

GMPT Legislative Update Forum AI Summary – January 21, 2026

This article was created by AI summarizing key points discussed. AI makes mistakes, so for full details and context, please refer to the video of the full meeting.

Quick recap

The meeting focused on preparing members for the upcoming legislative session in Minnesota, where Elizabeth Wefel, the lobbyist for Flaherty & Hood, outlined key dynamics and priorities. She discussed the legislative calendar, potential challenges, and the importance of building relationships with legislators. Elizabeth highlighted the need for advocacy and shared the organization's legislative agenda, which includes supporting a bonding bill, modernizing the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission, and extending legacy fund deadlines. She also mentioned the potential impact of fraud-focused legislation on grant programs and the importance of monitoring policy restrictions. The session concluded with a call for members to engage with their legislators, participate in the upcoming Legislative Action Day, and stay informed about legislative developments.

Summary

Meeting Introductions & Purpose Discussion

The meeting began with introductions from various participants, including Elizabeth Wefel, the lobbyist for Flaherty & Hood, and Joe Czapiewski, the System Plan Coordinator for the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission. The group discussed the purpose of the meeting, which was to provide updates and share knowledge on a topic of interest. Elizabeth mentioned that they would start the main discussion in a few minutes, and participants were encouraged to introduce themselves. The meeting continued with more introductions, including representatives from various organizations and local governments.

Legislative Advocacy Strategies Overview

Elizabeth provided an overview of the upcoming legislative session, highlighting key factors such as retirements, election-year dynamics, and potential challenges in passing major legislation. She emphasized the importance of building relationships with legislators and outlined advocacy strategies for the group's goals, including support for a bonding bill,

legacy funding, and the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission. Elizabeth also discussed the community grant program and encouraged members to participate in the upcoming Legislative Action Day.

Next Steps

- Elizabeth: Send out the link to the presentation and the link to the final report on the Community Grants Program (either in the email or in the newsletter) to all participants.
- Elizabeth: Circulate a link to the Community Grant Program to everyone once it becomes available.
- All members: Sign up for the upcoming Legislative Action Day when the sign-up is sent out within the week.
- All members: Submit dues by the end of January if not already done.
- Elizabeth/Lily: Follow up with Bruce if any information is learned about GOP candidates' positions on parks and trails, especially regarding Kristen Robbins.
- Elizabeth: Share information about the community grant program changes with the board and gather their thoughts on possible legislative tweaks to the \$750,000 cap.
- All members: Contact Elizabeth or Lily if they hear anything from legislators that could impact parks and trails issues, especially regarding potential new policy restrictions or amendments.