

Upper Mississippi River Commission Notes

May 14, 2002

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Winona, MN

Present: Bill Howe, John Campe, Bob Mullally, Robin Grawe, Jim Sieben, Marc Schultz, and Roger Steinberg of the University of Minnesota Extension office, Rochester.

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 AM by chair Jim Sieben.

Moved by John, seconded by Bob to approve the agenda. Motion passed.

Moved by Bob, seconded by John to approve the minutes of the last meeting. Motion passed.

Organization: Bob expressed a concern that the articles of incorporation filed on April 4 had not been approved by the group. John noted that the papers filed were boilerplate and that he and Robin had acted under the direction of the group at its March meeting. Discussion followed comparing the documents actually filed and those drafted by Bob and sent out to the group a week prior to the meeting. Noted were the number of incorporators, the description of purpose, and provisions for governance. The central question was how much should be included in the incorporation documents and how much left to the by-laws. Bob noted that by-laws were easier to change than the articles of incorporation. John noted the articles of incorporation could be changed by notifying the state and submitting a fee.

Moved by John, seconded by Jim to ratify the Articles of Incorporation filed with the state of Minnesota in light of Bob's suggestions that the articles may need to be amended. Motion passed.

Moved by John, seconded by Bill that the group ratify the appointment of Marc and Bob as a committee to draft an organization structure including but not to be linked to draft by-laws and any appropriate changes to the Articles of Incorporation. Motion passed.

John reported that he was in the possession of checks totaling \$550 made out to the Mississippi River Citizen Commission. **Moved by Bob, seconded by Robin that funds provided by two individuals be deposited at the First National Bank of LaCrescent. Moved by Robin, seconded by Bill that John and Bob be designated assignees on the account.**

John reported that the filing fees to the state of Minnesota had been paid as a donation.

Robin passed around a copy of a handout describing the organization of the MRCC which she had prepared for a presentation to the UMRBA at its May 15 meeting. **Moved by Bill, seconded by John to thank the secretary for going to Davenport to present to UMRBA.**

Reports from Iowa: Robin reported that she had contacted three people in Iowa recommended by Mike Griffin of the Iowa DNR. Doug Mullen, retired district refuge manager at McGregor, said he was building a house and did not have time to serve on a board but would be happy to serve as a resource person. Jerry Enzler of the Mississippi River Museum at Dubuque expressed enthusiasm for the MRCC and suggested that the Museum have a representative on the board. He also encouraged the MRCC to consider holding future conferences at the Dubuque

conference center soon to be built. Marian Meier of Belleview, former citizen commissioner for the Iowa DNR, expressed enthusiasm for the MRCC and said that while she could not afford to take more vacation days for board meetings, would be very interested in working with us on Iowa projects.

Trips to Washington: John reported spending the better part of a day with the staff of Congressman Gil Gutknecht. He said that Jim Beabout of Gutknecht's office had indicated that Republican Congressmen were very favorable to the EMP, that they recognized the problem of interrupting data collection implied in sharp budget cuts, that they hoped for an eventual EMP budget of \$21 to \$25 million. John said that Congressman Gutknecht was spearheading measures to elevate forages and pastures to the status of commodities for federal assistance purposes and that he was disappointed that the farm bill did not give enough incentives to larger producers for buffer strips. Marc noted that NRCS staff has diminished and that the new bill would probably create pressure to better staff the offices. Bob reported that at the MPR Q and A River Project, he and Robin had argued for the need for decision making based on "good science." Marc noted the need for scientifically sound journalism. John reported that he had also spent time with the staff of Collin Peterson, who had served on the conference committee for the farm bill. He said that Congressman Gutknecht's office would like to be kept informed of the activities of the MRCC.

Jim reported that he had participated in a public meeting in St. Croix County with Congressman Kind concerning the UMR Basin Act.

Next Meeting: It was decided not to meet in June or July and to try to coordinate an August meeting with the low water tour of the Motor Vessel Mississippi and a possible joint meeting between the MRCC and the Mississippi River Commission in connection with their public meeting in Prairie du Chien. **Moved by Bill, seconded by Jim that Bill and Robin try to arrange the joint meeting. Motion passed. It was also agreed to work with the Corps of Engineers to provide an excursion on the MVM for community leaders and media through Pool 8.**

Science Fairs and distribution of Pool 8 drawdown videos: Robin reported that she and Kent had staffed a table at the La Crosse Area Middle School Science Fair, distributed brochures to students with river-related projects, and distributed 20 videos to La Crosse area schools through the Science Fair and by delivery for a total of 37 videos distributed to schools and media outlets. At the meeting she distributed videos to members who wanted them and two to Roger Steinberg for educational outlets.

MPR River Project and Picnic: Jim and Bob reported that the MPR picnic was sparsely attended because of weather but that Popeye Tronnier had been present. It was agreed to follow up with MPR on the possibility of doing a feature on recreational boating.

Facilitating public involvement for agencies: Robin reported that the Water Resources Development Act of 1999 had charged the Corps with creating a Comprehensive Plan for flood control, with attention also to environmental and recreational issues. The budget included a line for public involvement, and Robin reported that she had made initial discussions with the Corps about MRCC involvement. Roger Steinberg suggested a partnership with the extension offices of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Iowa.

New Business: Roger Steinberg expressed thanks for being allowed to sit in on the meeting and offered help in facilitating MRCC.

Marc reported that he had been invited to participate in a live broadcast on the river by WLFM on May 17.

Bob passed around brochures on Wisconsin's commercial parts.

Kent Pehler was chosen to be the next chair by consensus, with Bill active as an alternate if Kent was unable to take on the responsibility at this time.

John moved to adjourn. Motion passed. The meeting adjourned at 11:57.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Grawe, Secretary