

Mississippi River Parkway Commission Annual Meeting Memphis, Tennessee

September 19, 2014
Culture and Heritage Committee

Morning session

Present: Chair Ruth Hawkins, AR; Tom Hodges, KY; Debbie Jochims, Iowa; Frank Nickell, MO; Nancy Salminen, MN; Faye Wilkinson, MS; Dennis Donath, WI; and from AR Joe St. Columbia, Pat Audirsch, and Terri McCullough.

Morning topics generally discussed:

1. No new interpretive center nominations. Expect Mississippi Welcome Center in Vicksburg in the future.
2. Frank worked on the criteria for the first 50 sites selected as Interpretive Centers. It was a three-year process. Sites asked to be included. All sites since then have formally applied based on the written criteria.
3. Signage placement - sometimes inconsistent poles w/ unique welding, both MS & WI; overlays too large for Mississippi signs. Need for all states to check on any problems, issues, extra poles and/or signs.
4. Encourage Commissioners to visit at least yearly, preferably more often, with checklist to state and national.
5. Suggest states consider having quarterly meetings at Interpretive Centers (some do).
6. At national meeting, have area ICs make presentation to familiarize Commissioners.
7. IC checklist review of the visits documented in our registration package.

Recommendations:

- A. Yearly visit to ICs with material sent to national office
- B. New employee checklist for IC personnel
- C. Emphasize training. Should know about www.experiencemississippiriver.com & 10 state GRR map
- D. Framed map behind wall for clear display

Motion by AR second by MN - Develop a program introducing IC personnel to the overall system of Interpretive Centers and the importance of wayshowing/wayfinding along the Great River Road National Scenic Byway.

Vote: Unanimous Yea

Ruth mentioned she had limited grant funds left from a previous project. Therefore, AR volunteered to pilot the concept using a Power Point presentation for front line personnel training stored on a jump drive, providing an AR Great River Road map for reference, and AR GRR tear sheet maps. Goals:

1. IC staff encourage tourists to travel along GRR
2. IC staff develop knowledge of driving tours to each IC w/ local history of that area
3. IC staff use new vocabulary, i.e. wayfinding, history treasures, interpretive potential
4. IC staff left powerpoint data on jump drive for future employee training
5. IC staff left with AR GRR framed map when we visit there at training or at later MRPC meeting

Afternoon session

Ruth presiding again. Added: Jane Roth Smith, WI visitor, and Karen Melissa Thornton TN Corridor

Afternoon topics generally discussed:

1. Geo Tourism - In-Kind contribution gathering local data, locations
 - A. Much of this collection will likely fall to the Culture and Heritage Committee
 - B. Commissioners can claim \$20 per hour in-kind & mileage at federal rate
 - C. Website edit & upkeep-Who pays after National Geographic pulls out
 - D. C & H Committee endorsed the Nat Geo project by unanimous vote at 2014 Semi-annual meeting in Alton IL