

Minnesota River Congress 3

Meeting Summary from 4-16-15 Session

New Ulm, MN Turner Hall

6:45P.M. to 8:45 P.M. Official Meeting Time

The agenda was presented, approved and the meeting started on time. It was noted that the “Networking Fair” was once again a good success with much interaction, learning and awareness accomplished by those with booths. A statement of reflection and support from the Minnesota Earth Sabbath Team was then shared with all the attendees. Next, Natalie Warren with “Wild River Academy” gave a short presentation on this year’s expedition being planned along the Minnesota River. She solicited support from the congress to interact with those on the trip this year and provide learning opportunities for the paddlers.

The first order of official business was to review the outcomes from the first 2 congresses and the 6 basin-wide listening sessions. It was also noted that the agenda and documents for the meeting, along with actions to be considered, were developed by the Minnesota River Organizing Team after 4 in person meetings in Henderson MN. The Organizing Team members in attendance were asked to raise their hands and be recognized for their work. The review was presented by the Organization Team appointed facilitator/coordinator Scott Sparlin. Questions and clarifications were then called for and addressed.

Having no further inquiry regarding prior sessions the meeting continued on to the first action to be considered. The first action under consideration was for future meetings ground rules and conduct during sessions and related meetings. The ground rules were developed and approved by the Minnesota River Congress Organizing Team to bring forward for consideration and adoption by the full Congress. After ample time for review a motion was made to approve the ground rules, seconded and having no further discussion was approved unanimously.

The second order of business to be considered for action on the agenda was the review of the Functioning Ideals and Guiding Principles for the new entity as developed and approved to bring forward to the full Minnesota River Congress by the Organizing Team. After ample time for review along with questions and some clarifications, a call for a motion was made and seconded to approve the Functioning Ideals and Guiding Principles as written, having no further discussion the motion was approved unanimously.

The next order of business on the agenda was to review and vote on a mission/vision statement. Two mission statement options were developed, approved and brought forward to the full congress from the Organization Team. After ballots were handed out the full Congress, the vote to approve one was made to the following (**“To promote citizen participation from all communities of interest and take cooperative action to protect, conserve and improve the Minnesota River System”**). The statement was approved by a significant majority of the participants.

On the agenda next for consideration by the full congress was the call to prioritize and rank purpose statements which had been developed by the Organizing Team. A document with 10 organizational purpose statements was passed out to participants. Tables were asked to rank each purpose statement individually and then discuss as a table to come up with a possible consensus. It was explained that all ranking would be tallied for examination and dissemination by the Organization team between now and the next congress meeting in July. It was then conveyed to the participants that the results of their ranking would subsequently guide the Organization team in the development of direct actions which will be up for consideration at the next meeting of the full congress in July. It was also noted that the Organization Team would carefully examine the responses and that the next full congress would have ample opportunity to weigh in at the July session regarding the purpose statement priorities and subsequent actions which will then be strategized.

Action Board structure options ballots were handed out to all participants as well as a draft organizational structure chart which were developed by the

Organization Team to be brought to this full congress session. An explanation of the chart and its operational sequencing was explained. How the chart relates to those who are currently engaged in Minnesota River System initiatives and actions was also presented by the facilitator. It was also emphasized that a Management Committee would be sought out in addition to the Action Board which would consist of those with specialized talents relating to organizational management. Questions and clarifications were called for as the process went on. Ballots were turned in after ample time for examination and further clarifications. When the voting was completed it was then noted that the Organization Team would take the outcome of this voting and use it in the development of the final structure options. It was stated then that those options would be then presented at the full congress meeting in July and potentially adopted or possibly reconsidered for a late fall session.

Next steps followed on the agenda which were explained and described and included timelines. Participants were asked to be thinking of people and groups to be represented and then begin to develop a list of potential participants for the Action Board and/or the Management Committee. It was noted that a nomination process would be set up by the Organizing Team which would be voted on by the full congress at the next meeting in July.

An evaluation form was then distributed to all, forms were collected and will be analyzed and comments from them will be shared in future communications. A preliminary assessment of the forms found them to be very positive with productive input offered. We adjourned at 8:37 PM. There was 81 total attendee's including representation from throughout the entire river system. They included a very diverse set of interests and ages from high school, college, middle age, all the way up to those in retirement.