



**Mississippi River Parkway Commission**

701 East Washington Avenue, Suite 202  
Madison, WI 53703



Notes:

Horizontal lines for taking notes.

**Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
Marketing Committee Meeting**

**January 18, 2018 | 10:00 AM-11:30 AM**

Attendees: MO, MN, IA, AR, KY, National Office (NO)

**Notes**

Meeting began at 10:02am.

IA requested the December notes be amended to state that IA can't commit to *Midwest Living* cooperative advertising until the IA legislature provides their next budget. NO will change the notes.

I. CMP Vision Statement

- Review states' marketing budget: NO has received most of the states' budgets and will include it as a summary for the CMP. NO will send the summary to Transportation Chair to see what information needs to be collected.
- Review National Scenic Byways Federation members: NO will create a spreadsheet with members and include it in the CMP information.

II. 2017 and 2018 Marketing plan/budget: NO updated committee on their involvement on a *Lonely Planet* feature on the Great River Road (GRR). NO also alerted the committee that the Board approved funding for a paddlewheel branding promotion. NO would like to meet in February to review the marketing efforts including the culinary and "Drive the GRR" promotion and the new branding efforts. Committee agreed. MN requested a breakdown of the approved budget. NO will prepare it for the meeting.

- Vote on Sept/Oct 2018 issue of *Midwest Living*: NO reviewed the documents distributed in advance of the meeting. IA recommended the full circulation option. Committee agreed. KY asked to confirm the issue dates. NO confirmed Sept/Oct 2018 with an insertion deadline of June 1. MN stated they cannot commit until after state legislators meet in April and they receive their budget. MN said it may not be resolved by June 1<sup>st</sup>. IA agreed. April is when their legislature meets. MO agreed, too. MN would like to review the



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placement in the context of the rest of the budget in February. NO offered to schedule a Marketing committee meeting in May and table the vote until that meeting. Committee agreed.

- Steve Watkins memorandum of understanding update: NO has sent a draft to Watkins for consideration.
- Review MRCC 2018/ update on National Geographic Geotourism: NO updated the committee on the work being done to transition information from the Nat. Geo site to the MRPC site. Committee expressed gratitude for the efforts. IA shared MRCC is meeting in St. Louis next week and Pilot Pro Tem will be attending. NO will request an update for the committee.
- Map and app updates: NO reviewed the app is updated and in both iPhone and Android stores. NO confirmed the Board approved a budget to reprint the printed map for 2018 with minimal changes and updates. MN requested Marketing Chair express gratitude to the Board for their confidence in the committee to reprint the maps to fulfill the requests while the committee works through a sponsorship process. KY agreed to share the sentiment on the next Board call.

III. Sponsorship ideas for 2017: MN reminded committee to focus conversation on sponsorships versus advertising. NO offered PBS’ sponsorship tags versus advertisements as a good example of the different tone and language used. Committee agreed.

- Review additional metrics for the sponsorship package: NO reviewed the potential assets to include in a package. NO asked states if their assets should be included, too. AR reported MRPC pages are included on the state’s tourism website and did not believe could contain advertising. IA and MN shared a similar situation. NO suggested committee move forward using only national assets including: website, e-newsletter, social media, app and printed map. MN recommended interpretive centers’ traffic considered an asset to include in a package. MN suggested signage as an option. NO recommended working with the Culture & Heritage committee to determine estimated attendance. IA stated average attendance figures are included in the evaluation and review checklist states perform for existing centers in the network. MN said some but not all of the centers have been reviewed. KY recommended compiling the ones that have submitted to find a general value. NO will look at the submitted forms for numbers.
- Review framework for sponsorship package: NO asked if the committee wanted to focus efforts on one main sponsor or multiple package options available to a variety of sponsors. MN



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recommended focusing on one exclusive sponsor due to the time commitment to work with multiple partners and meet their objectives would require more effort than searching of one main sponsor. To be efficient, an exclusive option should be advanced with evaluation built into the process. AR agreed and if one could sponsor could not be found, we consider a backup plan. KY agreed. AR offered although a three-year contract would be great, because this is a new program, we should start with one year and build in evaluation period. MN agreed with including an extension option and an opportunity for either party to end the contract if needed.

- Add value to sponsorship package: AR asked if a value had been established. NO said it has not been set and entertained ideas. MN said assets will determine the value and show the traffic from our geographic markets. NO added that while the current map distribution is 125,000, more maps could be printed and distributed if we could afford to do a larger run. AR concurred and said they are always begging for more maps to distribute. AR thought a business involving tires, AAA or Walmart could be added to our list of potential sponsors. KY shared that businesses will often donate to events or promotions they believe in even if they don't get much exposure from their sponsorship. Industries might want to have a 10-state audience. MN agreed that reaching an audience in 10-states at once is cost-effective for them. AR also felt the reach of 10-states is a big selling point since not many organizations have that reach and scope. NO agreed to include that value into the package. Based on sponsorship packages KY has seen for less value, KY recommended a starting package at \$100,000 for one sponsor or 4/\$25,000 sponsors. MN and AR asserted the goal will be for one sponsor with the potential to break it into smaller packages, if necessary. KY agreed. NO offered to break down the reach and frequency of assets and calculate the value .Committee will review at the next meeting.
- Discuss strategies to approach potential sponsors: Committee will review values in February and discuss which sponsors are best fit.

- IV. MRC updates: NO updated the committee on the California sales mission in April and the opportunity the dues paying states and their stakeholders will have to meet with top Japanese travel trade professionals.
- V. State reports: KY: Chinese media is booking tours from China to Kentucky through Angie Yu, the entrepreneur who was part of the KY MRPC Semi-annual meeting. Yu is creating itineraries that fly through Chicago and then bus or take a connecting flight to KY to visit Louisville, Lexington,

