

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

Date: 03/20/2025
Minutes prepared by: Marcia Cardone-Mohar
Location: Hybrid Meeting – Teams and In Person at Lake County Highway Department-Two Harbors
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), Sharon Erikson-Ropes (In-Person) and Erik Peterson (Virtual).
- 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: Jeff Hrubes and Melanie Bomier, Board of Water and Soil Resources (BWSR); Tara Solem, Kari Hedin, Beth Hippert, Nate Quadhammer, Jenna Kaiser, Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD); and Illena Hansel, Cook County SWCD.

Decisions Made

- MOTION by Jim Erickson to accept the March 20, 2025, agenda, Seconded by Bill Majewski. AFFIRMATIVE All. MOTION ADOPTED.
- MOTION by Bill Majewski to accept the January 29, 2025, meeting minutes as written, Seconded by Dan Belden. AFFIRMATIVE All. MOTION ADOPTED.

Agenda

- Welcome/Opening
- STAR Grant Review
- One Watershed, One Plan 101
- Program Update/What's Next
- 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 shared a note about gratitude. Janice asked everyone to introduce themselves and mention what they were grateful for. Members approved the day's agenda and the January meeting minutes.

STAR Grants

- Discussion included four STAR grant applications.

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 | Silver Creek Township | 1924 Town Road, Two Harbors, MN 55616 | \$10,000 |
| 2 | Carlton County Soil and Water Conservation District | 808 3 rd Street, Carlton, MN 55718 | \$10,000 |
| 3 | St. Louis River Alliance | 394 Lake Ave. So, Suite 604, Duluth, MN 55802 | \$10,000 |
| 4 | Lake Superior Center DBA Great Lakes Aquarium | 353 Harbor Drive, Duluth, MN 55802 | \$10,000 |

- Application #1 Discussion: No conflicts of interest. 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: Conflict of interest by Bill Majewski – will participate in the discussion, but not scoring. After a good discussion, the scoring sheets were collected.
- Application #4 Discussion: No conflicts of interest. After a good discussion, the scoring sheets were collected.

One Watershed, One Plan 101

Melanie Bomier, Board Conservationist, BWSR (Minnesota Board of Water and Soil Resources) and Jeff Hrubes, Clean Water Specialist, BWSR, were introduced and shared what is happening regarding the One Watershed, One Plan (1W1P) on Lake Superior North and South. No other state is doing water planning in this way.

Lake County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD), staff Beth Hippert, Lake County SWCD Supervisor; Kari Hedin, Community Conservationist; Nate Quadhammer, Conservation Specialist; Jenna Kaiser, Forester; Tara Solem, District Water Planner, were introduced and spoke on their role in the 1W1P.

Ilena Hansel, District Manager, Cook County SWCD, was introduced and spoke on Lake Superior North's portion of the plan and the forestry work that has happening.

For a link to the slide shows – Please contact any Coastal Program staff.

What's Next/Program Update

Amber Westerbur was hoping to talk about the federal government happenings, but there is not anything new to report.

As was discussed in January, Amber mentioned that she had spoken with DNR Regional Management, Division of Ecological and Water Resources leadership, and Commissioner Strommen about the Coastal Council. Based on feedback, Amber suggested three recommendations for improvement of the overall effectiveness and efficiency of the Coastal Council's operations and functions. These recommendations are:

- **Reconfigure the make-up of the council to include county governments (4), state agencies that regulate land, air and water (7), and individual residents living anywhere in the state (4).** Governments and agencies would designate a member, and the DNR Commissioner would appoint the individual residents. The DNR would set the term limits and use the DNR's annual recruitment process to solicit applicants from residents. In addition to solving the appointment problem, this pivot ensures that our entire constituency will have seats at the table. This is foundational to program success.
- **Invite representatives from Tribal Nations, Tribal organizations and NOAA affiliated partners in the region to join the Coastal Council.** Tribal Nations and Tribal organizations include the Fond du Lac Band of Lake Superior Chippewa, Grand Portage Band of Lake Superior Chippewa and 1854 Treaty Authority. NOAA affiliated partners are Minnesota Sea Grant and the Lake Superior Reserve. By inviting them, they have a choice as to whether they participate. I hope they do, because their insight is something others cannot provide.
- **Entrust grant review to a committee of the Coastal Council.** This will right-size the Coastal Program's grant making efforts and bring them in closer alignment with programs of similar size throughout the state.

Each council member was given three dots to adhere to the recommendations listed above and in the room to see if we have consensus.

- Recommendation number one did not meet consensus – discussion included talking about ways to get it to consensus.
 - A recommendation to have counties recommend a citizen – then have four county citizens and four government folks.
 - Some were concerned about having too much government folks and not enough folks that have walked the land.
- Recommendation number two met consensus – no additional discussion
- Recommendation number three did meet consensus – discussion included concern about lack of transparency.
 - Cynthia mentioned that the state grant procedures will not change.

Amber feels she has it down and will work out the kinks from the discussion and will send it out to the council.

Closing

Amber wrapped up the meeting and it adjourned at 2:35pm.