

NORTH DAKOTA

Recreational Trails Program Advisory Committee (RTPAC) Meeting
July 8, 2020 at 1:00PM

PRESENT:

- **RTPAC Members:**
 - *Non-Motorized*
 - Dave Mayer
 - Jeannie Schmidt
 - Glee Mayer
 - Andy Banta
 - *Motorized*
 - Nick Lippert
- **NDPRD:**
 - Jolene Rieck
 - Char Binstock
- **FHWA:**
 - Kraig McLeod
 - Pam Todd
- **NDDOT:**
 - Pam Wenger
- **Applicants:**
 - MDH Trail Association – Roger Ashley & Curt Glasoe
 - Barnes Co. Park Board – Rodney
 - City of Abercrombie – Wayne Ulven
 - City of Grafton – Connie Johnson
 - City of Horace – Matt Lower
 - NDPRD – Todd Thorson
 - Lewis & Clark – Katie Ogden
 - TRMF – Joslyn Tooz

ABSENT:

- Keri Vammer

PUBLIC ATTENDEES:

Matthew Davidson – North Country Trail Association

ND Parks & Recreation Department Director, Andrea Travnicek, Ph.D. Opening Remarks

Andrea introduced herself, shared her background and thanked the group for the invitation and opportunity to learn more about the program as this is her first meeting.

FHWA Updates and Discussion – Kraig McLeod, FHWA

Kraig shared that the FAST Act is expiring soon and they're waiting on an extension or replacement, which affects the funding of the Recreation Trails Program.

Title VI – Pam Todd, FHWA and Char Binstock, NDPRD

- Char discussed Title VI and clarified the Title VI coordinator position for their entity/organization.
- Do research for your LEP plan using the US Census website (data.census.gov)
 1. Select Geography
 2. Model your plan based on the users in the area of your program.
- Char shared a number of resources for Title VI including registering for Linguistica translator services and the NDDOT site. Char also shared video links that are within the presentation.
- NDPRD will randomly select sub-recipients for Title VI Audits to see if any complaints have been file and if so, they will check to make sure procedures were followed correctly.
- Pam shared that if you have less than 1,000 people or 5% of the population in your county, you fall under the Safe Harbor Act.
- Barry Johnson asked if there have been any new statue and title language changes recently. Pam answered that there have not been, and there isn't talk of making changes in the next year.

Overview of FY21 applications and discussion of SharePoint/Microsoft Teams – Char Binstock, NDPRD

- 200 applications totaling \$2.4 million with \$1 million available to award
- 6-9-month timeline for approval from application to notice to proceed with project

Char discussed using the Microsoft Teams meeting format for the RTPAC Board Applicant presentations, as well as, using Share Point to access applications. She asked for feedback from any committee members having problems connecting.

- Andy – MS Teams is lagging quite a bit from the phone conversation
- Dave – not accepting phone or microphone on computer
- Rich – not recognizing microphone
- Simon – on phone, trouble on computer

Ranking process for applications – Jolene Rieck, NDPRD

Jolene gave an overview of how the ranking process will work for the board members

- Ranking process is based on ranking projects in comparison to each other.

- Each advisory board committee member should save their individual ranking sheet on their local drive, fill-in and then email to Char.
- Compare each project by asking yourself the question, "Does project #1 fulfill the goals and needs of the Recreation Trail Program better than #2?" If yes, then fill in the box to the right with a #2 in it.
- Add up the number of colored boxes per row and enter under Total Times Chosen. Once this is done for each row, the column should add up to 190.
- Josh Mathern asked a question. "Is there a ranking component that has to do with cost? For example, if project 1 is \$1 million and project 2 is \$50K will project 1 be better than 2." Jolene answered saying that cost is not an identified factor in ranking and reminded the group that there is a cap of \$200,000 awarded per project.
- Char also pointed out where to find the RTP manual on the website (parkrec.nd.gov/business/grants), which includes more information and examples of the ranking process.

Char walked through presentation slides that detailed the Recreational Trails Program timeline whereas the ranking score sheets are due to the Grants Coordinator by **Friday, July 31, 2020**.

Final Discussion and Questions

City of Horace Question

The City of Horace would like to amend the scope and location of the project as their original project has been funded through the Transportation Alternatives round. Char asked the board's opinion on this request. Policy states that new applications cannot be submitted after the deadline, but will the board allow an amendment to the original application? Board members shared questions and thoughts including Dave feeling that they should be excluded this round and submit next time. Glee felt that they shouldn't be punished for receiving funding and leaned toward allowing them to participate this year will help their project move along. Dave made additional observations based on the application. Andy discussed that making an exception for one may make it complicated for other projects who may also want to amend. He also noted that the City of Horace was upfront about applying for other funding. Pam shared that the funding they were awarded was for fiscal year 2022. Jolene's recommendation is to evaluate the grant as submitted (Phase 2) and give the applicant the opportunity to present at next week's meeting and let the advisory board rank.

Board Member Resignation – Keri

Char requests an emergency action to fill the Member At Large for Motorized position. She made a request to open up applications to fill the unexpired term. Motion Passed. No discussion or nay responses.

Dave Mayer Question

Dave had some concern with the absence of guidelines on scoring criteria for the ranking of the projects. Char pointed out the guidelines that are on page 10 of the RTP manual, and there was still concern from Dave and Andy that this wasn't concrete enough. Pam shared background on the Paired-Based Scoring and stated that it worked well for the TA program for NDDOT. Ranking and scoring process is under review. Jolene shared that revisions can be made for next time. She shared reasoning why the department hesitates to give strict requirements. The decision truly is in the eye of the beholder and with the diversity among board members, they each bring unique perspectives.

Josh Mathern Question

Are agencies that have a member on the Advisory Committee allowed to submit an application? Yes. There may be a conflict of interest, but board members are encouraged to rank fairly and holistically. With 13 people ranking applications, the diversification helps create an equal scoring process and would dilute out any conflicts of interest.

Andy moved to adjourn. Jeannie second. 2:45 p.m.