

Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources

MEMO: Agenda Item #3

DATE: February 24, 2020

SUBJECT: Staffing Levels

Introduction

We have had success creating operational efficiencies over the last couple of years and have made additional investments intended to create even more improvements for staff, members, project managers, and proposers alike. However, for various reasons, we are currently still not at a staffing capacity that allows us to provide the level of service and assistance that I believe is warranted.

Situation Assessment

- Thanks to the commission, we added .75 FTE additional capacity in May 2019. However, we also lost staff in November. Our newest staff person is currently in the process of getting trained in—a process I anticipate will take about 1 year.
- Thanks to the commission we were able to start designing and creating an online system in 2019. This continues to have great promise for streamlining our work and reducing errors inherent in the manual and outdated systems we currently use. We have launched the first module as of February 2020 but will be designing and testing subsequent modules through the rest of the calendar year. Design and testing has required more staff time than anticipated. The amount of training that will be needed for project managers and proposers is still unknown.
- Some particularly challenging projects have required dedicated attention the last couple of years. It is likely, however, that there will always be challenging projects that require more assistance than others.
- The number of proposals has significantly increased. Since 2015, the number of proposals has doubled-- from ~150 a year to ~300 a year.
- With support from the co-chairs, we hired temporary assistance from a retired project manager, who has been working with us part-time and remotely since August. It is a steep learning curve, so we were fortunate to have someone available who was already familiar with our work. It is not clear how much longer this arrangement will work. Temporary, part-time, and remote work has its challenges. Funding has come from the 20-21 biennial operational budget set-aside that was intended for a special project(s) on outcomes and/or historical database.
- As one reference point, a comparison to our colleagues shows the following for years FY2010-FY2020:

	Per staff person LSOHC (4 FTE)	Per staff person LCCMR (4.75 FTE)
Ave. annual proposals	13	44
Ave. annual organizations	8	19
Ave. annual appropriations	9	14
Ave. annual projects	9	15

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Proposed approach

Staff is seeking approval for an additional FTE. Any staff increase would need to be approved by Legislative Coordinating Commission. We propose to continue temporary assistance for as long as the relationship is mutually beneficial.

Per M.S. 116P.09, Subd. 5, the LCCMR's administrative budget is capped at 4% of the amount available for spending in a given biennium. Our current administrative budget is at 1.1%. The impacts related to this cap in relation to the current biennium is noted below.

Temporary, part-time assistance to-date: \$10k. Continued assistance for remainder of biennium is likely \$20-\$40k additional. *If additional funds are provided to cover this cost, it would represent 1.2% of total amount available in this biennium (vs. 4% cap).*

Full-time, classified position: Est. \$100k annual. *If additional funds are provided to cover this cost, it would represent 1.3% of the total amount available in this biennium (vs. 4% allowed).*

Action

If the commission is interested, move to approve 1.0 FTE additional LCCMR staff