

Mississippi River Parkway Commission

Marketing Committee Video Conference Call

April 23, 2020 | 11 AM-12 PM

NOTES

- I. 2020 Marketing Plan NO
- COVID-19 Messaging Update
 - Monitoring states' responses including safer at home orders and its messaging impact
 - Wisconsin extending through 5/26
 - We need to account for varied state responses and its impact on travel to keep a consistent message for travelers
 - AR:
 - Doing really well on curve
 - Doing more testing now though, so numbers will go up
 - Messaging: we had some issues with public because in the beginning we were saying go outside and enjoy state parks but then one of the state parks had the highest attendance ever
 - Not a mandatory stay at home
 - Governor is going to start looking at mandatory on 5/4
 - Has an economic recovery team including Secretary of Tourism
 - Hopefully, more answers next week
 - IL:
 - Mandatory stay at home till 4/30, sure governor will extend
 - KY:
 - 4/30 date
 - Governor likely to extend
 - One state park is set up as corona patients isolating area for those with nowhere to go.
 - Governor's looking at 14-day patterns and doesn't want anyone to open up anything before state is ready
 - Think may be closed to sept
 - LA:
 - Yesterday mandatory mask order for whenever outside
 - Numbers are pretty high throughout state
 - Governor afraid if we don't continue to social distance there will be resurgence around Christmas
 - A lot of state parks are triage areas
 - Marketing: working on plans and using past Katrina research, how block grants were used, tracking money closely

- Governor put together task force with tourism to talk about how federal funds can be spent. Received \$1.8 billion but not sure how funds can be used yet
 - Monitoring legislation
 - 4th and 5th bills are expected to go through
 - Things are very complicated to follow
 - Home stay until end of April, not sure if it will extend
 - Governor has 3 phases to bring back to normal
 - Lots of questions, not many answers, like for everyone
- MN
 - 5/4 extended stay at home
 - Opened golf courses under conditions and standards
 - State parks: visitor centers and person contact are closed but you can still access through online passes
 - Today might get an announcement about schools
 - Agencies have been doing different things
 - Historical society decided to close their sites through 6/30 and furlough half their staff
- MS:
 - Governor doesn't want us to only buy at Walmart so flower shops, clothing stores, lakes and beaches are open
 - Supposed to shelter in place through end of week
 - Expect to keep us closed through end of April
 - Not heard anything about travel and tourism industry and when that will reopen
- Reopening plans
 - Bedding issues with resorts, etc.
 - Lots of discussion about ability to reopen, how do we message cleanliness/safety/sanitation precautions
 - Bring your own linens could be an option
 - No particular announcements yet from state associations with types of recommendations/mandates/etc. for safety standards
 - WI: 3 phase reopening plans but not specific business levels yet
 - AR: At this point, Kim assumes tourism will not open quickly. Already in place is that only people to stay at hotels are essential workers.
 - Really worried about budget. Haven't had discussion on how to open back up.
 - We know smaller places will be looking to us for guidance, we don't know what it will be yet
 - US Travel Panel (MN reporting)
 - Mostly from Florida with President of US Travel
 - Messaging is going to have to be about safety
 - People are going to have to trust that where they are going is safe before making plans

- Many destination marketing organizations are taking it upon themselves to talk about how to open up safely
 - Encouraging conversation about procedures undertaken to get ready to open back up
 - Stress safety messages during this time
 - Pivot message to be a trusted voice in terms of safe travel
 - We might play a role in getting our ideas from interpretive centers and being the conduit for conversation on how to open back up
 - Effigy mounds were open, and not prepared. Not only will people travel, but people will travel to places that have not had this traffic before.
- It doesn't appear that there are a lot of steps on hotel side, on restaurant side, it will be takeout/delivery for a while
 - There will be people who will travel regardless of safety
 - Safety standards 2 months ago are not safety standards today
 - People are travelling in RVs and second homes right now
 - Hotels will have a tough time for a while
 - Still getting hotel cancellations through July
 - A lot of people want to get out of the house, but are afraid they are taking safety seriously, but other people are not
 - Still seeing people no gloves, no facemask, no social distancing
- IA:
 - Postponed ads
 - All in the same boat
 - Not looking to encourage travel until further guidance
- NO messaging
 - Showcasing natural beauty
 - Seeing some park overcrowding, making a conscious effort to try to not talk about interpretive centers
 - Maintaining scenery and relaxation content
 - If our posts are getting people driving, I feel less concerned
 - If they are getting people to places, they shouldn't be, we want to be more careful
- Interpretive Centers (ICs) Campaign
 - Started creating a database for reaching out to ICs
 - Not getting much response from
 - Most ask to check back in a couple of weeks
 - MS: Delta Blues Museum had to furlough 8/12 workers
 - Taking turns going into museum to fill online orders
 - Trying to work on virtual tours of museum
 - Launching this week about Muddy Waters
 - IA: Sawmill Museum
 - A lot of interpretive centers required to be closed
 - Lost revenue from end of school year field trips
 - Overall, we feel like we're not ready to interact with people

- A lot doing different things on Facebook
 - 2nd week of March, we were getting from tourism, seeing a lot of in state travel, road tripping, there was a lot of encouragement, but now that message has changed since we don't know when we'll be back on track
 - When ICs can provide us with things, we will share.
 - ICs are currently working on their own content and engagement plans and we can share when they are ready
 - NO announcing an interpretive center roundtable 5/6 at 3pm.
 - Provide opportunity for centers to opening talk
 - Registration based
 - Send through our email service so we can see who we're reaching
 - AR at home:
 - Puzzles
 - Bingo
 - Zoom backgrounds
 - Virtual tours
 - Trying to do as much online as we can
 - Summer Flavors Campaign: on hold
 - Drive the Great River Road Month: still planning for September
 - GRR Travel Guide: on hold
- II. All American Road Applications NO
- AR updating Corridor Management Plan, turned in by early next week
 - States again thank LA for guidance
- III. Mississippi River Country - Update NO
- MRC board met and voted to update fulfillment materials and website for Japanese market and for use in Canada
 - Keep messaging to Japan market but focus on Canada
 - Educating Japan market but looking at Canada for more immediate travel
 - Looking at closer stays and non-flight travel is a better focus than bringing in international travel, so Canada is a better fit
 - Better way to promote Great River Road with Canada—and they are interested
- IV. State Reports All states on Call
- Reports given above
- V. Toolkit Reminder NO
- VI. Set next meeting date: May 21st @ 11am
- VII. No other business