



MRPC Board of Directors Meeting 12-13-24 MINUTES

Attendance:

- Norma Pruitt - Pilot, KY
- John Anfinson - Pilot Pro Tem, Culture and Heritage, MN
- Holly Cain - Secretary, IL
- Derrick Biglane - MS
- Anne Lewis - Pilot Emeritus, MN Proxy
- Lisa Walsh - IA Proxy
- Edmond McDavis - TN
- Sherry Quamme - WI
- Sharon Calcotte - Marketing, LA
- Mark Kross - MO
- Francis Schelfhout - Transportation
- Sabrina Chandler - ERA
- Pat Audirsh - Culture and Heritage, AR Proxy
- Mike McClanhan - TN
- Susanne Thiede-Barnet - National Office

The Pilot called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

- The Pilot asked if all reviewed the minutes of September 18, 2024. WI made a motion for approval of the minutes. IL seconded. Motion approved.
- The Treasurer presented the financial report. A motion for approval of the financial report was made by the Treasurer. MN seconded. Motion approved.
- National Office led the discussion of future annual meetings announcing that we will no longer be looking to co-meet with MRCTI. Collin Wellencamp won his state election in Missouri and the meeting location changed to Minnesota. As a result, we are looking at options for fall of 2025. Sharon noted that LA is a possibility and she asked about agenda interest for the meeting nothing that she annually organizes the LA Rural Tourism meeting. She mentioned discussion about America 250, placemaking and untold stories of America on the Great River Road. Sharon will talk with Doug and follow up with the national office.

- The Pilot and National Office presented a draft of the 2025 budget. Transportation Chair requested we update the committee line item to \$5,500, an increase of \$1,000 to insure we cover the anticipated MRT costs. The Treasurer made a motion to approve and Pilot Pro Tem made a second. Motion approved.
- Pilot Emeritus began discussion on the Mississippi River Corridor Ports Initiative, a collaboration about ports working together to go after federal money. This would likely reduce semis on the Great River Road. She noted that every state DOT has someone who might work with the EDC from the transportation angle. MN made a motion and LA a second to explore through the transportation committee and see what they think about this. Transportation chair noted that this is out of his expertise and asked if there is anyone in our group with experience. Motion approved.
- Mike McClanhan from TN thanked everyone for the Stewardship Award. He also noted that he's leaving his position and Victoria Cooper will be his replacement at T-DOT. He assured everyone that Edmond and the TN commission is in a good position for funding and future participation. The Pilot thanked Mike again on behalf of everyone. He will continue on the National Scenic Byway Foundation board as well as TN's Keep America Beautiful.
- The Transportation committee has a goal to complete the IC signage portion of the CMP. The committee has an aggressive schedule in order to get it to all committees before the Annual Meeting, with deadlines every month. He noted that participation from all state DOTs is necessary. He continued that MRT is in full action with ownership ending in March.
- The Culture and Heritage committee is continuing to request all ICs verify their information online so we can confirm that ICs are open for visitors. Discussion on America 250 is also ongoing.
- Marketing hopes to get everyone writing in the new year with articles that are of interest, even regionally. These are blog stories that will live on the website. These can be stories that fall into committee-related topics. Pilot Pro Tem mentioned his five-part series - move down river visiting three ports and visiting places along the River. LA made a motion for MRPC to consider working with the Canadian market. A second was made by IA. Motion approved.
- ERA is looking for help in co-leading the committee. Erin has not been able to help as much as she initially thought.
- Meeting adjourned at 10:36am