Crawford County Trails Committee

Wayne detailed that Crawford County has a Trails Committee but no Parks and Recreation function within the County. The Trails Committee consists of volunteers including retired Department staff, the City Manager, and representatives from the County Road Commission. Crawford County has constructed \$1.3M worth of trails connecting Grayling to Hartwick Pines State Park and a \$1.8M non-motorized bridge over I-75. Wayne presented public comment to the Board in February requesting that the application criteria be modified to allow County Road Commissions to apply for grants. Wayne stated the application criteria disadvantages small communities where the County Road Commission has the expertise to manage these projects and township supervisors do not. Prefunding projects and engineering limits appear to be policy decisions. The Trust Fund is in the state constitution, but the application process is in state law and that does not require a vote of the people. The Department has a legislative liaison who can evaluate proposed changes like this. Wayne requested that language including County Road Commissions be recognized by the State of Michigan and the Federal

Government as units of government to complete projects that have a recreation component. Crawford County has 5 trail projects in the works, one of which connects a trail to a Trust Fund funded property (Rayburn Property).

Wayne concluded by asking the Department if they will examine the Road Commission eligibility issue. If the Department is not willing to evaluate this issue, the county will move ahead. Shannon Lott recommended that Wayne link up with Heather Huffstutler with Huron Pines. Heather and Wayne agreed. Chair Hamp also commented that the Board is aware of the inequity of trust fund distribution throughout the state and is working to balance that out.

e. Beth Friend, Supervisor, East Bay Township, Grand Traverse County

Beth commented that Michigan is incredibly fortunate to have a program that takes revenue from leases of state-owned oil, gas, and mineral rights and then invests them into conservation and public recreation. From a user perspective, Beth complimented the staff that support the Trust Fund and the goals of the Trust Fund. Department staff are extremely informative and helpful. Beth discussed two projects before the Board; the City of Traverse City, Brown Bridge Quiet Area Expansion that East Bay Township unanimously supports, and a development application put forth by East Bay Township, Grace Macdonald Park (TF23-155) to improve and expand winter recreation. East Bay Township's Grace Macdonald Park is a family-friendly park and community favorite. The application is proposing a warming hut next to an existing sledding hill to expand winter recreation and allow an opportunity for people who may prefer a respite from the wind and temperatures.

V. PRESENTATIONS FROM 2023 GRANT APPLICANTS

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

Questions by the Board were addressed during the presentation.

The August 2023 MNRTF applications presented include:

- a. TF23-0029 Clark Township – Hessel Marina Acquisition and Expansion Project (Mackinaw County); Mark Clymer, Clark Township Supervisor; Kieran Fleming, Director, Little Traverse Conservancy; Joe Graham, Little Traverse Conservancy

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$737,000	(74%)
Matching Funds:	\$259,000	(26%)
Total Project Cost:	\$996,000	

- b. TF23-0144 City of Sault Ste. Marie – St. Marys River, Rotary Park Modernization Project (Chippewa County); Tracey Laitinen, Engineering Project Specialist; Tyler Perron, Public Works Director

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$275,400	(69%)
Matching Funds:	\$124,600	(31%)
Total Project Cost:	\$400,000	

- c. TF23-0157 Crystal Falls Township – Heritage Trail Extension (Iron County); Scott Kenney, Crystal Falls Township Supervisor; Robb Anderson, Project Engineer, GEI Consultants

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$218,500	(74%)
Matching Funds:	\$76,900	(26%)
Total Project Cost:	\$295,400	

- d. TF23-0082 Baraga County – Point Abbaye Natural Area Improvements (Baraga County); Wendy Goodreau, Baraga County Clerk; Bill Sanders, Landscape Architect

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$300,000	(70%)
Matching Funds:	\$130,000	(30%)
Total Project Cost:	\$430,000	

- e. TF23-0063 City of Wakefield – Sunday Lake, Eddy Park Campground Expansion (Gogebic County); Robert Brown, City Manager; Tim Knutsen, Consultant from Beckett and Raeder

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$300,000	(60%)
Matching Funds:	\$200,000	(40%)
Total Project Cost:	\$500,000	

- f. TF23-0059 City of Traverse City – Brown Bridge Quiet Area Expansion (Grand Traverse County); Glen Chown, Executive Director, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy; Richard Lewis, Mayor of the City of Traverse City

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$2,352,200	(74%)
Matching Funds:	\$826,600	(26%)
Total Project Cost:	\$3,178,800	

- g. TF23-0152 Milton Township – Torch Lake Natural Area (Antrim County); Bob Kingon, Parks and Recreation Committee Member

Withdrawn

- h. TF23-0128 Bear Creek Township – Spring Lake Park Architectural and Accessibility Improvement (Emmet County); Dennis Keiser, Bear Creek Township Supervisor; Tim Knutsen, Consultant from Beckett and Raeder

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$300,000	(57%)
Matching Funds:	\$232,000	(43%)
Total Project Cost:	\$532,000	

- i. TF23-0191 Alabaster Township – Lake Huron Coastal Preserve Trail Development (Iosco County); Cindy Fowler and Kurt Fogelsonger, Parks and Recreation

MNRTF Grant Request:	\$300,000	(75%)
Matching Funds:	\$100,000	(25%)
Total Project Cost:	\$400,000	

The Board thanked the presenters and Department staff for coordinating the presentations.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Spark Grant Update – Clay Summers

The Department is in the active scoring process of the 450 project applications received. This is the final Spark round. There is a subset of funding (\$27.5M) that was moved over to the Council of Michigan Foundations that was originally called round three. Council of Michigan Foundations is working with the opportunity communities to disperse that subset of funding. The Department is planning to announce round two awards in early to mid-October.

b. Director's Update – Acting Director Lott

Acting Director Lott apologized for missing the June Board meeting, but she was wrapped up in budget meetings. The Department has received our fiscal year 2024 budget which is the largest budget in Department history, including five positions for Finance and Operations Division which includes Grants Management Section. The Department has also received an America the Beautiful Grant for \$5M to take out 28 of the 62 state-owned dams to re-establish fish passage.

c. Update on MNRTF Staff Activities – Clay Summers

Clay stated that his Grants Management Section team is phenomenal. Finance and Operations Division conducted their first intentional connection day where all Constitution Hall staff were back together. This routine will continue monthly allowing for cross over and the opportunity to work with our other sections including Real Estate and Minerals Management.

d. Withdrawal of Projects – Jon Mayes

TF17-0133 – Kalamazoo River Valley Trail (Kalamazoo County), Grant Amount \$300,000

MOVED BY RUSTEM, SUPPORT BY DR. BROWN, TO ADOPT WITHDRAWAL OF TF17-0133, KALAMAZOO RIVER VALLEY TRAIL, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$300,000. MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

VII. BOARD PACKET REFERENCE MATERIALS

Chair Hamp reminded the Board that all remaining meeting materials are contained in the Board's packet of materials and entertained any questions about those materials.

VIII. OTHER MATTERS AS PROPERLY BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS

The next meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board is scheduled for 9:00 AM, Wednesday, October 18, 2023, at Michigan State University, Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, Room 101, 4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing, Michigan. Information will be posted in advance on the Board's [website](#).

X. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Hamp asked for additional comments or discussion. None were offered.

The meeting adjourned at 11:58 a.m.



Steve Hamp, Chair
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Board of Trustees



Clay Summers, Manager
Grants Management Section
DNR Finance and Operations Division

Date: 10/18/2023