

League of Women Voters of Duluth • 32 East First Street, Duluth, MN 55802 •

**Join us April 15 - 7:00 - 8:00 pm via Zoom
Minnesota's Failing Grade on Climate Action**

What do you fight for?

How can Minnesota be one of the fastest-warming states in America?

Join us to hear Ellen Anderson share the science and policy that has created Minnesota's climate change challenge. Ellen is Climate Program Director for Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy (MCEA). Ellen will discuss the lack of progress toward meeting goals set by the Minnesota Legislature in 2007. Find out how you can be a part of the solution by joining us April 15 at 7-8pm. The public is invited. What do you fight for?



Zoom link:

<https://lwwmn-org.zoom.us/j/91722856739>

Meeting ID: 917 2285 6739

Dial in only: 1 312 626 6799

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**You are invited to the League of Women Voters of Duluth
Annual Meeting via Zoom**

**Thursday, May 6, 2021
7:00 pm Business Meeting
7:30 pm - 8:15 pm**

**Speaker, Terresa Moses
"The Justice of Intersectionality"**



See bio of
Terresa Moses
on page 3

RSVP Required by Saturday, May 1

We need to have a quorum to conduct our business and vote on the budget, the nominating slate, and the revised bylaws.

To RSVP, fill out the form on our website at

<https://www.lwvduluth.org/may-6-2021---annual-meeting.html>

or email lwwduluth@lwwmn.org and include your name and phone number, or call Julie Seidemann at 724-3031.

[Find Zoom information for the Annual Meeting on page 3.](#)

Annual Meeting Voting

We will be voting on the 2021-2022 Budget (page 4), the Board Slate (page 3), and on our revised bylaws found which can be found on our website at <https://www.lwvduluth.org/may-6-2021---annual-meeting.html> (scroll to the bottom of the page). If you don't have access to our website, please contact Julie Seidemann at 724-3031, and the bylaws will be mailed to you.

Our Mission

The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Officers

Co-President	Candy Winkler
Co-President	Sandy Grandmaison
Secretary	Gwen Thorson
Treasurer	Nancy Aldridge
Editor	Julie Seidemann

Calendar

April

TBD Membership Committee Meeting
 4-10 Cross Cultural Committee Meeting
 4-15 Natural Resources Committee Meeting
 4-15 Minnesota's Failing Grade on Climate Action
 TBD Racial Justice Event

May

5-6 LWV Duluth Annual Meeting
 5-27 LWV Duluth Book Club



Visit LWV Duluth website to read minutes from Board meetings and Observers' Reports.

Board Minutes

<https://www.lwvduluth.org/board-meeting-minutes.html>

Observer's Reports

<https://www.lwvduluth.org/observer-corps-reports.html>

President's Letter

The time is fast approaching for the LWV Duluth Annual Meeting. You will find a great deal of information in this Voter regarding this, but repetition can be necessary for some very important events. The date is Thursday, May 6, 2021 from 7:00 to 8:15 p.m. The meeting will take place via Zoom. As we need a quorum for voting, we are asking you to RSVP. The business meeting will take place promptly at 7:00 followed by our guest speaker, Teresa Moses. We are very fortunate to have such an accomplished and dynamic speaker this year. If time allows, there will be a Q and A. Please take time to read her bio in this issue of the Voter on page 3.

Another important event is the LWVMN state convention on June 11th and 12th, also a virtual event with registration beginning on April 12, 2021. Because this is a Zoom convention, it is easily accessible to most people. There is a registration fee of \$25.00. I encourage you to go to the LWVMN website at <https://www.lwvmn.org/convention-2021> to check out the two day agenda. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the effort of

the State League and how it intersects with our local interests.

And last, a call to action: Please call our Senators and thank them for their support for the passage of the "For The People Act."

This Act:

- Restores the Voting Rights Act
- Restores voting rights to formerly incarcerated individuals
- Curbs partisan gerrymandering
- Makes campaign contributions more transparent
- Modernizes the voter registration system

Thank you, and I will see you at the Annual Meeting!
 Sandy Grandmaison, LWV Duluth Co-President

P.S. As of this date, March 15, 2021, Deb Haaland was confirmed as Secretary of the Interior. She is the first INDIGENOUS person in the U.S. Cabinet...something to celebrate.

UPCOMING EVENT

"House Select Committee on Racial Justice Report to the Legislature"

Great opportunity for late April. Stay posted via our E News about a Zoom webinar event that LWV Duluth is co-sponsoring with the Clayton Jackson McGhie Memorial Board. Carl Crawford, Duluth's Human Rights Director, will interview two legislators, Rep. Rena Moran and Rep. Ruth Richardson, about their Report to the MN Legislature on Racial Justice and how local communities can act on the report's recommendations to address current racial disparities and inequities in MN, many the worst in the nation. Registration will be required. Stay tuned for a date. The time will be 6-8:30 on April 27, 28, or 29 depending on the schedules of the legislators.

LWV Duluth Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Statement

League of Women Voters of Duluth realizes that creative and innovative policies and practices are forged out of diverse points of view. We believe that diverse perspectives are necessary for responsible and representative decision making. Let us pause to acknowledge our commitment to welcome and facilitate diversity, equity and inclusion in all aspects of our work. We strive to include people from a mix of abilities and backgrounds in all of our activities.

League of Women Voters of Duluth Board of Directors Slate

Positions to be voted at 2021 Annual Meeting

Officers

President

Meg Litts 2021-2022

Vice President:

Mary Faulkner 2021-2022

Membership / 2nd VP

Anita Gille 2021-2022

Secretary

Gwen Thorson 2021-2023

Treasurer

Nancy Aldridge 2021-2023

Elected Directors

Jane Hovland 2020-2022

Gay Trachsel 2020 - 2022

Gail Nouska 2020-2022

Ellen Wiss 2021-2023

Sandy Grandmaison 2021-2023

Sue DeNio 2021-2023

Appointed Directors

Julie Seidemann 2021-2022

Theresa O’Gara 2021-2022

Emeritus:

Warren High

Portia Johnson

Gail Schoenfelder

Nominating Committee

Sally Munger

Theresa O’Gara

Candy Winkler



Nancy Aldridge
Christina Woods
Anita Gille

League of Women Voters of Duluth Annual Meeting

Thursday, May 6, 2021

Speaker, Terresa Moses “The Justice of Intersectionality”



Terresa Moses (she/her) is a proud Black queer woman dedicated to the liberation of Black and brown people through art and design. She uses creativity as tools of community activism like her recent solo exhibition, Umbra.

Moses is the Creative Director at Blackbird Revolt –a social justice-based design studio– and an Assistant Professor of Graphic Design and the Director of Design Justice at the University of Minnesota. As a community engaged scholar, she created Project Naptural – a natural hair initiative centers the experiences of Black women– and co-collaborated to create Racism Untaught– an anti-racist design research framework.

She is currently a PhD candidate in Social Justice Education at the University of Toronto. And, she serves as a core team member of African American Graphic Designers (AAGD) and as a collaborator with the Black Liberation Lab.

****Shaded words are links which can be accessed in our online Voter and on the Annual Meeting page on our website at www.lwvduluth.org under the Events and Newsletter tab.**

Zoom Information Annual Meeting on May 6 at 7:00 pm

<https://lwvmn-org.zoom.us/j/97718790031>

Meeting ID: 977 1879 0031

Dial-in only: +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Why I am a Member



LWV Duluth is a constant presence in my life. Lasting friendships have been forged along with a deeper understanding of issues and the knowledge that I can contribute to positive change. I especially appreciate the Cross Cultural Committee's efforts to listen and learn from our BIPOC community. I enjoyed participating in the small-group discussions of the book, "A Good Time For the Truth: Race in Minnesota" and this month we are reading "Caste" as part of The Sister book club. It is eye opening for me. Natural Resource defense is also of great importance to me, and I learned much from Don Arnosti's presentation on sulphide mining which was hosted by LWV. Observer reports give me an insider's view of what is happening in Duluth and beyond. The Legislative Roundtable is a yearly highpoint - hearing directly from our legislators in an informal setting brings to light the importance of registering voters and working to ensure everyone can vote. There is nowhere else that one can get such variety and depth in one organization.

I plan to be a lifelong member of LWV and look forward to meeting each of you at an upcoming gathering. Yes, we will gather again some day!

Thanks, Anita Gille, LWV Member - 11 years

**LWV Duluth Budget
2021-2022**

Income	
Contributions and Support	
Member Donations	\$2000
Non-Member Contributions	\$100
Total Contributions and Support	\$2100
Events	
Annual Meeting Dinner (May)	\$0
Annual Meeting Auction (May)	\$0
Citizens in Action (Jan)	\$1600
Equali-Tea (March)	\$2000
Plant and Book Sale (June)	\$1500
Total Events and Sales	\$5100
Grants	
LWVMN Voter Service Grant	\$1000
Other Grants	\$0
Total Grants	\$1000
Membership	
Household (\$100)	\$2500
Individual (\$65)	\$8000
Student/Limited Income (\$20)	\$100
Total Membership	\$10,600
Interest Income	
Interest Income	\$1
Total Interest Income	\$1
Total Income	\$18,801
Funds to Carry Over and Balance Budget	
General reserve funds from checking	\$2268
Total Funds to Balance Budget	\$2268
Total Budgeted for Use	\$21,069

LWV Duluth Assets of 3-01-21	
Checking Account	\$19,421
Savings Account	\$8208
Joyce Benson Memorial Fund	\$1450
Membership Scholarship Fund	\$405
Total	\$29,484

Expenses	
Committees	
Cross Cultural and Social Equity	\$400
Education	\$0
Health Care	\$0
International Relations	\$550
Legislative Roundtable	\$50
Membership	\$400
Natural Resources	\$400
Program Planning	\$0
Public Relations/Communications	\$0
Trafficking	\$0
Voter Service	\$1000
Total Committees	\$2800
Operating and Fixed Costs	
Bank Charge	\$25
LWVMN-PMP	\$4553
LWVUS-PMP	\$5232
Miscellaneous Operating	\$200
Phone	\$0
Postage Operating	\$20
President's Fund	\$100
Printing Operating	\$100
Rent	\$780
Supplies	\$300
Website	\$99
Total Operating and Fixed Costs	\$11,409
Member Activities	
Annual Dinner	\$0
Book and Plant Sale	\$50
Citizens in Action	\$1600
Equali-Tea	\$2200
Fall Kick-Off	\$300
Holiday Social	\$500
Membership Directory Printing	\$475
Membership Directory Mailing	\$35
Women of Influence	\$400
MN Convention/Council	\$250
National Convention	\$0
Total Member Activities	\$5810
Special Projects	
Other Special Projects/Voter Guide	\$0
Total Special Projects	\$0
The VOTER Newsletter	
Voter Newsletter Postage	\$550
Voter Newsletter Printing	\$500
Total VOTER Newsletter	\$1050
Total Expenses:	\$21,069

**The 2021-2022 Budget will be voted on at the
LWV Duluth Annual Meeting on May 6**

Opportunities to Make a Difference; Become Involved in a LWV Duluth Committee
Check website at www.lwvduluth.org or E-News emails for updates.

Committee	Contact	Next Meeting Date
Voter Service: Registration & New Citizens	Ellen Wiss mewiss62@gmail.com Candy Winkler: candywinkler49@gmail.com	Meets with whole Voter Service Committee on as needed basis
Voter Service: Forums	Mary Faulkner: faulkner.marykatherine@gmail.com Pat Castellano Castellanop4@gmail.com	As needed
International Relations	Liz Taylor 393-0703 (cell)	As needed
Membership	Theresa O’Gara 724-4821 (home) Barb Johnson 218-879-1890	April meeting, to be determined
Citizens in Action, January 29, 2022	Rosie Loeffler-Kemp 341-2014 Ellen Wiss 612-310-9797	Contact Rosie Loeffler-Kemp
Natural Resources	Sally Munger 728-0711 (home) Gay Trachsel 728-5478 (home)	Monthly Meeting via Zoom, Thursday, April 15, 6:30 - 6:55 pm
Newsletter Mailing	Sally Munger 218-728-0711 Gail Schoenfelder 218-310-8678	Generally last Wednesday of the month @ place TBD. Call Sally for information
Observer Corps	Sue Henke 218-340-9383	Depends on Board or Commission Port Authority observer needed, see page 6
Cross Cultural	Janet Kennedy 218-349-8057 Gail Schoenfelder 218-310-8678	Monthly meeting on Zoom, second Saturday, 10 - noon . Contact Gail (gail4duluth@gmail.com) for Zoom link
Book Club	Gay Trachsel 728-5478 (home)	Thursday, May 27 6:30 pm via Zoom. “Antelope” by Louise Erdrich Discussion Leader: Barb Huberty
Plant & Book Sale, Saturday June 12	Gail Schoenfelder Gail4duluth@gmail.com 310-8678 (cell)	Email Gail with intent to donate plants or books and/or to volunteer day of the sale
Communications	Julie Seidemann 348-1209 (cell) Gwen Thorson 624-4756 (home)	As needed
Equali-TEA Possibly Spring 2021	Gail Nouska 218-206-4682 Newska519@hotmail.com Jean Farmakes 218-724-4186 jfarmake@yahoo.com	Contact Jean or Gail if you are interested in helping.
Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women of Influence • Holiday Social • Annual Meeting 	Sandy Grandmaison, 348-7589 srgrandmaison@gmail.com	Contact Sandy if you are interested in helping with any of the noted events.



LWV Duluth “The Sisters” Book Club

**Thursday, May 27
6:30 pm via Zoom**

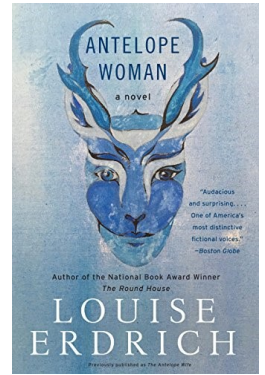
Questions: Gay Trachsel 218-728-5478

Zoom link will be sent out closer to the event.

FYI: April City Read is Colin Whitehead’s “Nickel Boys” — based on true story of the Dozier Reform School in Florida.

Book: “Antelope Woman”
by Louis Erdrich

It illuminates how history affects contemporary descendants who are products of two cultures, Ojibwa and white.
Discussion leader:
Barb Huberty



LWV Observer Needed for the Duluth Seaway Port Authority

Please consider this important and rewarding opportunity! The Port of Duluth-Superior is unique resource and a mainstay of our local and regional economy. Approximately 800 vessels and 35 million short tons of cargo move through the Port of Duluth-Superior each year, making it the Great Lakes’ largest tonnage port and one of the nation’s top 20. The Port supports nearly 8,000 jobs and contributes \$1.4 billion in business revenue to the regional economy. The Duluth Seaway Port Authority is an independent public agency created by the Minnesota Legislature in 1955 to foster regional maritime and economic development and advocate for port interests. The Port Authority is governed by a seven-member board of commissioners – two appointed by the governor of Minnesota, two by the St. Louis County Board and three by the Duluth City Council. The Commission welcomes LWV Observers. Their meetings are held on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Please contact Sue Henke for more information (suehenke@charter.net; 218-340-9383).

Observers’ Reports

African Heritage Commission - February 10, 2021

Present: City Staff, Kathy Wilson and Mollie Hinderaker. Commissioners Edmonds, Thornton, Staine, Pepper, and Ellison. Temporary chair: John Staine

Public Comment: Councilor Janet Kennedy thanked the Commissioners for their service on the African Heritage Commission. She reported that the development of the Martin Road Trail, renamed Waabbizheshikana, is an important project for the Indigenous Community and would like to see a similar project in Western Duluth, particularly the Oliver Bridge and the U.S. Steel site, that highlights the contributions of the African Heritage community. Comments to the Parks and Recreation Commission are being taken until Feb. 17. Commissioners were encouraged to have a voice in the development of these areas and their significance to the African Heritage community.

Elena Foshay and Duane Hill representing the Work Force Development Board addressed the Commissioners seeking advice to help the WFD Board improve their services to employers and those seeking employment. WFD works with employers on diversity, equity and inclusion and provides job seekers with training and goal setting. The Commissioners were asked what they were hearing about needs in the community and how WFD could reach out to those in need of services. Suggestions included: reach out to a variety of organizations such as the Family Freedom Center not just the NAACP, talk to people where they are and pay people (gift cards) to share their ideas one on one or as part of a focus group, talk to students particularly at the colleges, be present at job fairs and family nights at schools such as Myers Wilkins, identify those who could serve as community consultants (reimburse them) to identify the various factors that get in the way of securing a job.

By-laws: The Commissioners voted to approve the following Statement of Purpose of the African Heritage Commission: “The purpose of this Commission is to ensure that the views of the African Heritage community are incorporated in the decision making, future planning, and stewardship of the City of Duluth. The Commission will endeavor to act as a guide in the development of public policy, planning, and services so that the African Heritage community is adequately represented in these processes. The Commission will aim to plan, develop, and implement community projects that recognize and increase the awareness of the contributions of African Heritage history; to encourage and assist the teaching of African Heritage history; and to recognize sites in the community that are significant to African Heritage History.”

The next virtual meeting is on March 10, 5:30 PM. Demographic data requested from the city staff will be reviewed and discussed. The data requested of city staff by the Commissioners include: employment, businesses, education attainment, health disparities, justice and legal system, and general demographic statistics about the African Heritage community.

Submitted by Gail Schoenfelder

Observers' Reports

Duluth City Council – February 22, 2021

Nine citizens spoke to the issue of increasing the Duluth Police Department from two deputy chiefs to three. All of them cited their concerns. Invest in social services instead, please address use of force issues, need external accountability, address medical malpractice in the St. Louis County jail, and bias against people of color were topics presented. The City Council noted their concerns were heard. However, the Council unanimously passed the resolution to hire a third deputy chief. This will not have an impact financially on the department.

Submitted by Mary Jane Peterson

Duluth City Council-March 8, 2021

A consultant recommended spending \$23 million on capital upgrades to Spirit Mountain in order to improve the ski area's struggling finances. Spirit Mountain has required two cash bailouts totaling more than \$500,00. The COVID has forced scale backs. Councilor Forsman feels leadership is the key culprit. Accountability and transparency are needed. He also stated that Spirit Mountain is an asset. "Every dollar we spend in tourism taxes, brings \$18.72 back." Mayor Larson recommends action in the next several weeks in order to prepare for next winter.

Submitted by Mary Jane Peterson

Duluth Indigenous Commission - February 22, 2021

Elena Foshay, Director of Workforce Development for the City of Duluth, brought forth the strategic plan being considered in facing the following employment-related challenges for Indigenous people in our community: felonies; transportation; training and courses on work ethics; job training; programs for youth. Emily Edison (SOAR Career Solutions) and Rochelle Goodrich (Fond Du Lac Human Services) explained how their areas are partnering and working on these issues.

Dan Hartman reported on how the Glensheen Mansion staff plan to place land acknowledgement statements and signs around the Glensheen property. They believe it is not enough to just state the history, but will honor ancestors with pictures, pow wows on the property, and eventually have videos with more in-depth stories of the history.

Sobriety Feasts, with open meetings, will be the 4th Tuesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Concerns were brought forward regarding a Medallion Hunt program by KQDS Radio (Midwest Communications) as the public were encouraged to dig on sacred land.

A letter from the Indigenous Commission will be sent to Representative Stauber in opposition to his position on Deb Haaland as Secretary of the Interior.

Submitted by Liz Taylor

Duluth Parks and Recreation Commission - March 10, 2021

Amanda Crosby, President of the Commission, called the meeting to order. The meeting opened with Jess Peterson, Parks Manager, introducing the new Parks Project Coordinator, Todd Armbruster to the commissioners. His first assignment will be the renovation of the Enger Golf Course. There followed presentations and discussions of the two main topics being placed before the Commission: (1) an Overview of the Parks Fund by Jess Peterson and Jim Filby Williams, Director of Parks, Properties, and Libraries; and (2) a request for Action, a vote of the Commission, on the Waabizheshikana Heritage Interpretation Plan, presented by Cliff Knettel, Senior Planner. In addition to these two items, commissioner David Demmer, Chair of the Public Golf Committee, and Jim Filby Williams presented updates on matters relating to Duluth Public Golf.

The Parks Fund is comprised of two distinct aspects: (1) the Parks Funding Budget, and (2) the Parks Maintenance Budget. A third budgetary aspect, Property and Facilities Management, is also a part of the Parks' funding budget but is treated separately. A central feature of the Parks Fund was fixed by the City's Parks Master Plan of 2010, passed by Council in 2011, which established a base annual funding level of \$2.6 million without automatic adjustments for inflation. The result of the lack of adjustment has been an annual loss of purchasing power, calculated now as a negative 15% of spending value since 2011. Even in 2011, the budgetary health of Parks was not the best, because of the massive cuts brought about by the 2007-08 Great Recession. To give the funding situation a human face, Jess pointed out that in 2007 Parks had 17.6 FTE [Full Time Equivalent employees], and a year later it had 6 FTE. Presently, there are 13.7 FTE, which, because of the sharp decline of tourist dollars revenue during the Covid pandemic, had to be reduced to a minimum for several months. In short, the Parks Fund is capable of funding only 50% of what the 2010 master plan had set forth as being necessary. In the meantime, the City of Duluth has added substantial new acreage to the city's parks system. The 2021 Parks and Recreation budget for all purposes is set at \$3.24 million: 80% [the 2.6 million established in 2010-11 and based upon property taxes] with the remainder deriving from the city's General Fund and \$200K from the Tourist Tax. Parks this year is initiating a new 10-year Master Planning process.

Next commissioner David Demmer and director Filby Williams outlined the next steps for Duluth Public Golf. Succinctly, the Lester course will be minimally maintained until 2023, when it will be brought up to playable standards for one season only while the course at Enger is renovated and enhanced with a new club house and an affordable irrigation system with a secure water allocation.

Observers' Reports

Duluth Parks and Recreation Commission - March 10, 2021 (continued)

The plan is for Enger to reopen for the 2024 golfing season. At that time Lester will be permanently closed to golf. These decisions have been made after extensive discussion with the stakeholders and the Committee for Duluth Public Golf. Making these decisions has been painful to all involved; however, Duluth's financial realities combined with the anticipation that the number of rounds of golf played on Duluth courses will continue to follow the national trend in escalating decline has left no viable solutions to the magnitude of the problem other than closing one of our public golf courses. City Councilor Arik Forsman, a golfer, and a member of the Public Golf Committee, spoke in support of both the process followed and the decisions made in order to Save Public Golf in Duluth. Discussion followed and included numerous comments from citizens as well as commissioners. There was some confusion as to whether the end of golf at Lester meant the closure of Lester Park itself. That fear was quickly dispelled. The fact is that Lester Park's 260 acres are not endangered by the cessation of one activity taking place there. Filby Williams made clear the financial situation and the imperative need to stop the hemorrhaging of public funds that threatened other city initiatives, stating that at present the city is losing about \$200K per annum on its two courses, approximately the same on each. In order to bring order and predictability to this aspect of the city's budget, a way must be found to erase the loss [200k] and fund the amount that will be due annually to service the loans that the city will have assumed in order to adequately renovate golf at Enger (loan payments estimated at \$300K per annum). Or to look at the problem as simply as possible, the city must "swing" a half million dollars within a finite budget to renovate and sustain public golf. The challenges are daunting.

The presentation of Waabizheshikana/Marten Trail Heritage Interpretation Plan was exhilarating and refreshing. Once complete the seven-mile trail is likely to become the crown jewel in Duluth's parks system and hopefully a center piece of the National Trail System. Cliff Knettel walked the commissioners through a marvelous panorama of art, stone markers, artistic depictions, and ten-foot stainless steel information poles (readily repairable or inexpensively replaceable), with a total of 38 interpretative panels. Those walking the trail, or even relatively short sections of it, will glimpse the rich and diverse cultural and natural heritage that is uniquely ours. Through a collection of "stories" the ideas of the original native peoples are visually brought to fore. Their "stories" often focus upon the interconnection of humans and the natural world in which animals like "the Marten" become principal actors on the historical stage, so too native plants that nurture and heal. The Ojibwe language and culture are rooted in respect for the landscape and so form a natural template for understanding many of Duluth's past and present "stories." For example, African-American workers moved here to work in the steel mill, and loggers literally rode our rivers. Longshoremen loaded iron ore mined in Minnesota to build and rebuild our nation. Our paper overlaid the newspapers of America. The trail's interpretative components will tell the "Story" of the St. Louis Estuary including on-going efforts to clean up and rehabilitate its natural environment. There will be maps, animal profiles, river places, and life ways.

The estimated cost of close to \$600K hopefully will be funded by a broad assortment of federal, state and local agencies and organizations. The timeline for completion is long, for all the property is not yet even in the public domain. Some of the projected route is in the process of detoxification, and elsewhere relocation of existing soils and manmade construction needs to be completed and integrated into the design. Although it is perhaps needless to say, the Commission voted unanimously to forward the plan with its full and enthusiastic support to the City Council.

The meeting was adjourned. The next meeting of the Commission will be at 5:00 PM on Wednesday, April 14.

Respectfully Submitted, Tom Burns, Lane Palmer, Ron Regal

Duluth Public Library Board meeting - February 23, 2021

The Board continues to meet virtually. The meeting opened with a detailed presentation by Every Child Ready Duluth (ECRD) staff. Despite the constraints of the pandemic, this program is growing in the community. Staff have built and maintained contacts with local leaders and community groups. They have provided support to parents and made reading materials available to children in various ways. Development of a strategic plan going forward has been the major focus. This began with defining what school readiness means in our community and what factors promote it. Working with a steering committee that includes individuals with diverse professional expertise and community members, the ECRD staff has established a strategic directive and set goals for the program. They are preparing to launch their plan to the wider community on March 23. Opportunities for community members to volunteer in a variety of ways will be available at that time.

The library manager reports that curbside pickup at the Main Branch remains busy. Some incremental steps toward opening the library to careful in-person use will be explored, although this will take time. Many materials that were checked out before the pandemic began have been returned now. However, many are still out. Their return is critical to having sufficient books available to meet current requests. Patrons are encouraged to return any outstanding materials now, keeping in mind that they are accountable for them.

Library staff hope to make research assistance available by appointment at the Main Branch for people who need specific research materials that are not available online. The possibility of making tutoring available for public school students is being discussed. Computer access continues to go well.

Advocacy for the library continues to focus on promoting ECRD, library staffing and funding as well as on efforts toward safe reopening of library facilities.

The Duluth Library Foundation reports that plans are underway for a major September fundraiser in some form.

Submitted by Debbi Rasmussen

Natural Resources Commission (via WebEx) - March 3, 2021

Duluth's Forester Clark Christenson described two changes to the City's **Forest Revitalization Project** presented last month (<https://duluthmn.gov/media/WebSubscriptions/196/20210204-196-12464.pdf>) - responses to concerns about slash remaining on the ground and the potential for deer browse on young white pine. He showed slides which illustrated regrowth over slash, and the intent to seed white pine rather than use nursery specimens. Evidence shows deer do not seem to browse in-seeded trees. Clark also reported 10 public comments received, 7 supporting the plan, 2 neutral, and one strongly against. The most significant suggestion was a Project Proposal put forth by the Isaac Walton League, asking to take on management of the stand at Spirit Mountain. A meeting with affected groups was scheduled for March 9th, with Clark's feeling that the City would like to make the Proposal a reality. Reasons include wetter soils requiring more difficult harvesting techniques and consequent cost savings and timeline ease for the City. After some discussion, the NRC **unanimously approved** support for the City's plan, with strong encouragement to work with the Isaac Walton League on the Spirit Mountain proposal.

Clark's **Emerald Ash Borer** update focused on expanding publicity strongly encouraging home-owners to make a decision to remove or inject their ash trees sooner, rather than later. Once a tree becomes heavily infested, it becomes very brittle and dangerous.

Natural Resources Coordinator Diane Desotelle recapped and updated Duluth's first **Natural Resources Management Program Plan**. Points included:

- Encouraging public participation: support at City Council and County Board meetings
- GLRI funding to set the foundation for priorities, strategies, and alternatives
- Collaboration between the City and Minnesota Land Trust; example is planting natives with consideration of bird species above the zoo
- Acquiring Critical Tax Forfeit Land from the county *at or below value* will equal 1/3 of 12,000 acres of priority land to be *permanently protected*
- June (tentatively, and still online) Community Engagement seeking citizen ownership
- Using story maps, citizens can know what's happening, and propose projects that fit in
- Five project areas will gain parcels of land worth \$3.8 million (Hartley - 80 acres, Lester-Amity - 450 acres, Piedmont - 50 acres, Mission-600 acres, and St. Louis River 250 acres).
- Commissioner Brian Fredrickson suggested calling the Historic Preservation Office for help identifying cultural sites.

Diane's monthly report highlighted extra funds to fill data gaps in **Native Plant Community Management Planning**, focusing on understanding Brewer Creek/Piedmont and St. Louis River natives and Kingsbury restoration. Diane has given a presentation related to this work to Wild Ones, and is looking for other groups to present to; League was mentioned. Additional monies from the Soil and Water Conservation District for pollution control in the Amity Creek area would provide \$250,000 every four years if approved by the EPA. The DNR is doing the same for Tischer Creek area and for temperature reduction for Hartley's pond.

Commissioner Brandon Krumwiede announced grants available from the \$34 million National Coastal Resilience Fund for erosion protection, community building and planning, site assessment, restoration, and monitoring. Pre-pre proposals due to the National Fish and Wildlife Service April 7th, full proposals June 1st.

Commissioners thanked Brandon Van Tassel for his years of service to the NRC, as this meeting marked the end of his term.
Submitted by Barb Akre

Human Rights Commission (HRC) - March 10, 2021- via Webex

Purpose: Promotes cultural diversity in Duluth; promotes the elimination of hate, prejudice and discrimination against persons or groups based on race, gender identity or expression, religion, sexual orientation, ability, or other status; educates the community on issues of discrimination and cultural diversity; advises the City Council and City on human rights issues; and promotes the goals and objectives of the Minnesota Human Rights Act.

Commissioners in attendance: Bettina Keppers, Chair; Carl Huber, Secretary; Ashley Neenan; Ri Preap; Sandra van den Bosse and Mark Hakes. Carl Crawford, the Human Rights Officer for the City of Duluth was also present.

There was concern about recent alleged hate crimes reported by Asian-American residents of Duluth in the News Tribune. Carl Crawford will try to get in touch with them to talk about the issue and make sure they know about the Duluth HRC.

Commissioners voted to disband their committee on Gender and Sexuality because the city has established a separate commission on that issue. In its place, a Family Preservation Committee will begin to address issues of parents experiencing difficulty re-establishing custody of their children in foster care.

The Findings Committee met in late Feb with the St. Louis County Sheriff to discuss recent complaints filed with the HRC re: visitation policies and crowding at the facility. Commissioners learned that 50% of the population at the jail is people of color despite the fact that the population of the county is 90% white. They will follow up with the Sheriff to express their concerns and write to the Duluth Police Department and the Prosecutor's Office because they also hold power over who is held in jail.

They plan to hold a virtual "Listening Session" during the trial of Derek Chauvin so that people can express their feelings and what it tells about the state of human rights in MN.

Respectfully Submitted Polly Thomson Edmunds

League of Women Voters of Duluth
32 East First Street
Duluth, MN 55802

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Membership Renewals due by Sept. 30

Date: _____

Name: _____ email _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Address: _____ Zip: _____ 2nd Address: _____

Membership (Check one)

- Individual \$65
- Student/Limited Income \$20
- Full Scholarship \$0
- Household \$100 (2 members living at same address)
 - Name of additional household member: _____
 - E-mail of additional household member: _____
 - Phone number of additional household member: _____
- Additional support: \$20 \$40 \$60 \$100 Other Amount: _____
- I want to donate \$20 to sponsor a limited income member.

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All members with an e-mail address will receive the Voter newsletter by e-mail. Do you also wish to receive a print copy of the Voter newsletter? _____yes _____no

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