

Governor's Council on Minnesota's Coastal Program Draft Meeting Minutes

Date: 01/29/2025
Minutes prepared by: Marcia Cardone-Mohar
Location: Hybrid Meeting – Teams and In Person at MPCA Building - Duluth
Approved:

Attendance

- Governor's Council on Minnesota's Coastal Program Members: Janice Erickson (Virtual), Peder Otterson (In-Person), Bill Majewski (In-Person), Dan Belden (In-Person), Don Schreiner (In-Person), Rick Goutermont (In-Person), Sharon Erikson-Ropes (In-Person) and Erik Peterson (In-Person).
- Minnesota's Lake Superior Coastal Program Staff: Amber Westerbur (In-Person), Clinton Little (In-Person), Cynthia Poyhonen (In-Person), Marcia Cardone-Mohar (In-Person), and Julie McDonnell (In-Person).
- Special Guests: Shane Steele, Sustainability Coordinator, City of Grand Marais and Doug (Richard) Ricketts, Research Assistant, UMD joined the meeting virtually; and Pat Sterner, MN Point 50 joined in person.

Decisions Made

- MOTION by Bill Majewski to accept the January 29, 2025, agenda, Seconded by Erik Peterson. AFFIRMATIVE All. MOTION ADOPTED.
- MOTION by Dan Belden to accept the October 2, 2024, meeting minutes as written, Seconded by Rick Goutermont. AFFIRMATIVE All. MOTION ADOPTED.
- MOTION by Erik Peterson in support of the Grants Committee recommendation to offer \cong \$300,000 to be offered equally (50:50), between the Lake Superior North and St. Louis River One Watershed, One Plans; and that the plan facilitators select projects that 1) incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge, 2) are actions put forth by the Bands (Fond du Lac and Grand Portage), or 3) the band is the partner. Also, the grants committee recommended that the Coastal Program designate \$50,000 for small grants (both STAR and capacity) for federal fiscal year 2025. Seconded by Bill Majewski. AFFIRMATIVE All. MOTION ADOPTED.

Agenda

- Welcome/Opening
- 2025 Pass-through Grants
- STAR Grants
- Program Update
- Meeting Closing
- 25th Anniversary Open House

Meeting Notes

Opening

Meeting called to order by Chair Janice Erickson, at 10:10 am.

Janice welcomed and thanked everyone for their hard work and dedication and a note about gratitude. Janice asked everyone to introduce themselves and mention what you are grateful for.

2025 Pass-through Grants

- Discussion included three annual grant applications, recommend a STAR grant funding level, and consider alternatives for anticipated unassigned funds.

Cynthia Poyhonen introduced the Pass-through Grant review process. Procedures follow the [Standard Operating Procedures of the Governor’s Council on Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program](#) (Page 10). Twenty minutes were dedicated for each application.

APPLICATION	APPLICANT	ADDRESS	AMOUNT REQUESTED
1	Minnesota Point Preservation Society, Inc. d/b/a Minnesota Point 50 (MP50)	3206 Minnesota Ave., Duluth, MN 55802	\$45,000
2	City of Grand Marais	15 N. Broadway, #600, Grand Marais, MN 55604	\$149,788
3	Trustees of the Hamline University of Minnesota	1536 Hewitt Ave., MS-A1760, St. Paul, MN 55104	\$58,471

- Application #1 Discussion: Don Schreiner and Julie McDonnell both had conflicts of interest and would not be participating in the discussion and Don Schreiner will not be scoring on this. After a good discussion, the scoresheets were collected.
- Application #2 Discussion: No conflicts of interest. After a good discussion, the scoring sheets were collected.
- Application #3 Discussion: No conflicts of interest. After a good discussion, the scoring sheets were collected.

Preparing for NA25 (July 1, 2025 – December 31, 2026)

Cynthia Poyhonen went over the handout that was in the Council packets. Mentioned that the program was told to plan for level funding, \$1.15 million; we try to pass through 50% to local projects We received just over \$250,000 in requests. We would like to assign the balance (≈\$350,000) to community prioritized projects.

The grants committee met and discussed the options and decided to recommend ≈\$300,000 be offered equally (50:50), between the Lake Superior North and St. Louis River One Watershed, One Plans; and that the plan facilitators select projects that 1) incorporate Traditional Ecological Knowledge, 2) are actions put forth by the Bands (Fond du Lac and Grand Portage), or 3) the band is the partner. Also, the grants committee recommended that the Coastal Program designate \$50,000 for small grants (both STAR and capacity) for federal fiscal year 2025. Links to more information on this can be found here: <https://www.southstlouisswcd.org/1w1p/> and <https://www.co.lake.mn.us/soil-and-water-conservation-district/lake-superior-north/>

Amber mentioned that there are a lot of unknowns for 2025, right now, with the Federal Government.

Janice Erickson asked if this was a good time to talk about the future of the council. Amber mentioned that the Commissioner’s office is reviewing the council. There was a lot of discussion with the council members and staff. Some thoughts: have the council talk with the DNR Commissioner; have the Commissioner’s office appoint members; would like to keep the name “Governor’s Council on Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program.” There was a request for a show of hands – Who wants to see the Council stay a council. All hands were raised. It was decided to make time on the March meeting agenda for more discussion on this.

STAR Grants

Cynthia Poyhonen introduced the STAR Grant review process. Procedures follow the [Standard Operating Procedures of the Governor’s Council on Minnesota’s Lake Superior Coastal Program](#) (Page 10). Twenty minutes were dedicated for each application.

APPLICATION	APPLICANT	ADDRESS	AMOUNT REQUESTED
1	Regents of the University of Minnesota	Darland Administration Building, Suite 409, 1049 University Dr., Duluth, MN 55812-3011	\$10,000
2	Sugarloaf: The North Shore Stewardship Association	6008 London Rd, Duluth, MN 55804	\$10,000
3	Cook Soil and Water Conservation District	411 W. 2 nd St., Grand Marais, MN 55604	\$10,000

- Application #1 Discussion: Don Schreiner has a conflict of interest and will not be participating in the discussion nor scoring on this. After a good discussion, the scoresheets were collected.
- Application #2 Discussion: No conflicts of interest. After a good discussion, the scoring sheets were collected.
- Application #3 Discussion: No conflicts of interest. After a good discussion, the scoring sheets were collected.

Program Update

Program staff shared updates on program initiatives and happenings since we last got together in October.

- The NOAA 312 Review has been slated for August 2025 and it will be virtual.
- Development of a Section 309 (the chapter in the Coastal Zone Management Act) Assessment and Strategy is underway. Clinton Little referred members to [MLSCP website \(https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/lakesuperior/coastalenhancement/index.html\)](https://www.dnr.state.mn.us/waters/lakesuperior/coastalenhancement/index.html) with details and past Assessment and Strategy documents
- It was mentioned by a council member when talking about the Coastal Council/Program, all should be careful to use appropriate language – maybe add to the next meeting’s agenda to talk about language to avoid regarding our work.

Closing

Amber wrapped up the meeting and it adjourned at 2:10pm and the Council took a picture with Janice who was on the screen.

The 25th Anniversary Open house will be from 3:00 – 5:00pm, all are encouraged to stay.