

# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2016-17 Fiscal Year

2300.00



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### WISCONSIN Mississippi River Parkway Commission

# **2016-2017 Annual Report**

## **Wisconsin Mississippi River Parkway Commission**

### **Reporting Period: July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017**

#### **ABOUT THE COVER PAGE:**

The pictures on the cover are places and activities of traveling the Wisconsin Great River Road and is the cover page for the 50,000 copies of the 2017 WIGRRNSB Travel Visitor Guide. The image portrays travel on the Wisconsin Great River Road by many means as an increasingly popular way to visit our GRRNSB in Wisconsin. Demand has been brisk and the Visitor Guide continues to drive increased social media activity and website visits.

#### **WIMRPC Membership, Committees:**

##### **Membership**

The WIMRPC operates under Wisconsin State Statute 14.85 which specifies membership to consist of one representative appointed by the Governor from each of the eight counties bordering the Mississippi River along with two State Senators and two State Representatives. The Statute provides ex officio membership of the State Departments of Transportation, Natural Resources, Tourism, Commerce and State Historical Society.

Sherry Quamme (Commissioner from Crawford County) was elected for a two year term as WIMRPC Chairperson. Other elected officers are: Jean Galasinski (Trempealeau County) Vice Chair, Alan Lorenz (La Crosse County), Secretary. The Treasurer seat is vacant and is fulfilled by shared duties between the three members of the Executive Committee for the present time.

A roster of Commissioners, Marketing and Promotion Committee and Technical Committee members is attached.

##### **Committees**

The following Committees serve the WIMRPC:

- Promotion & Marketing Committee
- Technical Committee
- Executive Committee of the WIMRPC - Officers
- Ad Hoc Committees
  - Partnership & Outreach
  - Finance & Sustainability
  - Education

##### **Meeting Minutes**

WIMRPC convened four quarterly meeting during this reporting period. Minutes of the meetings are appended to this report. They are also provided routinely to the National MRPC office and to 75 other parties.

##### **Budget**

The source of funds for the WIMRPC is derived primarily from contributions from the 8 represented counties, Department of Transportation, Department of Tourism and from National Scenic Byways Grants. Income

from sale of Ads for the 2017 Wisconsin Great River Road Visitor Guide is a major source of income along with financial support from three grants. There are also contributions from some Tourism Councils of the region. Expenditures are primarily for Marketing and Promotion of the Wisconsin Great River Road National Scenic Byway, Sustainability/financial support, Partnership & Outreach.

2017 Budget

<b>Income</b>	<b>Amount</b>		<b>Comments</b>
8 Counties, Tourism Councils and organizations	7,000.00		
Promotion Committee	36,941		Visitor Guide Ads sales & other sources
<b>Expense</b>		<b>Amount</b>	
Partnership & Outreach		1600.00	Building/Maintaining Grant
Friends of the WI Great River Road		2300.00	
Promotion/Marketing		36,776.00	
Building/Maintaining NSB		13,300.00	Building/Maintaining Grant – contracts & activities
Intrinsic Qualities		2,000.00	Intrinsic Qualities –website materials
Financial Stability		995.96 0.0	Building/Maintaining Grant – equipment and software Accounting services
MRPC Annual Dues		15,000	Paid by WI DOT
MRC Annual Dues		15,000	Paid by Wis. Dept. of Tourism

**Accomplishments:**

**Partnership and Outreach**

- Completed steps to found the Friends of the Wisconsin Great River Road National Scenic Byway and established the new organization as a 501 c 3 IRS status entity.
- Approved Bylaws for the Wisconsin Friends of the GRRNSB and approved on 8/5/16
- Friends of the Wisconsin Great River Road had an educational booth at the March – 2017 Wisconsin Governor’s Conference on Tourism to promote both the Friends Organization, the WIMRPC and the Wisconsin Great River Road.
- Friends of the Wisconsin Great River Road took out an ad in the 2017 Wisconsin Great River Road Visitor Guide to promote the Wisconsin GRRNSB and invite new memberships.
- Connected with 68 Adopt a Highway groups of the Wisconsin GRRNSB to support highway clean up twice per year, with assistance of the WI DOT.

- Continued discussions with the Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission staff regarding assistance to the WIMRPC, working on Tourism as economic development. Also researching Grant options, ideas, and potential new funding sources.
- Exhibit at State Capitol Rotunda May 30 – June 5 for education regarding WI GRRNSB which coincided with June Dairy Month and promotion of Agri Tourism.
- Created a Work plan for 2017-18 to schedule and conduct meetings with stakeholders – “Spring Board” meetings to provide education regarding WIMRPC, WI GRRNSB and officially launch Friends of the WI GRR. Will enlist the assistance of retired WI DOT Byways Coordinator Jane Carrola for this.

#### **Financial Stability/Long Term Sustainability**

- August 5, 2016 - Established a plan to conduct meetings with legislators starting in January, 2017. Assistance from all 4 legislator commissioners was offered and accepted.
- Schedule meeting with partner Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission to identify potential Grants that could be considered, applied for by WIMRPC to support the work plan.
- Determine means for funding a paid staff person to facilitate the WIMRPC
- Explore feasibility of updating SS 14.85 to identify current State Agencies who are to support the WIMRPC and determine what other options there are for added State Funding such as a line item in the Bi-Annual State Budget

#### **Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Organization/NSB**

- Education Session for WIMRPC on NSB projects Potosi Brewery and Museum and the Genoa Fish Hatchery project with US Fish & Wildlife.
- Provided information to WIDOT on scenic easement infractions on the WIGRRNSB which resulted in actions to address these issues. This work continues as issues are not resolved.
- Participated in the ongoing development of the Geo-Tourism Website as part of the MRPC agenda.
- Continued to monitor use of remediation funds specific to CAP X 2020
- Through the efforts of the Executive Committee and Commission, worked to address financial management issues by converting financial records to Quick Books which is a financial management software system. This work continues.
- Utilizing the services of an accounting firm to update financial records.
- With assistance of Commissioner Senator Howard Marklein, developed financial policies for business operations.
- Contracted with Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission staff to develop the WIMRPC Handbook for Commissioners and Committees and to develop an updated Corridor Management Plan utilizing the Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Organization Grant.
- Communicated scenic easement concerns to the US Army Corps of Engineers regarding repository for dredged materials from Pool 4 which the COE proposed to be located on Hwy 35, the WI GRRNSB. This was done by their August 25, 2017 Public Comment deadline.
- Drafting a policy on repository and records retention for the WIMRPC.

## Promotion and Marketing

- The Wisconsin Dept. of Tourism has invested \$35,000 in direct marketing investment to promote and market the Wisconsin Great River Road Region as of 8/1/17. This continues to be a strong, valued and important relationship for the benefit of all parties.
- Publication of the 2017 Wisconsin GRRNSB Visitor Guide and distribution of 50,000 copies across the region.
- Printing of the 2017 Visitor Guide including selection printing vendor La Crosse Graphics and Kristen Mitchell Design for the editing again resulted in a positive cash flow from the project. A sales person was added to work on commission as a way to sell additional ads in the VG.
- Selected La Crosse Graphics and Kristen Mitchell Design as the vendors for the 2018 Visitor Guide is expected to result in a positive cash flow again from this project. Contracts were established with 2 sales people to work on commission for the sale of the 2018 VG ads. This is expected to increase the number of ads in areas that have been under represented and will alleviate some of the workload for the volunteer WIMRPC and the volunteer Promotion & Marketing Committee. Quick Books accounting system was implemented in 2016 to help with the business management of this project and that continues to be successful. 100% of the ad accounts were paid.
- Contracted with Sleeping Giant Studio, a La Crosse, WI company, to develop a new website and move the hosting to a new vendor. Revenue from the 2016-17 Visitor Guide projects will help fund this project and it is due to “go live” by Sept. 1 2017.
- Exhibitor at the Minneapolis Home & Garden Show
- Wisconsin Governor’s Conference on Tourism – partnered with Friends of the WI Great River Road as an exhibitor at Market Place.
- Milwaukee Wheel & Sprocket Bike Show – with Wisconsin Dept. of Tourism
- June Dairy Breakfast exhibits – 8 Counties
- Wisconsin State Fair (With Wisconsin Dept. of Tourism)
- September – Drive the Great River Road Month – promotion
- Great River Road Festival – Stonefield Historic Site – Cassville, WI
- AgriTourism Promotion
- Maintained an increasingly popular social media campaign for the WI GRRNSB. Excellent gains in engagement. (Report Attached)
- Invested \$3035 for an ad in the May/June 2017 issue of Midwest Living as part of the WI Dept. of Tourism Co-op advertising opportunity. As of Sept. 2017, over 1000 requests for information and 2017 Visitor Guides had been fulfilled. Strong consideration to do this again in 2018.

## History/Education

- Completed inventory at all Interpretive Centers
- Distributed 3 cases of the Corp of Engineers publication “Our Mississippi”, to elementary and middle schools of the region. (This is a continuing effort which was started in 2014).
- Intrinsic Qualities rack cards were distributed with display units to each of the WI GRR Interpretive Centers. These will also be distributed in sets to Elementary and Middle schools of the WI GRRNSB who receive “Our Mississippi” publications.

## **Technical**

- Provided assistance to the Partnership and Outreach Committee regarding Friends of the WI GRRNSB design and implementation
- Contracted with partner organization Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission to create the WIMRPC Handbook as part of the Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Organization Grant. Distribution will occur September – 2017. Electronic files will be shared with all 10 GRR States.
- Contracted with partner organization Mississippi River Regional Plan Commission (MRRPC) to assist with updating the WI Corridor Management Plan – Strategic Plan as part of the Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Organization Grant.
- In collaboration with MRRPC, contracted with Corridor Solutions, to do an Online Stakeholder survey and assist with leading the Strategic Plan/CMP update to be completed by Spring 2018.

## **Executive Committee**

- Developed and approved an updated draft of the WIMRPC Bylaws for consideration which includes allowing legislative members to identify a lead staff person to attend Commission meetings and hold the proxy for the respective Legislator Commissioner.
- Worked diligently on operations, business and financial activities with the support /guidance of WI DOT advisor Jane Carrola
- Provided ongoing support to all committees including the Partnership and Outreach Committee for the implementation of the Friends of the Wisconsin Great River Road efforts.
- Planning for the Fall 2017 CMP/Strategic Action Planning meeting to update the WI CMP.

# Wisconsin Great River Road Social Media Annual Report and Analytics

## Facebook

July 1, 2016      June 30, 2017

**Total Page Followers**    4,713                      5,840

**Total Page Likes**        4,992                      6,100

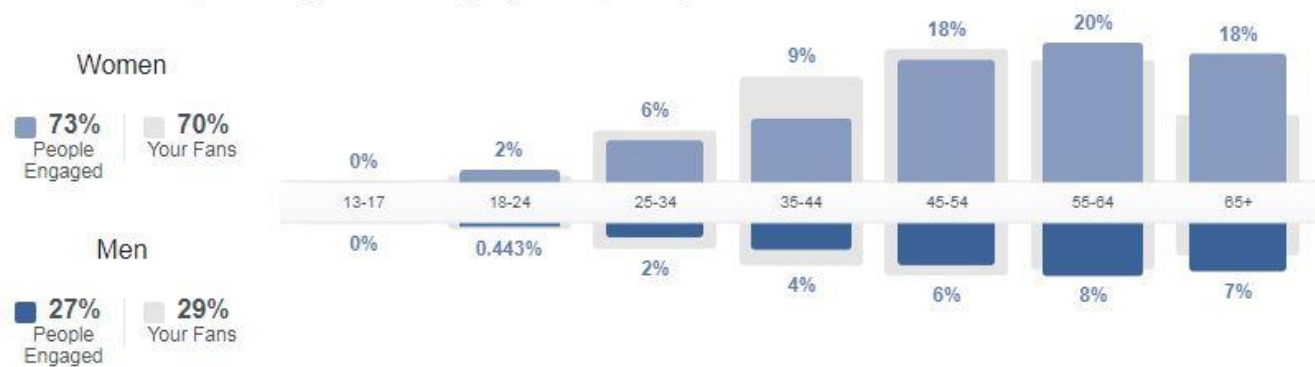
Growth of Facebook followers and total page likes has seen a steady increase over the past year. We have money approved to promote paid posts and are awaiting the set-up of a credit card to do so. Once we do this, these numbers will most definitely see more growth.

Top 2 posts for the year had an **organic** reach of 9.1 thousand and 11.2 thousand - will be able to boost this number and also have a more consistently large reach once we can utilize paid promotions.

04/29/2017 7:00 am		Life Along Wisconsin's Great River Road And Why You Need To G			9.1K		431 341		<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
04/28/2017 10:02 am		Celebrate International Migratory Birding Day at the Trempealeau			1.6K		30 10		<a href="#">Boost Post</a>
04/26/2017 7:40 am		We've said it before and we'll say it again...Wyalusing State Park is			11.2K		815 407		<a href="#">Boost Post</a>

View the graphic below for **demographic statistics** for the July 1, 2016 – June 30, 2017 term:

The number of People Talking About the Page by user age and gender.



As of March of 2017 the Wisconsin Great River Road created two new social media platforms (there were previous accounts but due to a transition in committee member control, the passwords were not recovered therefor new accounts were made): Twitter and Instagram.

Though the established time of these platforms has not been long, the following will show the number of followers to date:

**Twitter:**

WI Great River Road - tag: [@WI\\_GreatRiverRd](#)

Followers: 96

Following: 176

Likes: 76

\*side note: the previously used Twitter account (that we cannot log in to due to unknown password) is linked to the established Facebook account so we technically have 2 Twitter accounts, doubling our Twitter reach. Each time a post is published on Facebook, it also posts to the old Twitter account so information is still up to date. Below you will find those statistics from that account:

WI Great River Road – tag: [@WIGreatRiverRd](#)

Followers: 1,748

Following: 259

Likes: 55

**Instagram:**

WI Great River Road – tag: [@wigreatriverrd](#)

Followers: 105

Following: 80



# MINUTES

WIMRPC Meeting November 11, 2016

State Office Building

La Crosse, Wisconsin

## 1, CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Quamme called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m. and asked those in attendance to introduce themselves so everyone would know who was there.

## 2. ROLL CALL:

**Commissioners present:** Representative Lee Nerison; ,Sherry Quamme; Jean Galasinski; Al Lorenz; Dennis Donath, Dave Smith, Katy Prange, Chief of Staff for Senator Marklein

**Commissioners excused:** Senator Kathleen Vinehout, Representative Chris Danou, Tom Vondrum, Bob Miller

**Others present:** WIMRPC Promotion Committee members: Amy Gabay (Chair), Jeanne Rutter and Mary Rae representing Karen Dahl,, Karrie,Jackelen, (Aide to U.S. Representative Ron Kind), Technical Committee members Mike Rewey, Bob Fisher, Jennifer Kuderer, Ric Ahern

**Others excused:** Drew Nussbaum, Department of Tourism Regional Specialist,

Quamme announced that a Quorum was present.

## 3. MINUTES:

The minutes of August 5, 2016 were discussed and approved. MSC Galasinski/Donath

## 4. CHAIR REPORT

Possible dates for the WIMRPC 2017 Quarterly meetings were reviewed and approved as: January 13<sup>th</sup>, April 21<sup>st</sup>, August 11<sup>th</sup>, and November 10<sup>th</sup>. Galasinski will be in contact with WIDOT to make room reservations for these meetings.

.Quamme reported:

\*\* Our Commission members have donated \$250 towards a scholarship fund in the name of Patrick Reinsma through Waukesha Technical College.

\*\*The WIMRPC 2015-2016 Annual Report was prepared by Quamme for the Annual MRPC Meeting and distributed to Commission Members and other interested parties.

\*\*The MRPC had requested nominees for Distinguished Service Award, Honorary Membership, and nominees for new Interpretive Centers. Bob Miller was nominated for the Distinguished Service Award by the WIMRPC and was presented with that Award in Natchez. Congratulations to Bob—well deserved.

## 5. TREASURERS REPORT

Acting Co-Treasurer Quamme Quamme reported that there is presently (11/3/16) a balance of \$34,252.35 in the Commission's Checking Account. This amount includes revenue from past and present Visitor Guide sales and WIMRPC Reserve funds.

Quamme then reviewed a number of QuickBooks Reports ----Balance Sheet of November 3, 2016, Profit and Loss January through November 2016 and the Customer Balance Summary.

There are still a number of vendors who are in 'Accounts Receivable' for the 2015 Visitor Guide Ads. Notices have been sent to those businesses. These accounts are expected to be paid in the near future.

Quamme then presented a draft Financial Policy developed by Sen. Marklein and Quamme. Copy attached

MSC Galasinski/ Donath to accept the Treasurers Report and approve the new Financial Policy

An audit of the Commission's financial records will be delayed until a Commissioner is appointed to assist Tom Vondrum.

## **6. REAPPOINTMENT UPDATE**

Quamme reported that there are several possible candidates to replace Maynard Cox as Vernon County Commissioner. We should know more by our January 13<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting.

## **7. WIDOT UPDATE**

Due to a scheduling problem, this Report was deferred until the January 13<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Commission meeting.

## **8. TOURISM UPDATE**

Drew Nussbaum has been reassigned to the SW Wisconsin Region to replace Patrick Reinsma. The replacement for Drew is Julie Fox of Siren in the Northwest Wisconsin Region.

Quamme said that a meeting with Department of Tourism's Deputy Secretary Sarah Klavas has been scheduled for November 16<sup>th</sup> in Madison. A detailed Report of the Commission's 2016 "marketing activities, 2017 Goals and funding needs is being prepared by the Marketing and Promotion Committee for this meeting.. Tourism has asked the Commission to partner with them on a Midwest Living Ad in the Spring Edition. MSC Smith/Lorenz to allocate \$3000 for this joint marketing ad to promote the GRRNSB.

Tourism provided over \$30,000 in promotion/marketing for the GRRNSB corridor in 2016.

The 2018 Superbowl will be hosted by the Vikings in Minneapolis. Judy Berg, River Falls Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, member of Promotion & Marketing serves on their Volunteer Committee for Events and is recommending our Promotion & Marketing Committee be involved to promote the WI GRRNSB, communities and events to draw visitors to our region. Rooms are being reserved as far east as Eau Claire. Networking to research the possibilities has started and more information will follow.

A Tourism Scholarship to the Governor's Annual Tourism Conference is being developed by the SW Wisconsin Area Chambers of Commerce. Each County Board is being asked for a donation. MSC Donath/Smith to approve a donation of \$300 from the Commission funds. The Director of the PduC Chamber Bob Moses is heading up this scholarship drive.

## **.9. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, INPUT**

Representative Danou was not re-elected in November so a new Democrat Representative will need to be recommended by the Democratic Caucus and appointed by the Governor. Quamme will monitor to assure this appointment is made in a timely manner.

Representative Nerison reported that the Railroad Commissioner has identified a number of locations when additional Public Crossings could be constructed to help the public gain access the River and public lands. It was the general consensus that these additional crossings would be very expensive to construct and not provide sufficient access for the public. Public Meetings concerning the trespass law will be scheduled in the future.

Fisher reported that there is an active Passenger Rail group called "All aboard Wisconsin" whose goal is: "Get more rail passengers to more places in Wisconsin with convenient connections to local and regional public transit including Amtrak.

John Medinger, Aide to Senator Baldwin reported that the Senator has requested a review of the Railroad "trespass law" by the Federal Legislative Research Council and there is an early determination that the Railroad does not have the legal authority to enforce this Law.

Medinger investigated to determine see who has the legal authority to write tickets and make arrests concerning the trespass law. Here is his response:

"Most of the laws/regulations come from the State level, this one included. Railroads hire their own police officers that are commissioned by the State and issue citations when the State Law is broken. Any fines issues are paid to the State and appeals go through State Court".

Prange reported that Senator Marklein is now Chair of the Revenue/ Financial Institutions and Rural Issues and Vice-chair of the Transportation and Veterans Affairs Committees.

## **10. CONTRACTS**

Quamme presented a contract for 2017 Visitor Guide Ad Sales for consideration. Evy Nerbonne is the sales person that has been selected. Contract reviewed, 20% commission for paid ads.

MSC Galasinski/Smith to approve a Contract to retain Evy Nerbonne to sell ads.

Quamme presented a Contract between the MRRPC and our WIMRPC to secure the planning services of the MMRPC to update the WIMRPC Corridor Management Plan for a cost not to exceed \$7000. This Plan updating will occur in the period between November 2016 and March 30, 2018.

Quamme also presented a contract between the MRRPC and our WIMRPC to secure the MRRPC planning services to develop a Commissioner's Handbook for a cost of \$1200. This work is to be completed between November 2016 and December 2017.

MSC Galasinski/Lorenz to approve these Contracts.

## **11. FRIENDS OF THE GREAT RIVER ROAD**

Quamme reported that now that the By-laws for the Friends Group have been approved the next steps will be to hold public meetings, develop a membership and begin fund raising campaign.

## **12. WIMRPC BYLAWS Revision, present/approve**

Galasinski presented the latest draft of the revised Commission Bylaws which included those changes to the August 5th Draft that were provided earlier by Commissioners.

These changes included the addition of a section relating to the relationship between the WIMRPC and the Friends of the WI Byway.

After discussion, MSC Donath/Smith to approve the Draft Bylaws as prepared and presented by Galasinski with some changes in grammar.

## **13. MRPC NATCHEZ SEPTEMBER 14-16**

Quamme, Miller, Donath, Smith and Lorenz attended the 2016 MRPC Annual Meeting in this historic Mississippi River Town

In this year of 2016, Natchez is celebrating their 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as the oldest continuing settlement on the Mississippi River.

Some highlights from this meeting included:

The Cultural and Heritage Committee recommended 2 new Interpretive Centers which received MRPC Board Approval.

The Transportation and Marketing Committees both requested that the MRPC Board allocate up to \$35,000 of reserve funds to complete the GIS Navigation Mapping of the GRRNSB. The Board will consider this request at their December 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting.

## **14. MARKETING AND PROMOTION**

The schedule for the sale of advertising and production of the 2017 Visitor Guide was reviewed. It is anticipated that the 2017 Guide will be available in early 2017.

The WIMRPC Web Site rebuild is progressing and is expected to be completed in early 2017.

The Committee discussed the 2017 Marketing Plan and 2017 Budget at their August and September Meetings. Items for consideration for the 2017 Budget include: Establish Photo Library with possible JEM

Grant (need photos for the southern half of GRRNSB) , possible funds to retain Drone Services for photos, funds for annual hosting of web site, funds for the sale of Visitor Guide Ads.

A Social Media Policy has been developed by the Committee with Megan Berg of the La Crosse County C&VB as the editor.

## **15. NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM PROJECTS/GRANTS-STATUS REPORTS**

### **\*FY 10 – Genoa Fish Hatchery**

Lorenz and Donath met meeting with Hatchery Manager Aloisi, F&WL staff and consultant in April to discuss how the GRRNSB is being included in the design of the GRRNSB Interpretive Center Exhibits. At that meeting, signing, the use of the GRR/NSB Logos, display areas, etc. were discussed and agreed upon. Donath and Lorenz will coordinate with F&WL Hatchery during this construction stage

Aloisi reported on November 10<sup>th</sup> that the outside stonework is being completed and all paving and exterior glasswork has been installed. Display design is still being developed. The main building is planned for completion by the fall of 2017

### **\* FY 09 - Agritourism**

Lorenz reported that \$1316 remains in this NSB Grant. The Promotion Committee will decide how to utilize the remaining funds An Agritourism Ad in the 2017 Visitor Guide is one option being considered.

### **\* FY 08 – Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Byway Organization**

Lorenz reported that to date we have utilized \$11225 NSB funds (\$25000 Grant amount) and \$1508 WIMRPC funds. Recent billings have been for Legal Work to establish a “Friends of the WI GRR” including services to create Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.

The finds to complete the update of the CMP will be part of the Grant. This is also the case for the Handbook Contract.

### **\* Intrinsic Qualities**

Lorenz reported that recent charges of \$364 that have been submitted to WIDOT for Rack Card design. We are awaiting for WIDOT reimbursement. After receiving WIDOT payment, \$4224 will remain in this NSB project.

### **\* National Geographic Geo-Tourism Project**

This NG Web Site is essentially complete however the nomination process will remain open through 2016. A meeting was held in New Orleans to review those nominations received to date.

The nomination forms for all WI Interpretation Centers have been submitted.

States are asked to develop an overall Management Plan for monitoring and updating the NG Site.

## **16. WIMRPC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### **Partnership and Outreach Committee**

The Committee is recommending the development of an “Overall Action Plan” to better acquaint the Commissioners and Committee Members with the GRR Corridor. A tour of the Corridor is also a recommendation.

#### **\*Capitol Rotunda Exhibit**

The GRRNSB Exhibit was in place from Monday, 6/6/16 –Monday, 6/13/16 was a success A special thanks to Rep.Nerison and

Staff for their assistance. This is a high traffic week since school tours are taking place plus the Cows on the Concourse event is also this week. It was decided that the same week in in June 2017 should be reserved for the WIMRPC Exhibit.

#### **\*Finance/Sustainability**

Lorenz thanked all County Commissioners for contacting their respective County Boards with 2017 Budget Requests. Lorenz reported that La Crosse County had budgeted \$3000 and Vernon \$2000 and Quamme reported Crawford County had budgeted \$1000,

A grant for Grant County must be prepared and submitted by January 1<sup>st</sup>. Quamme with the assistance of Vondrum will develop.

The Chairs of the Promotion/Marketing, Partnership/Outreach/ Financial/Sustainability should submit their 2017 Budget Requests by December 14<sup>th</sup> so a Draft 2017 Budget can be reviewed and Approved at the January 13<sup>th</sup> Commission meeting.

### **\*Legislative Meeting Schedule**

We will plan to meet with our 4 Legislative Commissioners in 2017 on February 7<sup>th</sup> pm at the State Capitol in Madison. Sen. Marklein's and Rep. Nerison's staffs will help coordinate.

Lorenz will circulate a Draft Agenda for comment prior to this meeting.

## **17. MISCELLANEOUS**

### **\*CAP X 2020 and Badger Coulee Line**

.The CAPX 2020 line is experiencing some electrical interference with the BNSF Railroad signals between Cochran and Alma where 161 hwy Line is attached to the same towers. Work to correct this problem may not be completed until the spring of 2017.

.The \$580m Badger-Coulee Line Project is in the right-of-way acquisition stage proceeding from South (Madison to the North (Holmen).This new transmission line will cross the GRRNSB near the interchange of STH 35 and USH 53and run parallel to the CAPX 2020 Line to the Briggs Road Substation.

There are 7 CAPX 2020 mitigation projects ongoing in Buffalo County worth a total of \$607,000 with a match ranging from 1:1 to 10-1. Main projects include the Buffalo County Courthouse Boiler, a trout stream rehab and prairie bluff restoration.

Galasinski reported that there is presently a CAPX 2020 mitigation project in progress for the Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge for a Wonder Learning Center for \$450,000.

### **\*Frac Sand**

No current action in WI to report. Allamakee County in Iowa is completing a study on mining siting funded in part with MRPC Foundation Funds.

### **\*File Material for Repository**

Lorenz reported that there has not significant progress on creating a WIMRPC repository pending a decision on format—hard copy or electronic and location. Materials received from Beekman's records are being temporarily stored in Viroqua at the Vernon County Economic Development Office.

2016 Visitor Guide storage is at La Crosse Graphics and at Pepin's Laura Ingram Wilder Museum. Will plan to use the same storage in 2017

Also the status of future storage at the proposed La Crosse C&VB is still uncertain due to merger of the La Crosse and Onalaska Tourism Offices at a new yet undetermined site.

### **La Crosse, Rose Street Project**

Lorenz reported that the City of La Crosse has contracted with a Design Consultant to prepare a 20-year Corridor Master Plan for roadside development along the USH 53 Corridor from I90, Exit 3 southerly to La Crosse Street. The City and their Consultant have been involving local citizens, businesses and stakeholders and agencies in this planning effort. Lorenz has been in contact with Jason Gilman, Director of City Planning and indicated that the WIMRPC would like to provide input concerning the importance of the route being the GRRNSB.

## **18. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Friday January13, 2017, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at La Crosse State Office Building.

## **19. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned @ 12:47 p.m. .MSC Galasinski/Donath

Respectively submitted: Al Lorenz, Secretary

**Meeting Dates 2017: January 13, April 21, August 11, November 10**

# MINUTES

WIMRPC Meeting January 13, 2017

State Office Building

La Crosse, Wisconsin

## 1, CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Quamme called the meeting to order at 9:35 a.m.

## 2. ROLL CALL:

**Commissioners present:** Representative Lee Nerison; ,Sherry Quamme; Jean Galasinski; Al Lorenz; Dennis Donath, Dave Smith, Katy Prange, Chief of Staff for Senator Marklein, Tom Vondrum, Jayne Lepke

**Commissioners excused:** Senator Kathleen Vinehout, Bob Miller

Quamme announced that Buffalo County Commissioner Miller has submitted his resignation since Bob and his wife Betty will be moving to Ohio to live closer to their children.

**Others present: Promotion/Marketing** Committee members: Jeanne Rutter, Megan King, Drew Nussbaum—Tourism, Karrie Jackelen, (Aide to U.S. Representative Ron Kind), Technical Committee members: Mike Rewey, MRT, Francis Schelfhout, WIDOT, Mark Tallman, WEDC, Doug Aloisi and Darla Wenger, Genoa Fish Hatchery

Quamme announced that a Quorum was present.

Quamme asked all those in attendance to introduce themselves

## 3. MINUTES:

The minutes of November 11, 2016 were discussed and approved. It was noted that the draft Minutes originally distributed by Email were corrected to remove John Me dinger's name from those in attendance. MSC Galasinski/Donath.

## 4. WIMRPC CHAIR REPORT

.Quamme reported:

\*\* Jayne Lepke of Stoddard has been appointed by Governor Walker to fill the unexpired term of Maynard Cox as the Vernon County Commissioner. Jayne is employed at Rocky's Supper Club in Stoddard, which is her family owned business.

\*\* The Promotion/Marketing met on November 16, 2016 with Tourism Deputy-Secretary Sarah Klavas and Consultant Drew Nussbaum. The WIMRPC Marketing Plan for 2017 and the Commission's financial management were discussed in detail and were well received by Tourism Deputy-Secretary Klavas. It should be noted that Tourism provided \$35000 in marketing support for the GRRNSB and western WI in 2016. The need for an enhanced photographic library for the southern GRRNSB was also discussed.

\*\* Those Commissioners and Committee Members needing Business Cards should contact Quamme,

\*\*Tim Jacobson will present a proposal for copy-write for the Intrinsic Qualities Project

## 5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Acting Co-Treasurer Quamme reported that there is presently (1/3/17) a balance of \$39,713.54 in the Commission's Checking Account. This amount includes revenue from past and present Visitor Guide sales and WIMRPC Reserve funds.

Quamme then reviewed a number of QuickBooks Reports ----Balance Sheet of January 9, 2016, Profit and Loss January through December 2016 and the Customer Balance Summary.

There are still a number of vendors who are in 'Accounts Receivable' for the 2015 and 2016 Visitor Guide Ads. Notices have been sent to those businesses. These accounts are expected to be paid in the near future. Those businesses receiving the notices have been made aware that interest will be charged on these late payments consistent with our Financial Policy.

\*\*A \$1500 Check was sent to Pilch and Barnet to pay for the Web Site hosting for the 3 years of 2014-2016.

\*\* The URL for the Commissions Web Site was re-established for a 10 YEAR Period.

MSC Galasinski/ Donath to accept the Treasurers Report.

An audit of the Commission's financial records will be delayed until a Commissioner is appointed to assist Tom Vondrum.

## **6. TOURISM UPDATE**

Drew Nussbaum reported that Julie Fox of Siren has been hired as the Tourism Consultant in the Northwest Wisconsin Region. Julie was formerly working at Interstate Park at St. Croix Falls.

Tourism and the WIMRPC will partner on a Midwest Living Ad in the Spring Edition.

The 2018 Super Bowl will be hosted by the Vikings in Minneapolis. Judy Berg, River Falls Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, member of Promotion & Marketing serves on their Volunteer Committee for Events and is recommending our Promotion & Marketing Committee be involved to promote the WI GRRNSB, communities and events to draw visitors to our region. Rooms are being reserved as far east as Eau Claire. Networking to research the possibilities has started and more information will follow.

A Tourism Scholarship in honor of Patrick Reinsma will provide the funds to attend to the Governor's Annual Tourism Conference (this year to be held at the Potawatomi Casino March 12-14). The fundraising and criteria is being developed by the SW Wisconsin Area Chambers of Commerce This Scholarship will be provided to a student interested in Tourism as a future means of employment.

The MN Home and Garden Show is planned for the last weekend in February and the WIMRPC will participate.

## **.7. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, INPUT**

\*\*Jackelen reported that U.S. Representative Kind will be hosting a Mississippi River Advisory Board Meeting in the near future. Quamme has recently been appointed to that Advisory Board which provides feedback to Representative Kind on River related issues.

\*\*Representative. Nerison reported briefly on the Governor's State of the State message and the State Budget Approval Schedule. Economic Development is a major theme and priority.

He reported that he and others are working on possible compromise actions concerning the Railroad Trespass Law. It was noted that the concern for trespassing fines has affected Tourism in Western WI and in other parts of the State.

Prange provided handouts on the Bills that Senator Marklein had either authored or co-authored during the 2016 Legislative Session. He is Chair of the Senate Committee on Revenue, Financial Institutions and Rural Issues and is Vice –Chair of the Senate Committee on Transportation and Veterans Affairs. He is also a member of the Joint Committee on Finance

## **LANDUSE/DEVELOPMENT STUDY-USH 53(GRRNSB)**

Lorenz Introduced the City of La Crosse Assistant Planner Tim Acklin who is the City's lead concerning the USH 53 Land Use/Development Study. Acklin described the overall purpose of the Study which is to prepare a 20 Year Master Plan for orderly economic development and transportation infrastructure for the corridor between I-90 and La Crosse Street. The Study area is approximately 2 blocks wide.

Acklin then introduced Will Kratt the lead Engineer for the ISG Consulting Firm who discussed the details of the Study, the public meetings held and the general input received to date.

Kratt indicated that the Study will determine how the Corridor can provide the most welcoming "Gateway to the City, including Way Finding Signage and with Facilities that create its special Identity.

WIMRPC members expressed their opinions on how the GRRNSB might be recognized and emphasized throughout the Corridor, Lorenz will prepare a draft letter to the City with our recommendation as to how the GRRNSB should be included in the Master Plan.

## **9. WI DOT UPDATE**

Francis Schelfhout, WIDOT Technical Committee member, provided details on the Trail Project between the Trempealeau Refuge (Marshland) and the City of Winona. This project is being funded through the WIDOT program with trail construction including a new bridge over the BNSF Railroad and a new deck in the bridge over the Latsch Island Slough. Buffalo County is the local sponsor for this Project.

Schelfhout handed out lists of the scheduled projects on the GRRNSB between Prescott and the WI River and answered questions concerning these Projects. He will provide project date for Grant County at a later date.

## **10. GENOA FISH HATCHERY PROJECT**

Hatchery Manager Doug Aloisi provided an update on the status of this NSB Project. The Project Exhibits are about 50% complete. With some new funding, additional space has been added to the structure to provide a larger Gift Shop, Theatre and Exhibit area.

The project is expected to be completed by late August of 2017.

A Peregrine Falcon Exhibit in cooperation with the Dairyland Power Cooperative will be added.

## **11. 2017 WIMRPC DRAFT BUDGET**

Draft 2017 Budgets for the Promotion/Marketing Committee, the Outreach and Partnership Committee and the Administrative Operations Area were proposed for review and comment.

Following discussion these draft Budgets were approved as proposed. MSC Lorenz/Galasinski . Copies for the approved Budgets are attached to these Minutes

## **13. FRIENDS OF THE GREAT RIVER ROAD**

Quamme reported that the Committee has budgeted expenses of \$3000 in 2017 for the development of the Friends Group which include office supplies, the holding of public meetings, web site development and creation of a Friends Newsletter.

## **.14. PROMOTION AND MARKETING**

The schedule for the sale of advertising and production of the 2017 Visitor Guide was reviewed. It is anticipated that the 2017 Visitor Guide will be available in late February 2017.

The WIMRPC Web Site rebuild is progressing on schedule and is expected to be completed in early 2017.

A Social Media Policy has been developed by the Committee with Megan Berg of the La Crosse County C&VB as the Editor. She provided statistics concerning the response numbers and rates.

## **15. NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM PROJECTS/GRANTS-STATUS REPORTS**

### **\* FY 09 - Agritourism**

Lorenz reported that \$1316 remains in this NSB Grant. The Promotion Marketing Committee will decide how to utilize the remaining funds updating the new website with Agritourism opportunities is one option being considered. The Committee will plan to utilize these remaining funds in 2017.

### **. \* FY 08 – Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Byway Organization**

Lorenz reported that to date we have utilized \$11225 NSB funds (\$25000 Grant amount) and \$1508 WIMRPC funds. Recent billings have been for Legal Work to establish a "Friends of the WI GRR" including services to create Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.



The funds to complete the update of the CMP will be part of the Grant. This is also the case for the Handbook Contract.

**\* Intrinsic Qualities**

Lorenz reported that recent charges of \$364 that have been submitted to WIDOT for Rack Card design. We are awaiting for WIDOT reimbursement. After receiving WIDOT payment, \$4224 will remain in this NSB project.

**\* National Geographic Geo-Tourism Project**

This NG Web Site is essentially complete. The nomination forms for all WI Interpretation Centers have been submitted.

GRRNSB States are asked to develop an overall Management Plan for monitoring and updating the NG Site.

**16. WIMRPC COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Partnership and Outreach Committee**

The Committee proposed a Budget of \$800 including Adopt a Highway Connections, Electronic Newsletter and Recognition Program, Also the development of an "Overall Action Plan" to better acquaint the Commissioners and Committee Members with the GRR Corridor. A tour of the Corridor is also a recommendation.

**\*Capitol Rotunda Exhibit**

The GRRNSB Exhibit will be in place from Monday, 6/5/17 –Monday, 6/12/17. The 2016 Exhibit was a real success. A special thank you to Representative Nerison's staff for their assistance.

This is a high traffic week since school tours are taking place plus the "Cows on the Concourse Event" is

Held this week.

**\*Financial/Sustainability**

Lorenz thanked all County Commissioners for contacting their respective County Boards with 2017 Budget Requests. Lorenz reported that a total of \$8000 has been budgeted by 4 of our Counties (Buffalo \$2000, La Crosse \$3000, Vernon \$2000 and Crawford \$1000)

A grant for Grant County must be prepared and submitted by February 6<sup>th</sup>. Quamme with the assistance of Vondrum will develop.

**\*Legislative Meeting Schedule**

We will plan to meet with our 4 Legislative Commissioners in 2017 on February 7<sup>th</sup> pm at the State Capitol in Madison. Sen. Marklein's and Rep. Nerison's staffs will help coordinate.

Lorenz will circulate a Draft Agenda for comment prior to this meeting.

**17. MISCELLANEOUS**

**\*CAP X 2020 and Badger Coulee Line**

.The CAPX 2020 line is experiencing some electrical interference with the BNSF Railroad signals between Cochran and Alma where the 161 kw Line is attached to the same towers. Work to correct this problem may not be completed until the spring of 2017.

.The \$580m Badger-Coulee Line Project is in the right-of-way acquisition stage proceeding from South (Madison to the North (Holmen).This new transmission line will cross the GRRNSB near the interchange of STH 35 and USH 53and run parallel to the CAPX 2020 Line to the Briggs Road Substation.

There are 7 CAPX 2020 mitigation projects ongoing in Buffalo County worth a total of \$607,000 with a match ranging from 1:1 to 10-1. Main projects include the Buffalo County Courthouse Boiler, a trout stream rehab and prairie bluff restoration.

Galasinski reported that there is presently a CAPX 2020 mitigation project in progress for the Trempealeau Wildlife Refuge for a Wonder Learning Center for \$450,000.

**\*File Material for Repository**

Lorenz reported that there has not significant progress on creating a WIMRPC repository pending a decision on format—hard copy or electronic and location. Materials received from Beekman’s records are being temporarily stored in Viroqua at the Vernon County Economic Development Office.

2016 Visitor Guide storage was at La Crosse Graphics and at Pepin’s Laura Ingram Wilder Museum. Will plan to use the same storage in 2017

**18. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Friday April 21, 2017, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at La Crosse State Office Building.

**19. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned @ 12:48 p.m. .MSC Galasinski/Lorenz

Respectively submitted: Al Lorenz, Secretary

**Meeting Dates 2017: April 21, August 11, November 10**

# MINUTES

WIMRPC Meeting May 5, 2017

State Office Building

La Crosse, Wisconsin

## 1, CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Quamme called the meeting to order at 8:35 a.m. This meeting was scheduled to begin an hour earlier than normal since the Commission will attend the Grand Opening of the I-90 Visitors Center at 11am.

## 2. ROLL CALL:

**Commissioners present:** Representative Lee Nerison, Sherry Quamme; Jean Galasinski; Al Lorenz; Dennis Donath, Dave Smith, Katy Prange, Chief of Staff for Senator Marklein, Jayne Lepke, Representative Jill Billings

**Commissioners excused:** Senator Kathleen Vinehout, Tom Vondrum

**Others present:** Promotion/Marketing Committee members. Amy Gabay, Chair, Jeanne Rutter and Mary Anne Collins-Svoboda, Karrie Jackelen, (Aide to U.S. Representative Ron Kind), Technical Committee member: Francis Schelfhout, WIDOT

Quamme announced that a Quorum was present and asked all those in attendance to introduce themselves

## 3. MINUTES:

The minutes of January 13, 2017 meeting were reviewed and approved. MSC; Galasinski/Smith.

## 4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Acting Co-Treasurer Quamme reported that there is presently (4/25/17) a balance of \$29,079.95 in the Commission's Checking Account. This amount includes revenue from past and present Visitor Guide sales and WIMRPC Reserve funds.

Quamme then reviewed a number of QuickBooks Reports ----Balance Sheet of April 25,, 2017, Profit and Loss January through April 2017 and the Customer Balance Summary through April 25, 2017.

There are still a number of vendors (11 for \$3292) who are in 'Accounts Receivable' for the 2016 Visitor Guide Ads. Notices have been sent to those businesses. These accounts are expected to be paid in the near future. Those businesses receiving the notices have been made aware that interest will be charges on these late payments consistent with our Financial Policy.

A number of Invoices have been received/paid—Blog Writer \$200, La Crosse Graphics \$14,561.80, Kristin Mitchell Design \$3000, La Crosse CVB for fulfillment \$364.24. Invoices that are anticipated in the next quarter are Sleeping Giant \$2000 plus and Tim Jacobson approx. \$2000 for website writing and photography – Intrinsic Qualities.

MSC Smith/Nerison to accept the Treasurers Report.

An audit of the Commission's financial records will be delayed until a Commissioner is appointed to assist Tom Vondrum.

## 5. TOURISM UPDATE

The Commission will adjourn this meeting at 10:30 am to attend the WIDOT Welcome-Visitor Center Grand Opening at 11am. Governor Walker, Stephanie Klett Tourism Secretary and Dave Ross Transportation Secretary will be attending.

The 2018 Super Bowl will be hosted by the Vikings in Minneapolis. Judy Berg, River Falls Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, member of Promotion & Marketing serves on their Volunteer Committee for Events and is recommending our Promotion & Marketing Committee be involved to promote the WI GRRNSB, communities and events to draw visitors to our region. Rooms are being reserved as far east as Eau Claire. Networking to research the possibilities has started and more information will follow

## **6. PUBLIC MEETING TRAINING**

The Open Meeting Training required for all State Agencies will be delayed until the August 11<sup>th</sup> meeting due to the time constraints of today's meeting. This training will involve procedures for emails, notes, records, etc.

## **7. DRAFT HANDBOOK**

Fletcher and Smith presented an overview of the Commissioner's Draft Hand Book. Commissioners were asked to review and send comments to Peter Fletcher. The MRRPC will be responsible for keeping the Handbook current. Both Fletcher and Smith were commended for the quality of the contents of the Handbook.

## **8. CMP**

As a part of the MRRPC's work to update the Corridor Management Plan Fletcher provided a listing and rating sheet of State and Community owned public facilities to each Commissioner for their area.

Each commissioner was asked to field review and complete the rating sheet and return them to Fletcher by June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **9. REPOSITORY**

Lorenz reported that the MRRPC has agreed to provide library space for the WIMRPC Records. Lorenz will provide materials to the MRRPC and will provide a listing to each Commissioner.

## **10. FRIENDS OF THE GREAT RIVER ROAD**

Quamme said that a springboard Meeting with invited guests would be planned for this summer and asked those in attendance for 3 names of possible invitees to this initial meeting. This meeting or meetings would be held in La Crosse area or one in the north and one in the south if there in a need for more than one meeting.

There is a need to hold a Friends Board Meeting yet this year per the 501©3 requirements

**11) MONARCH HABITAT** Donath has been providing information on the creation of monarch butterfly habitat/waystations to help in the recovery of this species .Kits are available with seed packs for those schools and individuals that are interested.

## **12. GENOA FISH HATCHERY**

Donath/ Quamme to check with Doug Aloisi on the construction status of the Interpretive Center. A Grand Opening had been planned for this August. We should seek approval by the MRPC in September at the Annual Meeting.??

## **13. NSB FOUNDATION MEMBERSHIP**

.Quamme recommended that the WIMRPC apply for membership in this Foundation (\$150 annually). MSC Smith/Galasinski to apply and to use the WIMRPC credit card.

## **14. NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM PROJECTS/GRANTS-STATUS REPORTS**

### **\* FY 09 - Agritourism**

Lorenz reported that \$1316 remains in this NSB Grant. The Promotion/Marketing Committee will decide how to utilize the remaining funds. Updating the new website with Agritourism opportunities is one option being considered. The Committee will plan to utilize these remaining funds in 2017.

### **\* FY 08 – Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Byway Organization**

Lorenz reported that to date we have utilized \$11225 NSB funds (\$25000 Grant amount) and \$1508 WIMRPC funds. Recent billings have been for Legal Work to establish a "Friends of the WI GRR" including services to create Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation.

The funds to complete the update of the CMP will be part of the Grant. This is also the case for the Handbook Contract with the MRRPC.

### **\* Intrinsic Qualities**

Lorenz reported that recent charges of \$364 that have been submitted to WIDOT for Rack Card design. We are awaiting for WIDOT reimbursement. After receiving WIDOT payment, \$4224 will remain in this NSB project.

### **15. LEGISLATIVE MEETING 2/7/17**

.With the assistance of Sen. Marklein' s and Rep. Nerison' s staff, a meeting was held with our Commission's Legislative members and staff at the State Capitol to discuss a number of issues important to the future of WIMRPC

Quamme first reviewed the current actions and projects of the Commission and then explained issues where our Legislators can be of assistance.such as: the Railroad Trespass Law, Frac Sand Mining, State Agency Funding of the WIMRPC and the need to update the SS14.85.

Sen. Marklein' s office will take the lead in updating SS14.85 including a discussion with the Department s of Agriculture and WEDA concerning their becoming ex-officio members.

### **16. PROMOTION COMMITTEE**

Gabay explained that the Committee is proposing to hire a new sales rep for the 2018 Visitor Guide hopefully to increase the number of advertisers resulting in a larger edition of the Guide.

250 pages have been added to the Web Site by an intern. The first blog article has been added to the existing Web Site and a second is under review.

The new WIMRPC Web Site rebuild is progressing on schedule and is expected to be completed by mid-2017.

A Social Media Policy has been developed by the Committee with Megan Berg of the La Crosse County C&VB as the Editor. She provided statistics concerning the response numbers and rates.

It was reported that GRRNSB information was the most popular fulfillment items at the La Crosse C&VB.items

### **17. MRPC SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING in PADUCAH**

Quamme, Smith and Donath gave a report of the significant actions and activities at this Semi-Annual meeting in Paducah...

The KYMRPC were great hosts and attendees were taken to segments of their GRRNSB including interpretive centers and River vistas.

This area of Kentucky is recovering from the closing of 2 major companies and increasing tourism revenues is a very important goal.

The 2017 10 State Maps will be available soon. They will be shipped to La Crosse CVB. Each Interpretive Center is to get 1 box and Commissioners have delivered them in the past to distribute. The cases of maps can be obtained from La Crosse CVB and arranged through Amy Gabay. The Promotion and Marketing Comm. will assist with distribution.

### **18. JANE CARROLA'S RETIREMENT**

Jane Carrola ,WIDOT Scenic Byway Coordinator will be retiring at the end of May and it would seem fitting to provide her with a gift in recognition of all the assistance she has provided to our WIMRPC over many years. .MSC Galasinski/Lorenz to have Quamme purchase a \$200 gift or gift card for her...

### **18. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Friday August 11, 2017, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at La Crosse State Office Building.

### **19. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned @ 10; 35 am MSC Galasinski/Lorenz

Respectively submitted: Al Lorenz, Secretary

**Meeting Dates 2017: August 11, November 10**

# DRAFT MINUTES

WIMRPC Meeting August 11, 2017

State Office Building

La Crosse, Wisconsin

## 1, CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Quamme called the meeting to order at 9:33 a.m. and Welcome to all present

## 2. ROLL CALL:

**Commissioners present:** Representative Lee Nerison, Sherry Quamme; Jean Galasinski; Al Lorenz; Dennis Donath, Dave Smith, Katy Prange, Chief of Staff for Senator Marklein, Jayne Lepke, Representative Jill Billings

**Commissioners excused:** Tom Vondrum

Absent: Senator Kathleen Vinehout

**Others present:** Promotion/Marketing Committee members. Amy Gabay, Chair and Jeanne Rutter, Karrie Jackelen, (Aide to U.S. Representative Ron Kind), Technical Committee members Mike Rewey and Bob Fisher, Diane Paoni, WIDOT, Scenic Byways Coordinator via teleconference and Sheronne Mulry of MNMRPC.

Quamme announced that a Quorum was present and asked those in attendance to introduce themselves

## 6) PUBLIC MEETING, TRAINING VIDEO (advanced in the Agenda)

Tom Kratt, WIDOT, in place of Francis Schelfhout, presented a 15 minute video entitled "Wisconsin Public Records Law"... Kratt also provided a 12 page handout which included all of the information included in the video concerning the open meeting and open records laws, public records responsibilities, record retention and public requests.

In that the WIMRPC is a quasi-government organization we must conform to this Public Records Law, Quamme appointed Lorenz, Schelfhout and Paoni to develop a draft procedure for WIMRPC to be presented for approval at the November 10<sup>th</sup> WIMRPC Meeting.

## .3. MINUTES:

The minutes of May 5, 2017 meeting were reviewed and approved. MSC; Galasinski/Smith.

## 4. TREASURER'S REPORT

Acting Co-Treasurer Quamme reported that there is presently (8/4/17) a balance of \$33025.62 in the Commission's Checking/Savings Account. This amount includes revenue from past and present Visitor Guide sales and WIMRPC Reserve funds.

Quamme then reviewed a number of QuickBooks Reports ----Balance Sheet of August 4, 2017, Profit and Loss January through August 2017 and the Customer Balance Summary through August 4, 2017.

All invoices for the 2017 Visitor Guide have been paid. There are still several for the 2016 guide that remain unpaid and may need to be written off.

MSC Smith/Galasinski to accept the Treasurers Report.

An audit of the Commission's financial records will be delayed until a Commissioner is appointed to assist Tom Vondrum.

Mulry reported that the State of MN has approved a Budget Item to fund the MNMRPC for another 2 years.

## **5. TOURISM UPDATE 9 (tabled until November 10<sup>th</sup> Commission Meeting)**

### **6. DRAFT HANDBOOK**

Fletcher and Smith discussed the completed version of the Commissioner's Handbook. It was decided that 40 hard copies in binder form would be produced and then provided for Commissioners and Committee members. An electronic version would be provided to the other MRPC States. The WI GRR map file will be received 8/15/17 and will be included.

### **7. CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Fletcher reported that all "rating sheets of State and Community owned public facilities" have been completed by each Commissioner for their area and this information will be used to assess the condition and needed improvements of the Visitor Facilities.

An amended Consultant Services Agreement with CS Corridor Solutions for \$7800 was reviewed and approved-- MSC Lorenz/Galasinski. Part of the expense will be paid from the Building & Maintaining a NSB Grant. An additional up to \$5000 is needed to fund this project. MSC Smith/Galasinski to amend the Administrative Budget by this amount.

Key Stakeholders Meetings will be held in La Crosse and possibly other locations by early fall. The names and email addresses of potential invitees are needed by Aug. 30, 2017. Email S. Quamme with the list of Key Stakeholders in each County including public officials, organizations, and WI GRR businesses should be included.

A combined CMP will be prepared by CS and the MRRPC.

### **8. DREDGING OF MISSISSIPPI IN POOL 4**

The comment period for the dredging and on land storage of an estimated 10 million cubic yards of material from Pool 4 has been extended until August 25 due to the large number of concerns expressed by the public and agencies.

Quamme provided copies of letters including Department of Agriculture Secretary Brancel who expressed concern about the loss of farmland and from WIDOT wherein they expressed concern about Scenic Easements, traffic impacts and access approvals. MSC Nerison, Galasinski for Quamme to prepare a letter from the WIMRPC to the COE by August 25 expressing the WIMRPC concerns.

Mulry reported that there was a very large attendance at the COE Public Meeting in Wabasha, MN who voiced opposition to the proposed location of dredge spoils in that area.

### **9. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, STATE BUDGET PROCESS, TRANSPORTATION and SS14.85**

Nerison, Shilling and Prange reported that the Legislature is still in negotiations concerning the 2017-2019 State Budget especially with concerns about the Transportation and Education areas.

The FOXCONN Project has added a significant amount of discussion and controversy.

The significant negative impact on Tourism of the Railroad Trespass Law has built support to draft a new Bill to allow the public to cross to other public lands and the River per Rep. Nerison.

SS 14.85--Prange reported that contacts have been made with the Department of Agriculture and WEDA about Ex-officio membership and the assignment of Technical Members to the Commission. Both agencies expressed agreement.

### **10. MONARCH HABITAT**

Donath has been providing information on the creation of monarch butterfly habitat/waystations to help in the recovery of this species. Kits are available with seed packs for those schools and individuals that are interested.

A number of waystations sites along the GRRNSB have been developed by schools and individuals.

### **11. GENOA FISH HATCHERY**

Donath has been in contact with Hatchery Manager Doug Aloisi on the construction status of the Interpretive Center. A Grand Opening has now been delayed until spring of 2018. A draft of the exhibits is now being reviewed by Donath, Quamme and Lorenz.

## **12. NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY PROGRAM PROJECTS/GRANTS-STATUS REPORTS**

### **\* FY 09 – Agritourism**

Lorenz reported that \$1316 remains in this NSB Grant. The Promotion/Marketing Committee will decide how to utilize the remaining funds. Updating the new website with Agritourism opportunities is one option being considered. The Committee will plan to utilize these remaining funds in 2017.

### **. \* FY 08 – Building and Maintaining a Sustainable Byway Organization**

Lorenz reported that \$12,763 remains in this project. To date we have utilized \$11225 NSB funds (\$25000 Grant amount) and \$1508 WIMRPC funds. 2016 billings for Legal Work to establish a “Friends of the WI GRR” including services to create Bylaws and Articles of Incorporation. That work is completed. A computer, printer and software have been approved by Jane Carrola and need to be purchased from this grant.

The funds to complete the update of the CMP will be part of the Grant. This is also the case for the Handbook Contract with the MRRPC.

### **\* Intrinsic Qualities**

Lorenz reported that recent charges of \$364 that have been submitted to WIDOT for Rack Card design. We are awaiting for WIDOT reimbursement. After receiving the WIDOT payment, \$4224 will remain in this NSB project.

## **13. PROMOTION/ MARKETING COMMITTEE**

Gabay asked the Commission to approve contracting with Phillip Wanke and Julie Wanke to sell advertising along the GRRNSB for the 2018 Visitor Guide.as recommended by the P/M Committee. MSC Galasinski/ Prange

A letter will be sent to past advertisers to determine their interest in the new Guide and this information will be sent to Julie and to Philip Wanke by September 1<sup>st</sup>. It is intended that an increased number of advertisers will be secured resulting in a larger edition of the Guide.

The new WIMRPC Web Site rebuild is progressing on schedule. Please review and let Amy know what might be missing? Gabay will send us a form for getting businesses included in the Web Site.

An intern from UW-La Crosse has been used to help secure more photos along the GRRNSB South

A big thank you to Commissioner Tom Vondrum for staffing the State Fair booth and handing out Visitor Guides with Dept. of Tourism and also thank you to Karen Dahl and Vernon County Tourism Council for giving out our Visitor Guides at their booth.

The Intrinsic Qualities Rack cards have been printed and are available for distribution. 6 sets of each rack card was distributed to those present, Commissioners are to supply them to interpretive centers, schools and interested businesses.

## **14. MRPC ANNUAL MEETING IN MARQUETTE, IA**

Quamme encouraged members to attend the MRPC Annual Meeting, Marquette, IA September 19-21. The Meeting Theme is “Iowa’s Driftless Area” and a number of tours on land and water are planned.

The Welcome Reception will be held at the new Driftless Area Education and Visitor Center at Lansing IA. WIMRPC submitted a nomination for the National Stewardship Award to be presented 9/21/17 at the MRPC Conference.

## **15. NOMINATION COMMITTEE FOR NOVEMBER ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

Quamme appointed Donath and Smith to be the Nominating Committee to provide a list of WIMRPC officers for the November 10<sup>th</sup> WIMRPC Meeting.

## **16. OTHER BUSINESS**

Quamme appointed Lepke to the Finance Committee and Smith to Chair the Education Committee.

The Annual Meeting of the Friends Group is scheduled immediately following the close of this meeting.



**17. NEXT MEETING DATE**

Friday November 10, 2017, 9:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at La Crosse State Office Building.

**18. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned @ 12:17pm MSC Galasinski/Lepke\_

**Meeting Dates 2017: November 10**

Respectively submitted: Al Lorenz, Secretary

