

Iowa MPRC Board Meeting: October 08, 2015, New Orleans, LA, Mason Dupuey Hotel

Commissioners Present: Chair, Edith Pfeffer, Clinton Co; Treasurer, Jane Regan, Allamakee Co; Martin Graber, Lee Co; Lisa Walsh, Des Moines Co; Jay Schweitzer, Louisa Co, and Technical Advisor from Iowa DOT, Mary Stahlhut.

Meeting was called to order by Chair at 7:15 a.m.

Minutes of the August 10 2015 meeting were approved.

Treasurer's report approved as presented. Motion Jay Schweitzer/Martin Graber

Committee reports were given by members updating the Commissioners on the National Committee Meetings that took place the day before: **Culture & Heritage** talked about the 10 State map and the missing two Interpretive Centers for Iowa. The Sawmill Museum at Clinton and Rock Creek Marina Eco Tourism Center at Camanche. Discussed a "white paper" that C&H will be developing to help educate our Stakeholders about our Interpretive Centers. Also encourage the States to invite our Interpretive Center Staff or Directors to attend our State Commission meetings to bring us up to date on their current events and provide updates on visitor numbers.

Environmental/Recreation/Agriculture: Jay reported on the ephemeral experiences they discussed such as the promotion of when the dogwoods bloom, when Harvest of Wheat, Cotton, Corn and Soybeans occurring, more farmers markets listing needed on the website, fall pumpkin patches, etc. The MRT has approached our National Board to discuss joining or becoming an arm or partner of MRPC. Further discussion will take place with the National Board. Iowa and other States need to continue to populate the experiencemississippiriver.com, website with more agri-tourism sites such as John Maxwell at Cinnamon Farm. **ACTION NEEDED BY COMMISSIONER:** Chair Edith, asked each commissioner to work on a list of Agri-Tourism businesses in our County to bring to the November State Meeting. (Wineries, Corn Maze, Pumpkin Patches, Tree Farms, Farmers Markets, Dairies, Buffalo Farms, etc.)

Marketing: Jane shared that the 10 State Map will be reprinted this next spring and Iowa has requested the maximum allowed of 30,000 maps due to the fact we have the most interpretive centers of all 10 States with 15 and one more being added after this National Board Meeting. Advised that the Café Press online source the National Office was going to use is not a viable option with poor quality promotional items and they are looking into working with Lands' End for our promotional material vendor.

Discussed our State advertising plans for 2016 and reviewed each publication and its cost and will add a revision to the Iowa Travel Guide ad DOT has prepared for us by placing the statement "go online to order your map".

Riverboat paddlewheels that came up River this year such as the Mississippi Queen and American Queen seem to have full control on the buses they bring with this cruises and the scripts that must be approved by the Riverboat. We question whether the towns where the stops are being made by the Riverboats will see any return on investment for all their work due to the limit time on land they get and

no “heads in beds” or purchase of gasoline and very little restaurant business. We need to ask our CVBs in these towns to try to track if these people come back to their towns after their cruise is done ever and hope they stay longer. Edith commented on the boats that landed in Clinton had alumni groups from the colleges and historic preservation groups.

Transportation meeting – Lisa Walsh reported they reviewed the Strategic Work Plan. Led by Carol Zoff. Identified action items and moved some items to immediate such as GIS shape files for the routes for every state and get a central library put together. (Iowa is the only State this is completed) Partner with interns and scan and prepare the docs. CMP plan for the entire route is needed. Iowa should be in good shape having just completed theirs and Minnesota is right behind us. The other States will have to have new plans updated. Assemble the resources we have and draw a short version from what we have from all the states. Iowa presented the signage and GIS (point by point of where the actual route is since we already have this in place. Other State’s should ask their DOTs to do the maps.

Edith suggested we have a Lidar view shed illustration presented at our State Meeting in Nov. She will talk with Jared Neilsen at NE Iowa RC&D to see if he could present this. The State Byways group is looking for five spots to put overlooks.

Mary Stahlhut advised our GRR Social Media Facebook page is getting updates posted weekly. DOT does not have possession of constant contact from Dave Dahlquist and Mary will work with Breann Bye to get this done and report back at our November Board meeting.

Byways sustainability – the other Byways two main things affecting the GRR and NE Iowa. GRR was not able to commit to two art installations funded by the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). NE Iowa RC&D is lead on this and included GRR art sites where it shares locations with other byways in their plan. This grant will allow for the planning and local funding to do the construction. They cannot sign a contract until all details including the installation sites are in order.

Commissioners reviewed the Fiscal Year End 2015 annual report. Each Commissioner was advised to provide Mary Stahlhut with the number of copies they need for Stakeholders, Local Governmental Officials in our cities and counties, County Conservation Boards, Engineers and Stakeholders. The DOT has mailed a copy to the Governor and all State Senators and Representatives.

Byways are sponsoring regional Byways conference in April. More details to come on that. By Ways of Iowa Foundation continues to form and get off the ground. Casey’s General Convenience Stores may be a big lead on this.

Edith reminded commissioners to continue to review and deliver copies of the newly adopted Iowa Corridor Management Plan to our local Elected Officials. We plan to invite our Senators and State Representatives to the State Commission meeting Nov 9 in Muscatine. Edith and Jane will be meeting with the Governor on Monday, September 12th in Des Moines. They will provide the annual report and the CMP the Governor and discuss legislative approval of an increased budget request for Iowa MRPC for FY 2017.

GRR route review – Montrose will continue to be signed as a detour and also at the Crapo Park portion in Burlington. Mary reported that bridge signage to the state to the east will not be done when the new GRR signs are installed in the spring of 2016. That project has gone out for bid and construction will be let 11/17 and fabrication will be bid 11/25. ~~has finally been let and a contractor hired for the installation.~~ Commissioners will be informed of this process so that we can keep our local officials informed on its progress as well.

Edith reported that THE GREAT RACE is coming through Iowa in 2016 again. The last time they came through Iowa was during the 75th Anniversary of the Great River Road in 2013. There will be a stop for lunch at Walcott and refueling, with the race ending at John Deere Commons in Moline, June 26, 2016. Iowa MRPC will work with Joe Taylor at Quad Cities CVB to see if we can set up a booth at the Walcott Truck Stop Museum. A meeting has been set with the owners of the Museum following our State Commission meeting on November 9, 2015.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:30 AM to attend National MPRC meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jane M. Regan, Secretary Pro-Tem