



## Mississippi River Parkway Commission Transportation Committee Meeting October 7, 2015 | 2-5pm

### MINUTES

- I. Introductions Meeting participants included Derick Biglane, MS; Brenda Edgin, MS; Bobby Kennedy, AR; Mike McGregor, KY; Lindsey Netherland, MS; Dave Smith, WI; Mary Stahlhut, IA; Lisa Walsh, IA; Brian Parsons, LA; Mark Kross, MO; and Carol Zoff, MN.
- II. Approve minutes Motion by KY, second by MO to accept; passed unanimously.
- III. MRPC Strategic Plan review The following comments are submitted to the BOD for consideration as the 2015-17 MRPC Strategic Plan is implemented and reflect how the Transportation Committee will work to implement the Plan:

#### **Legislative/Stakeholders**

ℵ Meet with governor and legislature between each meeting. (states, Board of Directors [BOD]) *Transportation requests that each state and or the BOD develop Transportation talking points in coordination with each state's Transportation Department so they are aware of and can support the Commission's goals over the next three years.*

Invite local leaders, elected officials and stakeholders to MRPC Annual and Semi-Annual meetings. (states, BOD) *Invite DOT District Engineers, Planners and Maintenance to reflect the needs and opportunities in each District along the byway. Also invite Metropolitan and Regional Planning Organizations along the river as these are typically involved in or lead local transportation investment programming.*

ℵ Create an annual report that can also be used for legislative meetings, as a press release,

and an e-newsletter to stakeholders, legislature, and local media. (states, NO) *Partner with MRC Tourism agencies as they compile tourism impact by county. Utilize examples such as Iowa and Wisconsin where the GRR and MRPC actively participate in Legislative Tourism Days, State Fairs and an annual report to the Legislature. Make appointments with Legislative staff if the Legislator is not available as these staff are vital to carrying forward needs and benefits of the byway.*

○ Compile and summarize the state commission, MRPC and MRC accomplishments. (states, BOD, MRC, NO)

○ Provide letters acknowledging gratitude and benefit to those who helped us achieve each year's accomplishments (states) *Combine these and customize for each state and*



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*sign by the Pilot and each state's Chair, including acknowledgement of paid dues, staff support and MRC contributions.*

### **Transportation**

Work with Departments of Transportation (DOTs) to compile GRR shape files for Mississippi River Trails (MRT) and GRR for use with MRC app and [www.mrpcmembers.com](http://www.mrpcmembers.com). (NO, Transportation) *Transportation to define shape file criteria and determine who in each state may have the files already in place for both routes. By August 2016*

§ Survey the ten-state route to determine if the GRR is signed in a consistent and continuous manner, assessing the sign locations, condition, effectiveness, and provide a cost estimate for needed improvements. (Transportation, states) *Transportation to survey states to determine current known status of wayshowing signs, electronic data management systems used to track signage, and confirm MUTCD requirements. Addressing signage conditions that are not known or to address conditions needing improvement (missing and deteriorated signs) may be incorporated in the ten state corridor management plan activities listed below. By August 2016*

§ Survey city/DMOs/IC/county/state/MRCC/MRT maps to determine if they incorporate the GRR route and logo in mapping. (Transportation, states) *After 2016*

§ Educate and advocate to transportation policy makers about opportunities and threats to the GRR and its amenities. (BOD, Transportation) *Transportation to start a concern list (ie, erosion, slope stability, MRT coordination and accommodation, restoring NSB eligible activities in the next Transportation Bill) By August 2016*

§ Develop a 10-state Corridor Management Plan (CMP) following Federal Highway Administration plan requirements. (Transportation, ERA, C&H, Marketing, BOD) *Transportation to focus on assessing current plans and activities each state and the National MRPC have already developed, as well as the Mississippi River National Heritage Corridor study by the National Park Service. The goal is to showcase existing materials to develop a finite plan with a compelling story to briefly state the accomplishments, needs and benefits for coordinated corridor management along this ten-state system.*

### **Strengthen the Organization**

§ Survey NO files, members, agencies and the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium for documents, charters/statutes, corridor management plans and links to relevant organizational materials to archive on [www.mrpcmembers.com](http://www.mrpcmembers.com). (NO, BOD, states)

§ Create a team to review the archived GRR/MRPC materials. (BOD, NO) *Combine these and begin with the standing committee members to review each state's records and*

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*the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium archives for incorporation in the 10-state CMP. Utilize Transportation Committee budget \$2000 to pay to archive and/or for travel costs.*

ℵ Start database of GRR signage photos. (Transportation, Marketing, C&H ) *See above*

ℵ Develop shape files for GRR if they don't currently exist. (states, Transportation) *See above*

ℵ Review each state's CMP for incorporations into the 10-state CMP. (states, Transportation, CMP committee) *See above*

ℵ Update Interpretive Plan and Toolkit, including looking at 11 interpretive themes identified and determine how to further develop each theme. (states, Transportation, BOD, CMP committee) *As a part of the 10-state CMP*

ℵ Update state CMPs to include MRT. (states, Transportation, CMP committee) *As a part of the 10-state CMP*

IV. Iowa sign plan update This project utilizes a final NSB grant to Iowa and will be let in November 2015. The plan has been turned in, including details for a 24" x 42" sign that incorporated a statewide byway template with the Pilot's wheel sign. Signs will be laser printed, have an 8 year warranty and are retro-reflective. The construction documents utilize an ERSI application that allows the contractor to GPS locate each location, and the Construction Office to inspect in real time virtually from the office. Once installation is complete Iowa DOT Maintenance will track the signs also using ERSI app.

The application has broader potential to track intrinsic resources, conduct view shed analysis and the State Aid segments of Iowa's Great River Road and other byways.

V. Round robin state updates

IA: Finished the CMP. Will meet with the Governor's office next week to present it, then post online for implementation uses. Next step is to conduct Lidar analysis of all Iowa byways. Two structural challenges include the Cascade Bridge and the Mount Rose segment which is sinking.

AR: Building upon the success of the Harahan Bridge to Memphis, a walking/bicycling trail to the levy from Marianna to Marion is a next step in multi-modal Mississippi River exploration.

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WI: A sustainability grant will facilitate the work of Marty Beekman who will write the history of the Great River Road in Wisconsin through two DOT Districts.

LA: Hard to attend out of state meetings so looking forward to Transportation Committee work to inform the need and benefit. Being a part of a ten state effort is a big reason to continue. LA has 494 miles of GRR on the west side of the river and 230 miles on the east side of the river. Bicycling is a growing mode of river exploration and plans for 60 miles of levee top trails are complete with more in development. New byway signs are also in the works..

KY: Plans are complete for new GRR wayshowing signs and signs for other river trails accessed via the byway. Implementation is 1/3 complete and the DOT will let the remaining contract in 3 months. Norma Pruitt is a great asset for getting this accomplished

MN: Completing a new CMP in November. Wayshowing is only 46% intact and will be one of four priorities. The others are developing a Plan Your Project GIS-based mapping tool to help the many segment managers manage the road, a Plan Your Project GIS-based mapping tool to help travelers plan and experience the river in Minnesota, and a Great River Road Ambassador program to increase education and engagement of partners who support the byway traveler.

VI. Set teleconference to address Strategic Plan implementation Carol to send out a Doodle Poll to determine the next meeting date during which we will begin the sign and shape file work.

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