

**MRPC Marketing Committee Conference Agenda  
March 10, 2017 10am-11:30am CST  
Conference Call**

**Attendees: MS, WI, MN, KY, IA, National Office (NO)**

**Meeting began at 10:03am.**

- Update on National Geographic Geotourism: MN attended the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI) and said Mississippi River Connections Collaborative (MRCC) is looking for sponsorships to fund the site. Sales sheets are being developed. Mayors requested adding community pages to the site. Delta Regional Authority is serving as the contact for the organization at this time. MS asked for a contact since their office is nearby and she could request additional information prior to the Semi-Annual Meeting. MN reported Spencer Lucher is the contact.
- Review 2016 Q4 and annual marketing report: NO offered to answer questions on the reports via email to save time during the call. WI praised the efforts of the Marketing Committee and said the results show the importance of email as a communication tool and the effectiveness of the social media campaigns. WI said they use the information in crafting their state messages. KY appreciated the information included in the report and the work behind putting it together. KY asked if the reports could be added to mrpcmembers.com in a prominent location for people to access. NO said it would find a more visible place.
- 2017 Marketing plan/budget
  - Review birding promotion progress: NO will be releasing the toolkit to promote the contest next week. NO asked all states to share the contest as widely as possible as it made a big impact on the numbers last year.
  - Reprint maps: NO updated committee that around 10,000 maps remain. NO said they have charged \$60 per box plus shipping. NO explained Board is anxious to close the budget gap. NO offered charging for the remaining map orders. IA prefers to keep the maps free and just charge for shipping. IA explained that the Effigy Mounds could distribute as many as we could give them but would not be in a position to pay. WI agreed and is reluctant to charge for maps since states already pay dues. NO suggested MRPC could wait another year to print maps and use the remaining maps for internal fulfillment but reprint next year. Committee prefers to move ahead with updating the map with the new interpretive centers and any changes from the states to get a new supply. NO said they would progress as planned. NO will send out the same link used last time to review the map, using the same process. Depending on the number of changes, NO will bring a draft to review at the Semi-Annual meeting, or do reviews over email. MN asked if maps can be shipped directly to multiple locations. NO

- explained that the budget covers shipping to one location, but states can pay the shipping fee to have them delivered directly. NO will collect shipping information from the committee to get prices. NO didn't anticipate many changes so the process should be fairly quick to reach the May 1<sup>st</sup> deadline for map shipping.
- Review MRCC “Year of Trails”: NO reviewed the changes to the MRCC’s annual promotion from “Year of Hiking” to “Year of Trails.” NO will incorporating the trails theme into each of the currently scheduled promotions.
  - Updated navigational app: NO updated committee that the map files are with the vendor who is stitching them together. NO is working on the platform design. NO updated Transportation Committee that progress is on schedule.
  - Determine Snapchat filter promotion locations and dates: NO gave committee brief explanation regarding filter use. KY asked how many committee members are on Snapchat. Few are users. MN explained the Department of Tourism uses it for major events. NO offered options for filter use: choosing a high traffic date like a national holiday or pick a weekend during the “Drive the Great River Road” campaign in September. MN proposed the committee focus on the promotional period. WI agreed. NO will pick a September weekend. NO assigned committee to select their state’s filter location for the Semi-Annual meeting.
  - E-newsletter campaign: NO brought attention to the e-newsletter program and its number as outlined in the report. NO said the program could be used as an advertising vehicle.
- Review advertising proposals
    - Midwest Living: WI discussed a fall 2017 cooperative advertising program through Midwest Living for consideration in fall 2018. WI will discuss options with the ad sales representative, Kim Sommerfeldt at the upcoming WI Governor’s Conference on Tourism. WI believes program would promote “Drive the Great River Road” month and provide visibility to a wide market. WI is participating in the advertising opportunity in 2017. WI discussed Sommerfeldt’s participation at the Marketing Committee meeting at the Annual Meeting in IA.
    - Southern Travel and Lifestyle: KY discussed their “Power on Partnership” advertising program in their publication offering ads and a three-page spread. KY felt this would make a good complimentary program to Midwest Living.
    - KY and WI will bring examples of the publications to the Semi-Annual meeting. NO will bring examples of different styles of cooperative ads they have designed to discuss managing a program.
    - WI said the Marketing Committee has made good progress and needs to keep it fresh by reaching new audiences. WI believes these advertising opportunities accomplish this goal.

- Sponsorship ideas for 2017
  - Review list of grant opportunities: MN presented the list of grant opportunities and the process to obtain the list. MN recommended the Knight Foundation with the most potential. MN stated it requires a letter of inquiry to apply as the first step in the application process. MN explained many of the options were more appropriate for state specific grants than for all ten states. MN believes a print map sponsorship is probably a more realistic for funding than a grant. MN recommended NO clarify the program segment and contact information. Motion for National Office to submit a letter of inquiry to the Knight Foundation by MN. Second by WI. Motion carried.
  - Review list of potential sponsors: MN believes the grants option on the last two pages of the grant opportunities represents the best option for sponsorships. IA reported they have done promotions with Casey General Store where \$1 of purchases can go to a project. IA said \$1 was supposed to go to the IA GRR. IA explained the promotion was not well communicated and front line staffs weren't familiar with the GRR to answer questions from customers. IA also provided information on Kwiq Trip as a possible sponsor stating that they only give food donations, not cash. MN recommended NO find out how GRR could be included in Land's End catalog as it features different destination and could be a possible partner. In addition to the list, other possible options include Radisson, Bass Pro Shop, ADM, and Meredith Publications. Committee to review the last two pages for the options that they think are the best fit based on their relationships. Committee should bring their feedback and any other possible partners for discussion at the Semi-Annual meeting.
  
- Other business
  - NSB Foundation: KY asked how many states are members. KY said the NSB Foundation is trying to increase their presence and try to capitalize on the new administrations focus on transportation. WI said they are looking at membership. KY explained membership allows a presence in their IPW booth. NO had a membership but will confirm it was renewed. MN asked for the NSB Foundation to be added to the agenda for the Semi-Annual Meeting. NO said it would make that addition.

Motion to adjourn by IA. Second by MN.

Meeting adjourned at 11:33am