

**Mississippi River Parkway Commission  
Culture & Heritage Committee Meeting**

March 15, 2022, 10:00-11:00

Agenda

- Checklist status
- Model Interpretive Center Application
- Nominations for [National Rivers Hall of Fame](#) inductees and award winners

Attendees

Pat Audirsch - Co-Chair, Arkansas  
John Anfinson - Co-Chair, Minnesota  
Anne Lewis - Pilot  
Adam Long - Arkansas  
Jim Janett - Iowa  
Mark Kross - Missouri

Nominations for National Rivers Hall of Fame

John began by letting attendees know that he has been asked to sit on the review committee for the National Rivers Hall of Fame inductees and award winners. Inductees are individuals who are no longer living and made great contributions to the nation's rivers, prominently including the Mississippi River. Inductees are individuals still living.

John wanted to let committee members know that we should consider possible nominations in both categories and that we could discuss this at future meetings.

Checklist

John asked if the states attending the meeting would be able to get one or more checklists completed before our fall national meeting. All said they would submit something.

John emphasized that with completed checklists in hand, we'll have a great discussion in Memphis about what we've learned, especially with regard to what our Interpretive Centers are looking for from us.

Interpretive Center Nominations

This was the principal focus of the meeting. In his meeting reminder John sent some of the text pasted below.

The second, and our primary focus, is identifying or developing a model interpretive center application.

- If you have one you think we should consider, please send it to all of us.
- The purpose is to get better applications and make the committee's job easier.
- We should see the same application structure and quality with every application.

- “Our goal,” as stated in the application form, is “to have a network of *premier institutions* that are willing to work together to further the interpretive and marketing goals for the Great River Road.”
- How rigorous should we be in holding applicants to our guidelines?
  - What level of quality do we expect from the narrative and the images?
  - How long do we want an application to be?

Section 1, No. 1, is the most important at this time and is what we can focus on. See below excerpt from our application form below.

### **Section 1 Qualifications**

1. The institution must interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river with a high level of quality and be open to the public on a published, regular basis.

- What story does your institution tell about the Mississippi River as part of its regular daily visitor experience?
- How does it relate to the themes for interpretation which are attached?
  - See the 11 themes and the overall theme.
- Why do you feel that this significant aspect or relationship to the river is presented at a high level of quality?
  - High level for a Dubuque Museum v a city or county museum?
- Describe the quality of the visit your guests receive.
  - Exhibits, staff knowledge, programs, indoor and outdoor spaces

**Do we want to redefine the language of section 1 to something that more accurately reflects what we have brought into our fold?**

- For example: “Your institution must, **to level expected from institutions like yours**, interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river with a high level of quality and be open to the public on a published, regular basis.”
- We then need to promote the array of ICs in a way that celebrates the local nature of some to the national and international scope of others.
- Everyone agreed that the variety of ICs reflects a slice of American culture that Great River Road travelers value.
- Anne made the point that we need to include the All-American Road designation by getting ICs to highlight their national stories, even if they do in at different levels.
- John said he’d take a look at making some draft revisions to the nomination form, based on our discussion.
- Jim is going to send the Driftless Area IC nomination as an example of strong one.
- We will look at taking one great example as our model or develop a model taking the best portions of a number of nominations.

### Other Topics

During our discussion Jim and Pat raised concerns about the continuity of their commissions due to political winds, and Mark is very familiar with those winds. Anne mentioned what Tennessee is going through, and Illinois also has some issues. Given state commission concerns are part of the agenda for Memphis, we agreed it would be very timely.

Next Meeting May 17, 10:00