

MRPC Culture and Heritage Committee
Minutes
Sept. 21, 2017

The Culture and Heritage Committee convened at 8:30 a.m. on Sept. 21, 2017 at the Cobblestone Inn and Suites, Marquette, Iowa.

Present: Sheronne Mulry, Minnesota, and Ruth Hawkins, Arkansas, Co-Chairs; Pat Audirsch, Joe St. Columbia, Arkansas; Ron Deiss, Martin Graber, James Janett, Edith Pfeffer, Lisa Walsh, Iowa; Carissa Viniard, Kentucky; Nancy Salminen, Minnesota; Dave Smith, Sherry Quamme, Wisconsin. Sheronne Mulry presided.

Reports from Interpretive Center visits included that it is important that the visiting commissioner include the name of the person spoken with at the IC, position title, email, and telephone for any follow-up and as a reminder to IC's on future visits of who provided info at the last visit. It was also suggested that commissioners try to visit IC's early in the tourism season, perhaps in April, to ensure that staff understand the role of the IC's.

Joe St. Columbia moved, seconded by Martin Graber, that the IC application from Oak Alley Plantation be tabled in order to request a more complete application. Motion carried.

Sherry Quamme moved, seconded by Nancy Salminen, to recommend the Heritage Center Museum (Des Moines County Historical Society) and the Driftless Area Education and Visitors Center (Lansing) both in Iowa, as our two newest Interpretive Centers. Motion carried.

Edith Pfeffer moved, seconded by Joe St. Columbia, that we request that the board meet later in the afternoon to approve this recommendation, in order that the two centers could proceed with getting proper signage. Motion carried.

Questions were raised and discussed about the need for a process to deactivate Interpretive Centers that no longer are meeting criteria. Such recommendations should come through the state commissions.

The committee continued to review themes represented by each Interpretive Center as part of the overall Corridor Management Plan. This will also be important in preparing for the 2018 Culture and Heritage theme along the river. An updated list is attached.

It was suggested that we also need to look at a permanent way of archiving river stories and river histories and catalog them for the CMP.

Recommendation was made that a reduced registration rate be offered to Interpretive Centers for semi-annual or annual meeting if they are from the states where meetings are held (or within reasonable driving distance). Registration should cover actual cost of meals and/or other direct expenses, rather than full registration, in order to make it possible for IC's to attend. Reduced rate would be limited to one person per center. Motion by Sherry Quamme, second by Nancy Salminen.

Discussion was held regarding the overlays and new signs. Joe St. Columbia moved, Sherry Quamme seconded, that the National Office should order signs for the new interpretive centers, with costs to be paid by the individual interpretive centers. The National Office should coordinate with the IC's to let them know the costs. Edith indicated they could pick them up.

The meeting adjourned at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes compiled by Ruth Hawkins