

DRAFT MINUTES

Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council (LSOHC)

June 25, 2025

Hybrid Meeting – Prairie Wetlands Learning Center & Zoom, pursuant to MS 13D

Call to Order: Chair David Hartwell called the meeting to order at 08:35 a.m. [\(00:00:02\)](#)

Members Present	Members Absent
David Hartwell (Chair)	
Ron Schara (Vice Chair)	
Suzanne Baird	
Rep. John Burkel	
Kristin Eggerling	
Sen. FOUNG Hawj	
Matt Kucharski	
Sen. Andrew Lang	
Darrel Palmer	
Tom Saxhaug	
Ted Suss	
Rep. Samantha Vang	

A quorum was present.

1. Review and Approve Agenda: [\(00:01:29\)](#)

Councilmember Suss made a motion to approve the agenda. – **Motion Prevailed**

2. Review and Approve Minutes: [\(00:01:48\)](#)

Councilmember Suss made a motion to approve the minutes from May 28, 2025 – **Motion Prevailed**

3. Conflicts of Interest Reported: [\(00:02:10\)](#) No conflicts of interest were reported.

4. Chair's Comments: [\(00:02:18\)](#)

Chair Hartwell thanked the partner organizations and members for their work and participation in the LSOHC Habitat Tour on June 24, 2025. Chair Hartwell provided updates on the process for hiring a new executive director in anticipation of Executive Director Mark Johnson's retirement. In the coming months, the Council is expected to create updated job descriptions and hear a presentation from the Legislative Coordinating Commission on the hiring process.

5. Executive Director's Report: [\(00:04:25\)](#)

Executive Director Mark Johnson thanked partner organizations and attending Council members for their participation in the previous day's Habitat Tour. Mr. Johnson thanked LCC IT staff Julius Menchikov for providing technical support at this meeting.

LSOHC Commission Assistant Tom Rebman provided the Council an informational presentation on the ML 26 Call for Funding Request process. Mr. Rebman described the distribution of press releases which were sent to all members of the legislature, local and tribal governments, and news media. Mr. Rebman noted news coverage of the Call for Funding Request and that the Council received a record number of 58 proposals. Council discussion followed.

6. Presentation / Discussion: Prairie Habitat Complex Building [\(00:16:24\)](#)

Greg Hoch, Prairie Habitat Supervisor, MN DNR, presented an overview of prairie habitat conservation work to the Council. Mr. Hoch's presentation discussed creating habitat complexes, prioritization of conservation efforts, and restoration practices.

Mr. Hoch then invited a panel of representatives from OHF partner organizations to share their perspectives with the Council: Sabin Adams, Minnesota State Coordinator at Pheasants Forever; Liz Beery, Associate Director of Grasslands at The Nature Conservancy; Jon Schneider, Senior Manager of Conservation Programs at Ducks Unlimited; and Wayne Ostlie, Director of Land Protection at Minnesota Land Trust. The panel discussed success and challenges in OHF-funded conservation efforts. Council discussion followed.

7. Discussion / Action: Review and Approval of ML2025 Accomplishment Plans
(01:27:52)

Chair Hartwell provided background information to the Council on the creation and review of accomplishment plans. Assistant Director Joe Pavelko informed the Council on the relevant events during the ML2025 funding process and common budget and parcel list edits. Council discussion followed.

Action: Rep. Burkel moved approval of ML2025 accomplishment plans with the exception of subd. 4(g) Big Swamp North – Peatland Restoration Project, which is expected to be reevaluated at the July 30, 2025 Council meeting.

A roll call vote was taken.

AYE:	NAY:	ABSENT:
Hartwell		
Schara		
Baird		
Rep. Burkel		
Eggerling		
Sen. Hawj		
Kucharski		
Sen. Lang		
Palmer		
Saxhaug		
Suss		
Rep. Vang		

8. Discussion: ML 2026 / FY 2027 Project Proposals – Process Overview: Scoring, Hearings, Discussions, etc. (01:35:14)

Chair Hartwell and Executive Director Mark Johnson explained the process for upcoming review and scoring of project proposals. Project Analyst Manager Sandy Smith reminded Councilmembers of the procedure for disclosing conflicts of interest as it relates to scoring of proposals.

No public testimony was heard.

Meeting adjourned at 10:28 a.m.