



Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Board of Directors Meeting
April 27, 2016 (draft)

Participants:

Karl Samp - Pilot

Bob Miller - Pilot Emeritus

Faye Wilkinson - Secretary (MS-MRPC)

Mark McAdoo - (TN-MRPC)

Craig Mitckes - (IL-MRPC)

Holly Cain - Treasurer

Joe St. Columbia - (AR-MRPC)

Sherry Quamme - (WI-MRPC)

Terri McCullough - Pilot Pro Tem

Greg Terry - (KY-MRPC)

Norma Pruitt - Marketing

Carol Zoff - Transportation

Ruth Hawkins - Culture & Heritage

Sheronne Mulry - Culture & Heritage

Mark McAdoo - TN

Greg Pruitt - KY

Chris Danou - WI

Susanne Barnet – National Office

Pilot Karl Samp called the meeting to order at 4:00pm at what time there was a quorum present.

- **Past Meeting Minutes from 2/12/16** Motion to approve by Pilot Emeritus. Second by Pilot Pro Tem. Motion carried.
- **Financial Report as of 3/31/16.** Motion to approve by KY. Second by AR. Motion carried.
- **Bylaws Committee** On behalf of Bobby Kennedy, Bylaws Committee chair, the National Office presented a draft of a bylaws change to section 5.5, appointment of State Commission, that would allow a representative from a state (general member) to be appointed to the board if no formal state commission exists and have the right to vote. It was noted that Diana Threadgill with Mississippi River Corridor - TN has been advocating for TN-DOT to re-engage in MRPC activities, pay the annual dues and be a voting member of the board. Mark McAdoo noted that we want to restart our byways in Tennessee. We will be hosting a regional national conference in Memphis where we should consider how to highlight the Great River Road.

Motion to approve bylaw amendment of section 5.5 appointment of state commission, as recommended by bylaws committee chair Bobby Kennedy, made by Pilot Pro Tem and second by AR. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Semi-Annual Meeting Update** WI and the National Office provided a brief overview of the meeting agenda.
- **Staff review update** Pilot Pro Tem noted that there was a small response to the survey but the data was consistent and provided a good learning experience for the annual review process. The executive committee met earlier in the day and reviewed the information, which the Pilot will review with the National Office.
- **Endowment Payouts/Grant** Pilot discussed the funds request from Iowa that was approved previously. Discussion followed regarding future grant requests and looking at development of a grant program that would provide further purpose for the endowment. It was noted that the endowment annual interest return was \$1470. Carol Zoff suggested we include a mention of giving in our fall promotion. WI agreed it would be good to have criteria and a process. Greg Pruitt

explained that Kentucky voted against the grant request since there was no process in place and it did not appear to benefit all 10 states. Pilot Emeritus said the Iowa request impacts five states. Pilot suggested that he could lead a future session on endowment fund giving.

- **National Geographic Update** Pilot Pro Tem and Craig Mitckes attended the MRCC meeting in Alton. Bob Miller was unable to attend. Terri updated that the meeting involved many agencies. The goal of the MRCC is to encourage tourism along the 10 states. The group has good intentions and the primary objective is to develop a website platform for smart phones. Craig indicated that there is much duplication and wondered if we could combine efforts. Greg Pruitt said he's attended 2-3 meetings; St Louis, Alton and Memphis and there has been lots of energy and a reason everybody is in this. He mentioned that when we sat at the meeting in Memphis about the \$40,000 contribution, he brought up issues that he wished he would have held onto. One, Jim Dion lied. People from other counties are at our meeting and a speaker from National Geographic and Terry Easton said all counties could participate in this. However, Jim said to Greg that only the four counties along the Great River Road are in this. Since Delta Regional Authority donated \$300,000 all of their counties can be involved. In Kentucky, there are not many ways to nationally promote only these four GRR counties and now this situation has changed. There are communities from 2 1/2 hours away asking to be part of this campaign.

Bob said this was a surprise to him and that DRA was included below the Ohio River and that he has an email from Rory that confirms this.

Terri and Craig said there was no discussion about this at the Alton meeting.

Tennessee notes that there are five counties on the River in TN but many more included in DRA.

Pilot noted that the RFP sounds like what we are already doing. We can't compete with this large, for profit movement. What if governors decide to spend with MRCC instead of MRPC. We need to be aware of what could happen.

Ruth Hawkins said no two organizations define the Delta alike. She continued that DRA in Arkansas is all the way to Little Rock and those of us in Arkansas think that's crazy. One county wide doesn't work within some of the Delta because it changed course and that's part of the story we tell of the River.

Carol recalled that during the Memphis press conference, DRA said this is a delta-wide project.

Bob said he's willing to go forward to Rory and ask for a real definition of the Delta, as it was agreed already upfront. This is why we had a contract upfront so everything matches from front to end.

Pilot asked what are the risks for us if we don't participate? Terri indicated that businesses who participate receive gold window clings, web endorsement and a certificate for framing. This is positive.

The Pilot further asked what is the risk if we stay part of it non-monetarily?

Greg asked, is this our window? This is what MRPC does. Do we carry the ball and move forward?

Bob said the nom and pop businesses will never pay.

Pilot asked what are the rules of the partners? Bob said we will need clarifications. Pilot asked where are funds coming from?

Terri said there will be a MOU in June with MRCC. Partners will keep close and follow the mission statement. Everyone is excited and there is a plan for long term growth and sustainability. MRCC will meet again in St Louis.

Pilot noted that our name is on the list if it fails.

Terri said she is concerned but appreciates the opportunity to bring this forward for businesses and engage economy for local businesses.

Maintaining a database for local businesses is too volatile.

Pilot asked who is insurer of RFP? Bob indicated that Rory is the keeper for the respondents.

Pilot asked if we are fiscally responsible? As far as the website right now, the functionality isn't great; several clicks are required but it is attractive. Norma asked what if we put this effort into our experience website?

We need to stay engaged and stay on top of it. We need to be leading. We won't sign anything unless we're clear what's expected of us and what we will and won't do. We can work together as a group and do a lot together without putting more money into it.

Everything well said, we must stay involved. An informal ask around the time led to action of: Propose a new MOU. 4 to lead. 2 no. 9 explore/engage.

- **MRT** Postpone until MRT provides us with an agreement draft to review. Ruth Hawkins indicated that Todd Antoine is working with an attorney to put an agreement together for their board to review first.
- **10-State CMP** Carol indicated that some states have been doing work on their corridor management plans that provide storytelling of places and intrinsic qualities. Transportation committee is working on compiling shape files for global information systems for the Great River Road and also trying to do MRT, looking at way showing. We're securing documents for 10 states' interpretive plans. National Geographic has all GIS. Many aspects will play into this and all committees will be involved. We're tracking construction things like scenic easements, MRT trails. We need to do assessments to review and protect these things to help us understand our needs and find our next priorities. How do we move into a CMP nationally and collaboratively? We're looking for all committees to make this a priority. We have a three- year time frame as part of our strategic plan. If board agrees we stand forward, we need to compile documents and people could find these things. Minnesota, for example, has prioritized way showing, plan your project map, ambassador development.

Norma said this information is needed so people can see the value of what's along the Great River Road. Karl said we need to look for funding opportunities. Carol stressed that all committees will need to be involved.

- **2016 Annual Meeting** Pilot and MS said that due to House Bill 1523 states like Minnesota are unable to travel to Mississippi at this time for the fall annual meeting. The meeting will continue as planned.
- **Future Meeting Schedule** The National Office shared a draft of the proposed national meeting locations indicating that 2017 spring will take place in Kentucky and 2017 fall in Iowa.
- **New Fulfillment Maps** The National Office distributed new maps to all and reminded states to check with them before loading boxes.
- **Other Business** MS - MRPC indicated that their commission has been moved under MS Development Authority/ Tourism and they have a meeting next week.

Meeting adjourned at 6:52pm.