The meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Board of Trustees commenced at 9:00 AM, Wednesday, June 13, 2018.

The following Board members were present:

Sam Cummings, Chair
Keith Creagh
Steve Hamp
Erin McDonough
Bill Rustem

Also in attendance were various staff members of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and other interested parties.

I. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF APRIL 11, 2018.

Chairman Cummings called for the adoption of the minutes for the APRIL 11, 2018 MNRTF Board meeting.

MOVED BY MR. HAMP, SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR CREAGH, TO ADOPT THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 11, 2018 MNRTF BOARD MEETING.
MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSenting VOTE.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR MEETING OF JUNE 13, 2018.

Chairman Cummings called for the adoption of the agenda for the JUNE 13, 2018 MNRTF Board meeting.

MOVED BY DIRECTOR CREAGH, SUPPORTED BY MS. MCDONOUGH, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA FOR THE JUNE 13, 2018 MNRTF BOARD MEETING.
MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSenting VOTE.
III. INTRODUCTIONS.

The Board members introduced themselves.

Mr. Dan Lord, Section Manager, Grants Management Section, Finance and Operations Division, DNR, introduced himself and Grants Management staff: Mr. Jon Mayes (Recreation Grants Manager), Ms. Rachel Schumaker (Administrative Assistant to staff and Board), Mr. Mike Chuff (MNRTF Financial Specialist), Ms. Tamara Jorkasky (Grant Coordinator), Ms. Merrie Carlock (Grant Coordinator), Ms. Erin Campbell (Grant Coordinator) and Ms. Lindsay Ross (Grant Coordinator).

Mr. Lord also introduced Ms. Sharon Schafer, Chief of Finance and Operations Division.

IV. PUBLIC APPEARANCES.

Chairman Cummings recited a quote from Mr. Bailey’s book (A North Country Almanac – Reflections of an Old School Conservationist in a Modern World): “We used to protect civilization from the wild, now we need to protect the wild from civilization.” For 34 years, Tom Bailey has been Executive Director of the Little Traverse Conservancy and a tireless pioneer, workhorse and advocate for conservation in the State of Michigan. His contributions to conservation and outdoor public recreation in Michigan, and the nation, are far too numerous to list, but have touched and impacted everyone that enjoys the extraordinary natural resources of this state. No one gets outdoor conservation better than Tom. He understands, and advocates, for thoughtful and inclusive conservation, he knows that it cannot happen without people and that sustainable land protection has to be for people and land. That allowing sensitive and sensible access is critical to broadening the support for the cause. He has been an inspiration and mentor to everyone across the entire state. Chairman Cummings stated that he was thankful for his friendship, dedication to this state and for everything that he has done. With his retirement, the conservation community is truly losing an arm. His shoes, his spirit, and his hat will be incredibly difficult to fill. Mr. Bailey was then presented with a “Good Deed” document signed by the board.

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

Mr. Bunch complimented Mr. Bailey stating that he has been an icon of the private conservation movement in Michigan. He really pioneered it, as one of the first executive directors, and drove the land conservancy process in the state. He has always been a listening ear and given measured advice. Mr. Bunch stated that he is extremely grateful to Mr. Bailey. He presented Mr. Bailey with a pen; the barrel of which was made from an oak that lived on a conservancy property.

Mr. Glen Chown, Executive Director, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

Mr. Chown stated that Mr. Bailey is a force for the local land conservation movement in Michigan. Mr. Bailey hired Mr. Chown in 1988 as the first Associate Director of Land Protection for Little Traverse Land Conservancy. He learned many things from Mr. Bailey including; the importance of relationships, partnerships, common vision and working together. Mr. Chown also recited a
quote from Mr. Bailey’s book: “I believe if more children could spend more time in the natural world, they would have fewer problems. I believe that there would be less helplessness and hopelessness and homelessness in our society if more people were able to spend more time learning and growing outdoors. I believe in the rightness and goodness of nature to the very depths of my being. I’ve seen the healing and powerful regenerative affect that nature has had on me and others. The goodness and brightness of this power is something I know to be true.”

Ms. April Scholtz, Director of Land Protection, West Michigan Land Conservancy

Ms. Scholtz thanked Mr. Bailey for teaching her the importance of partnerships and supporting local communities. Many of the projects across the state would not have been possible if it hadn’t been for those partnerships and Mr. Bailey really was the individual that showed everyone how to be a great partner to make that happen.

Ms. Helen Taylor, State Director, The Nature Conservancy

Ms. Taylor stated that Mr. Bailey has an ability to articulate his heart, vision and his work of conservation unlike any other. He is never daunted by his work. He brings three categories of leadership to the state and board; vision, professional application and implementation. His commitment to create Heart of the Lakes, so that there would be a stronger conservation movement in the state, was powerful. The conservation world will now make the commitment to personally make sure that that vision carries out. So much has been learned from Mr. Bailey and Ms. Taylor thanked him for giving her something to aspire towards and more boldness toward what she is trying to do every day in this work.

Mr. Tom Bailey, Executive Director, Little Traverse Conservancy

Mr. Bailey presented in support of Clark Township’s Lake Huron Access Acquisition Project. This project will address the strong need for extra parking to serve the marina. This will also provide space for snowmobilers in the winter, as this will be the only off-street public parking. They are trying to facilitate more public access.

Mr. Bailey stated that it has been a tremendous honor and thrill to be involved in so many of the great projects and see this program doing so much good in the state. This was his last meeting as the Executive Director of Little Traverse Conservancy. It has been a great privilege for the past 34 years to be a part of this. He stated what a tremendous program this is and that it is government at its best. To the extent that he has been able to make a contribution, he hopes that he has been able to return a fraction of the blessings that he has received in his career.

Chairman Cummings stated that the board and staff had an extraordinary tour around Genesee County and the City of Flint. He expressed his gratitude to the hosts and mentioned what wonderful projects that the board was able to see. He thanked Genesee County Parks, Genesee County, City of Flint, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, Ruth Mott Foundation, Genesee/Flint Chamber of Commerce, The Hagerman Foundation and Six Rivers Land Conservancy. Having been involved in urban revitalization for almost 30 years, he acknowledged the tenacity,
dedication and passion of the people of Flint. The board is extremely grateful, on behalf of the people of the State of Michigan, to be able to partner with them on developing their communities.

**Mr. Mark Young, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners, Genesee County**

On behalf of the mayor, himself, the City of Flint, and Genesee County, Mr. Young thanked the board and staff for visiting and for the commitment that has been shown. He appreciated that the board and staff were able to see the processes that they are going through and the vision and focus as they move things forward on these projects and endeavors. The board had the opportunity to see Genesee County’s newest gem, “Atlas County Park”, a beautiful facility that they want to make sure stays in its natural state and the Flint Riverfront Restoration Project. Mr. Young thanked the board again for all that they have done. Mr. Young also congratulated Mr. Bailey on his endeavors.

**Ms. Barbara Garbutt, Citizen, Commerce Township**

Ms. Garbutt presented in support of the Scarlet’s Playground at Dodge Park #5 Project. For over 35 years she served as the Director of Outdoor Education and as the Elementary Principal for Walled Lake Schools. During her tenure, she worked with many children who were wheelchair bound. These children were often spectators to the other children enjoying the amenities of the parks. With this proposed park, they no longer have to be spectators, they can be participants. This is a wonderful thing for children with disabilities.

**Ms. Karyn Miller, Supervisor, Flint Charter Township**

Ms. Miller presented in support of their acquisition of the former Pirate’s Park property. This park has been closed for approximately 10-15 years. It is located in the middle of the Township’s business district. The Township currently only has one small park that contains three swings and a couple of trails. There is a need for this new park to meet the needs of their residents. Their goals to repurpose this property include: an urban beach, nature trails, a possible amphitheater for music in the park and a dog park. A dog park has been added to their master plan for parks and recreation and they have received many requests from the residents. The Township recently created a Downtown Development Authority and partnering with the Township, they will maintain this park. The Township strongly supports the vision for this project.

**Ms. Peggy McTigue, Co-Chair of the Cherry Beach Committee, Chikaming Township, and Ms. Marcy Hamilton, Deputy Executive Director, Southwest Michigan Planning Commission**

Ms. McTigue and Ms. Hamilton presented on their Cherry Beach Preservation and Expansion Project. They are requesting $3,299,850 from the MNRTF. They have secured $625,000 to date. The land appraised at $3,750,000. They have launched a public fundraising campaign. This parcel will triple the size of Cherry Beach. There are seven miles of lake frontage in the Township; only two percent of that is public. With this acquisition, there would be three percent public access. Warren Dunes is within walking distance of Cherry Beach. It is located along the Lake Michigan Water Trail and US Bike Route 35.
Mr. Mario Ortega, Consultant, McKenna Associates

Mr. Ortega presented on their Grand Beach Nature Preserve Acquisition Project. The Village of Grand Beach is located in Berrien County. This acquisition is to acquire 41-acres of existing coastal plain marsh. The total project cost is $3,200,000. They already have $800,000 of that committed. The residents of the village started a fundraising campaign several months ago. The fundraising is ongoing and the village will dedicate the remaining match needed. This property features beautiful natural resources. They want to maintain the pristine conditions, so this will mostly be for passive recreation. They are working with preservationists to understand the best way for people to enjoy this site, while also not harming the land. They have been working closely with Chikaming Open Lands (COL), which is the local land conservancy. COL has the expertise to provide the village with policies and procedures on how to properly utilize this site effectively and also maintain it.

Mr. Dave Austin, Consultant, Williams & Works

Mr. Austin presented on two applications; one for Lowell Area Recreation Authority and the other for the City of Lowell, for the River Valley Rail Trail Project. Lowell is in the middle of a 125-mile rail trial system. The trail begins just west of Owosso all the way to Belding. Lowell is the only gap in the 125-mile system. In 2013, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the National Park Service (NPS) created a master plan that identified work that needed to be done to complete that gap. There is an active wheat mill in Lowell that uses the railway, therefore it cannot be abandoned. There was a study conducted that looked at regional and local trail connection and how to connect that to the area plan. They are requesting $2,600,000 from the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). They are requesting $300,000 from the Recreational Trails Program from the DNR and a total of $600,000 from the MNRTF.

Mr. David Marquardt, Director, Grands Rapids Parks and Recreation Department, Ms. Carrie Rivette, Storm Water Manager, Grand Rapids Environmental Services Department, and Ms. Catherine Zietse, Communications and Public Outreach Manager, Grand Rapids Parks Department

Mr. Marquardt, Ms. Rivette and Ms. Zietse presented today on the Roberto Clemente Park Project. This park sits in the Blackhills neighborhood, in the City of Grand Rapids. The plan for this park includes; a new park shelter, upgraded ADA accessible restrooms, basketball courts, moving all surface parking outside of the park, storm water quality improvements, new play spaces with a focus on the natural environment, new walking pathways and ADA accessible trails. The proposed underground storm water retention system will treat the storm water onsite before it hits the Grand River. This park ultimately creates a greater greenspace. It is important for the City of Grand Rapids to connect their children with nature. There is a heavily wooded area along the trail that they intend to open and make fully accessible with LED lighting for safe passage. This trail leads to the school and neighborhood. The total project cost is $1,600,000. They are requesting $300,000 from the MNRTF. There is a millage that brings in roughly $4,000,000 a year, of which $3,000,000 is invested for capital improvements to the park system. The Environmental Services Department will provide a $900,000 match and $400,000 will come from the parks millage funding.
Mr. Howard Fink, Manager, Park Township

Mr. Fink presented on their South-side Lake Macatawa Land Acquisition Project. The Township has an existing piece of narrow land with a boat launch on it that contains very limited parking availability. They have always identified the boat launch as a kayak launch opportunity as well. With the launching of the motorized boats, they did not feel that it was the most ideal situation. A parcel of land adjacent to the boat launch came up for sale and they knew it was the perfect opportunity to create the lakefront park that they had envisioned. This property will include: a pedestrian park, there will be an area for kayaking, fishing and swimming. There will be kayak storage, information kiosks and additional parking. There is a house and pool on the property. They plan to fill the pool and incorporate some of the features of the house into the plans. This property is on the existing trails plan for Lake Macatawa. The Township and land owners have come to an agreed upon price for the property. The Township is requesting $675,000 from the MNRTF. The total project cost is $900,000. They will be providing the required match.

Ms. Emily England, Parks and Recreation Director, Commerce Township, Mr. David Scott, Supervisor, Commerce Township and Ms. Linda Davis-Kirksey, Consultant, Davis-Kirksey Associates, Inc.

Ms. England, Mr. Scott and Ms. Davis-Kirksey presented on the Scarlet’s Playground at Dodge Park #5 Project. This project does not only create a barrier-free park for children, it will allow wounded warriors to go to the park with their children, it will allow senior citizens the opportunity to be there with their grandchildren and will accommodate children with restrictions or children without. They presented a video that was a compilation of new clips, public speaking engagements and a music video for this project. They are requesting $195,000 from the MNRTF. The 501c3 group, Scarlet’s Smile, has also matched $105,000. This is a million dollar project and the 501c3 organization has single-handedly raised $500,000. Commerce Township will be managing this project and will also maintain it.

Chairman Cummings called for a motion to recommend funding of the Scarlet’s Playground at Dodge Park #5 Project, TF18-0136.

MOVED BY MS. McDONOUGH, SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR CREAGH, TO RECOMMEND FUNDING FOR SCARLET’S PLAYGROUND AT DODGE PARK #5 PROJECT.
MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSenting VOTE.

This will be for the 2018-2019 grant cycle.

Mr. Ken Hibl, Manager, City of Clare

Mr. Hibl presented on the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Extension Development Project, also known as “The Clare Gap”. This project will complete a gap that will allow for 86 miles of continuous trail. This trail is designated as part of US Bike Route 20. One challenge to this project is that they have to cross an active railroad. They have partnered with MDOT on this project. MDOT stated that they would approve a rail crossing. They are requesting $300,000 from the MNRTF. They received a TAP grant of $1,900,000. Total project cost is $2,800,000.
Mr. Brian Marzolf, Recreation Director, City of Auburn Hills

Mr. Marzolf presented on their Auburn Hills Kayak Point Park Development Project. This is their top priority for recreational development at this time. The main feature of this project is the kayak and canoe launch. There will also be a picnic shelter, parking and kayak lockers. This will add two miles onto the existing trail. The city has a Riverwalk master plan and this project aligns with those goals. It is also located in their parks and recreation master plan and consistent with the goals of Oakland County Planning and Economic Development. They have hired a woody debris specialist to help clear the river in preparation for water trail use. Director Creagh asked that once they have this up and open if they plan to be working with fisheries on a habitat management plan within the river. Mr. Marzolf stated that they were and that there is currently a fish stocking program already in place as well. They are requesting $199,600 from the MNRTF. They will be matching it with $70,200, $60,200 from their general fund and $10,000 of labor and electrical work for the project. Total project costs are approximately $270,000.

Mr. Gregg Strand, Member, Calhoun County Trailhead Alliance, Director of Corporate Foundations and Government Relations, Albion College

Mr. Strand presented in support of the Eastern Calhoun County – Iron Belle Trailhead Development Project. Calhoun County is the largest gap in the Iron Belle Trail, Great Lake to Lake Trail and National North Country Scenic Trail. Being that it is so rural it is a challenge. There is a lot of support in Battle Creek, Marshall, Albion and Homer. This will also provide many benefits to the college’s equestrian center, which is a main portion of the economic driver for the region. Future phases would include camping and a range of recreational resources and amenities. They are requesting $265,000 from the MNRTF. Albion College has guaranteed a match of $93,000.

Mr. Artie Bryson, Supervisor, Clay Township

Mr. Bryson presented on the Harsens Island Kayak Access Project. They are located in the lower part of St. Clair County. It is known as the home of the largest freshwater delta in the northern hemisphere. They are also home to the first Trust Fund grant that was ever awarded by the board in 1977, St. John’s Marsh Project. This project is going to provide kayak access to the Krispin Blueway and also paddling access to the North Channel of the St. Clair River and all the way through Mascamoot Bay. Other project features include; a bike trailhead, a parking lot, a nature trail, a 25-foot observation tower and public restrooms. This is a 9-acre parcel that they hope will become a recreation destination for boating, fishing, birders, bikers, walkers, joggers, paddle boarding and more. None of these needs are currently being met on the island. They are requesting $86,200 from the MNRTF. They are partners with the St. Clair County Parks and Recreation Department; the department plans to provide a thirteen percent match and the Township will also provide a thirteen percent match. The total project cost is $116,600.
Ms. Jennifer Wright, Director, Van Buren Parks and Recreation Department, Ms. Jennifer Zaenglein, Deputy Director, Van Buren Parks and Recreation

Ms. Wright and Ms. Zaenglein presented on their Van Buren Township Iron Belle Trail-Phase 1 Project. The scope of work for this project includes; a 10-foot wide trail, landscaping and trees along the trail, program acknowledgement signs, Iron Belle Trail acknowledgement signs and an Iron Belle Trailhead sign. They updated their master plan to include the Iron Belle Trail. The trail itself will be .45 miles. This will be a non-motorized trail. It will connect to the Washtenaw County’s Border to Border Trail, as well as to the Lower Huron Metro Park. It will also connect to Riggs Heritage Park, which is a 30-acre park. They are requesting $300,000 from the MNRTF. The total project cost is $400,000.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

MNRTF Financial Report

Chairman Cummings stated that if the MNRTF earns the standard treasury projection, and they award the standardized/recommended annual average, the MNRTF would break even. Unless they earn significantly more than the treasury projection, they are going to have to spend less. It is the board’s responsibility to be good stewards and maintain the long term viability of the program.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

Update on MNRTF Staff Activities

Mr. Lord outlined various MNRTF staff activities:

- Staff is conducting site-visits of the 2018 applications.
- Staff is looking at enhancements/improvements for the MiRecGrants online system from both the grantee and program side.

Project Withdrawals

- TF17-0021, Valley Farms Park Path Improvements. The Township no longer wishes to pursue this project based on the loss of key leadership and the current limited staffing.

Chairman Cummings called for a motion to accept the withdrawal of Valley Farms Park Path Improvements (TF17-0021).

MOVED BY MR. RUSTEM, SUPPORTED BY MS. McDonough, TO ADOPT THE WITHDRAWAL OF VALLEY FARMS PARK PATH IMPROVEMENTS (TF17-0021). MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.
Ms. Anna Mooney provided a brief update on the following senate bills:

**SB883** – Pursuant to the recommendation of the MNRTF Board, this act appropriates $49.9 million from the MNRTF for 34 acquisition projects (approximately $28.9 million) and 97 development projects (approximately $21 million). Total matching funds of $45 million result in total project costs of $94.9 million.

- This bill was signed on June 6, 2018.

**SB551** – This bill was sponsored by Sen. Hildenbrand. This act amends Part 19 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA) to establish an advisory group to provide guidance to the MNRTF Board in determining the amount of money to be made available for annual spending and operations. The advisory group will be comprised of the Governor, State Treasurer, Senate Majority Leader, Speaker of the House or their designees and a member of the MNRTF Board.

**SB763, SB931-932 and Senate Joint Resolution O**

This legislation seeks to amend the NREPA and the Michigan Constitution to provide flexibility for the manner in which oil, gas and mineral royalty revenue is to be distributed to the MNRTF and the State Park Endowment Fund (SPEF).

This legislation would change the formula for funds currently distributed from the SPEF to designate at least 15% of the royalties to be used towards local public recreation projects. The proposed changes to NREPA and the Michigan Constitution could also allow for more grants to be awarded from the MNRTF each year for the development of public recreation facilities.

- This legislation passed the Senate and was referred to the House Committee on Appropriations.

The Nature Conservancy, Michigan Environmental Council, Trails and Greenways Alliance, mParks, Heart of the Lakes, Michigan United Conservation Club, Michigan Association of Counties, Flint Riverfront Conservancy and several individuals and stakeholders, were all in support of this and working on the legislation. Director Creagh thanked Rich Bowman for his great leadership.

**VII. STATUS REPORTS.**

**DNR Real Estate Report – State Acquisitions**

Mr. Jon Mayes filled in for Mr. Scott Goeman, Manager of Real Estate Services Section, who was not in attendance.

Since the last Board meeting, there were no MNRTF acquisitions taken to Director Creagh for approval.
Completed MNRTF Projects Report

No discussion.

MNRTF Land Consolidation and Line Item Department Projects

No discussion.

VIII. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The next meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board is scheduled for 9:00 AM, Wednesday, August 15, 2018, Quality Inn & Suites, 2603 N. Lincoln Road, Escanaba, Michigan.

IX. ADJOURNMENT.

MOVED BY CHAIRMAN CUMMINGS, SUPPORTED BY MR. RUSTEM, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. MOTION PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:27 PM.

Sam Cummings, Chairman
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Board of Trustees

Dan Lord, Manager
Grants Management Section
Finance and Operations Division

8.15.18
DATE