

**Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Culture & Heritage Committee
17 May 2022**

Pre-Meeting Outline

John Anfinson - Based on conversations I've had over the past couple of months, one theme is emerging and troubling. Many states are having a hard time with getting responses from or time for working with their Interpretive Centers (ICs). I know Susanne and others had difficulty in getting responses for basic contact information and photos for the map update. All this suggests thinking about our relationship with the ICs. Should we be adding any more until we can handle what we have? How do we more actively engage with our ICs? Who has the time to do so? Should we remove some?

I'd like to get the committee's thoughts about these questions when we meet. Also, any updates on how the new checklist is working for those who are using it.

Agenda

1. General Concern – IC responsiveness

A state by state concern but also a national one.
Contact info issues between central office and ICs

Map Example

Arkansas	15	14 have replied. 1 outstanding
Illinois	9	5 have replied 4 outstanding
Iowa	18	14 have replied 4 outstanding
Kentucky	2	Good
Louisiana	9	? All came in yesterday
Minnesota	13	Good
Mississippi	8	?
Missouri	9	2 have replied 7 outstanding
Tennessee	3	Good
Wisconsin	6	Good

63 of 91 ICs listed on new website

Update profile every year and checklist on meatier issues.

2. Checklist

- Mississippi County Museum – Osceola, Arkansas
 - Example of what should concern us
 - They don't see the connection or value.
 - The answers are not very helpful. Simple Yes or No with no explanation for either. We need more than Yes or No on many of the new questions.

- Their answers a big statement about capacity and lack of engagement.
- Mississippi River State Park Visitor's Center, Arkansas.
 - Most questions not answered and when they are, the answers is not encouraging.
- Mill City Museum
 - Some positive indicators: staff know about GRR and are trained.
 - Don't display logo or banner; not on their website.
 - Questions unanswered.
 - People don't visit because they are travelling the GRR or because of our AAR status. Yet people seem to know about the designation and why it matters.
- Take aways from the three we have.
 - Where they answer No on value and benefit of GRR, is it because they don't know? Or do they just not see any value?
 - Need a more engaged review process, or it is hardly worth doing. Key questions left blank. We need deeper conversations.
 - We seem to be more of a burden than a value added.
 - We need a plan, reset,
 - Presume Covid as a prime cause for lack of engagement and develop a Covid recovery plan.
 - Certain states vs MRPC,
 - Depending on state: #, responsiveness, relationships.

3. Anne Lewis: Ask where committee members think our work is integrated with the other committees? Marketing and issues with ICs, for example.

Meeting Notes

Attendees

Anne Lewis – Pilot

Pat Audirsch – AR – Co-Chair

James Long - AR

James Janett – IA

Ann Geiger – IA

John Anfinson – MN – Co-Chair

Mark Kross – MO

Shelley Ritter – MS

Mike McClanahan – TN?

Sherry Quamme – WI

Susanne Thiede-Barnet – National Office

Chris Miller – MN Director

Great River Road Map

Susanne is having a hard time getting current contact info for the national map update. Many sites have changed their names. We need this info as soon as possible. Once printed, the map is out to the public for about three years before being printed again. About 150,000 maps will be printed.

Susanne will send a final notice out to all, but she won't go to publication until each state has approved going ahead, with or without the most up to date information. She will send this out in late May. The goal is to get the map to print in early June.

Checklist

We had a short discussion about the new checklist and getting enough done to evaluate at the fall meeting.

Ann Geiger suggested preparing a summary or overview for the fall C&H session for those who will be there but haven't been on the calls.

Other Notes

Need more coordination between the Marketing Committee and C&H Committee. Our committee could use the marketing summaries with our ICs to show how much outreach the MRPC does for them..