



Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission Notes
Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 18, 2016
Nahant Marsh
18670 63rd St, Maquoketa, Iowa

Call to order:

Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.

Roll call was taken with a quorum of the eight-member 2016 roster present.

Commissioners: _____

Edith Pfeffer, Chair, Dan Petersen, VC.;

Marvin Graber, Lisa Walsh, Scott Tunnichliff

Tech Members: Mary Stahlhut, Iowa DOT Byways Program

Guests: Brian Ritter, Nahant Center, Jean Peiton, Ft. Madison

Welcome and Announcements:

Brian Ritter provided a welcome to Nahant Marsh and a brief program including the site's development history and current unique partnership with the City of Davenport, colleges and other entities.

Business:

Minutes –

June 20, 2016, meeting minutes as distributed were reviewed by Pfeffer.

Moved to accept minutes as amended: Peterson, Second: Graber

*Approved.

Treasurer reports

MRPC Foundation balance was not reported.

Mary Stahlhut Reported the MRPC 2016 DOT appropriation budget final balance at \$ 1428.61.

Motion to accept MRPC DOT report as distributed: Tunnichliff, Second: Graber

Discussion:

*Approved.

2017 Fiscal Year Budget Discussion

Other Reports

Marketing: Activity is reflected in the budget.

- There are more visitors up and down the river in Iowa and the centers report that something has changed.
- Public radio was concerned with the MRPC as a political/ government entity. MRPC wishes to have DOT AG clarify this.
- MRPC is receiving monthly Google analytics from Travel Iowa.
- Pfeffer reported on the radio spots and the text in the air time, and encouraged the commissioners to print the emails as a resource for their future activity.
- Pfeffer remarked on how many stories there are to tell from ancient native populations throughout the GRR. Native American
- The Iowa Tourism Conference will be held October 19, 20, and 21st in the Quad Cities.
- Day trip itineraries are a good tool that we should develop for each county. Pfeffer asked each county to contact their CVB's for fresh itineraries to send to National.
- Pfeffer shared Keokuk a CVB booklet and challenged all to check their local promotional materials for GRR references and to insert correct information. This year, the new GRR signs being installed are a good reason to refresh local stakeholders on the GRR and promote together.
- Eastern Iowa Tourism provided information to Pfeffer and the invoice was received and approved for payment under previous action in June 2016 and the 2017 budget approved today.
- January- The Byways sustainability collaboration on byway stories will result in the Great River Road having a culinary feature story on GRR businesses in the Edible Iowa magazine.

Environment and Recreation: Peterson reported on the nomination we is preparing for a National MRPC Steward Award for CIPCO (Central Iowa Power Cooperative) who tore down an old coal fired power plant and converted it into a natural area. Commissioners agreed Peterson should submit the nomination.

Transportation: Walsh reported the committee conference call scheduled for July was not initiated by national and has not been rescheduled.

Pfeffer asked if there are any Iowa nominees for the Distinguished Service Award. Commissioners proposed to nominate the Keokuk River Loop promotion. Moved Tunnickliff, Second Walsh
*Approved

Pfeffer reported that National discussed the current USDOT FAST act that refers to a tourism modal model? Diane Threadgill was nominated to represent the 10-state MRPC on this committee.

MRPC Annual Meeting Sept. 14-16, 2016, Natchez, Miss.

- Natchez: Nat-Geo site will be unveiled, MRPC may need to coordinate and arrive early because the National Geographic meetings precede MRPC
- The 2016 National meeting will include many outings. The first reception is at a private antebellum home.
- Mississippi River Town and Cities Mayors is also will be meeting

Budget Discussion

State Fiscal Year 2017		BUDGET Record		
Item	Description	Iowa DOT Annual Budget	Amount Paid to Date	Amount Remaining
1	MRPC Annual Dues	\$15,000.00		
2	Annual Meeting Natchez, MS	\$6,900.00		
3	Semi-Annual Meeting, Kentucky	\$4,500.00		
4	Travel/meals in state	\$2,215.00		
5	Iowa Byways Foundation	\$500.00		
6	Eastern Iowa Tourism Dues	\$135.00		
7	Administration	\$300.00		
8	Marketing (buys committed)	\$6,495.00		
9	CMP Communications and Marketing	\$3,955.00		
TOTAL		\$40,000.00		

Walsh Moved, Peterson second to accept the 2017 budget as presented

Discussion: Edith will follow up on the media buys approved in June.

* Budget approved.

Committee Reports and Assignments

Culture and Heritage Committee: Martin- Surveys should be submitted ASAP to include in the annual report and submit at the annual meeting. Pfeffer reported on the Sawmill survey. Commissioners were asked to share during their visits to interpretive centers and ask centers to gather information. Heritage museum in Burlington will be submitted for 2017 designation. Lisa will work with Edith and the site director to complete the application

Election of Officers

Peterson nominated Pfeffer for chair. Tunncliff second. Nominations ceased

*Approved

Peterson nominated Graber for VP Tunnick second. Nominations ceased.

*Approved

Pfeffer nominated Peterson for Secretary. Graber second. Nominations ceased.

*Approved

Walsh nominated Regan for Treasurer. Peterson second. Nominations ceased.

*Approved

Other Business

- Iowa State Fair Booth: Jay, Martin, Lisa, Edith, John, Dan and Jane are scheduled to staff the booth Sunday 14th and the Friday the 19th
- 4000 folded maps for the State Fair: Moved Graber Second Walsh
*Approved
- Iowa Great River Road T-shirts were discussed. Proposal to order new GRR shirts at a maximum cost of \$500 was proposed. Moved: Graber, Second: Walsh
*Approved

Iowa Byways Sustainability- Pfeffer reported

- Audio Tour call-in to listen protocol is being used around the Amanas and connecting to a service that provides an audio interpretation.
- Foundation updates included progress with the statewide art project and potential plans for a Casey's fundraiser again this September.

National Annual Reports

- Commissioners discussed what to include in the 2016 annual report including: Jane's reports, riverboats, signs, and pictures. Our work plan, activities and accomplishments.

Adjournment

The business meeting was adjourned for lunch

Call to order:

Chair Edith Pfeffer called the meeting to order.

Additional guests for the afternoon:

Denise Bulat, Executive Director, Bi-State Regional Commission; and Chandra Ravada, Director of Transportation Department, East Central Intergovernmental Association.

Fundraising Discussion-

- MRPC to go back to DOT/AG legal counsel about the Commission Foundation raising funds.
- Motion Graber, 2nd Tunnick. Consensus to request support for a GRR marketing plan.
- Pfeffer requested that commissioners provide her with potential local or broader grant opportunities

Marketing proposal-

- Jean Peiton described a web-based QRT code-based promotion of the Great River Road tourist locations. Jean will provide a concept with Ft. Madison as an example to test and then discuss in the November meeting.
- Banners: Scott and others will work on a committee to pull together the pictures and descriptions for new banners. This will be developed during spring FY2017.

MPO- RPA

Edith described the discussion of funding splits from STP and the input from the last meeting asking for specific tasks/ items that MRPC needs help with.

Denise Bulatt responded suggesting that her intern in Allamakee and Clayton could work on items related to planning. Edith asked them to proceed with the appropriate planning tasks that are in the GRR CMP that would apply in Allamakee and Clayton counties.

Pfeffer reported again how the interpretive centers are seeing an uptick in visitation and it includes a wide range of states. Many visitors arrive with the Iowa tear sheet or the 10-state map in-hand.

Denise Bulatt explained that STP dollars / the transportation alternative program cannot provide staff time. They do not fund projects under \$100,000. MRPC could apply for a project to their policy board and compete. It could be a combined project among several planning organizations to cover the GRR. You would need a match and if the dollars are already in-hand you would have a better chance. An interpretive signing project might be competitive. No help or money would be provided for marketing.

Denise reported on a conversation with Craig Markley, DOT Systems Planning that morning about the Iowa Byways program and the potential funding in the Iowa Byways Program. The Great River Road/ MRPC could opt in to the State Byways program in order to receive a budget of about \$20,000 and would need to raise some match. funding of \$5,000. This could help fund the sort of staff time that other byways have under the DOT Iowa Byways Program. However, the other byways have other work tasks and requirements that the MRPC currently is not assigned. Denise and Chandra discussed the collaboration and network opportunities.

- Planning organizations will include the GRR and its CMP in their plans and this becomes a part of their work.
- Prior to MRPC committing to the Iowa Byways Program, the Planning organizations will determine their best match and make a proposal to MRPC.
- One MPO will review the CMP and then review with others.
- The four entities will start looking into activities that already fit into the MRPC mission to help with existing items that may already be in the MRPC scope of work.

Stahlhut asserted that the GRR is the only Iowa byway that does not have a managing entity with local staff. The existing sustainability program will expire at the end of March, so all the byways will renew contracts and the program will update the process, partly

based on the recent round of byway applications evaluated. All byways will be signing a program agreement with DOT to ensure strength of the program.

National Meeting to be hosted by Iowa MRPC- Workshop

- Pick a theme, pick a city, pick a date
- Include field trips relevant to the theme
- Consider agri-tourism and sustainable agriculture: 3 legged stool: Environmentally safe, profitable and socially acceptable.
- Quad cities is a good base for travel
- Edith has the schedule requirements
- Riverfront time
- On-water time
- Blackhawk hotel
- Visit interpretive centers
- Camanche- get two pontoon boats, or pontoon and Seesewr Boat or put on the river with tour guides
- Location, facilities
- Third week in September
- Speaker for each committee topic area
- Edith proposed Zegenta Plant visit and harvet of seed corn, followed by Tom Hotz cattle feeding operation, Tour of grain processing in Muscatibne, Cinnamon Farms, Buffalo Bill homestead, Buffalo Bill Museum, Eco-Tourism Center-boat ride, Dinner at the Sawmill Museum.
- Dan had a proposed itinerary: Nahant Marsh, Wildcat Den, Dan's Farm, another farm, Cinnamon farms, speaker, and Buffalo Bill locations
- Speaker incuded
- Dr. Eugen Watkins- historian at the Fort in Ft. Madison
- Brian Fox Ellis – Arc of the River- historian from Bishop Hill, Ill.
- Putnam river reception.
- Historic Home reception
- Suzanne provided a count of 60-70 people.
 - Theme: Breadbasket of the World,
 - Ag- Iowa style ,
 - Food production 2017
- Technology, ecology and agriculture for your food
- 60-70 people
- Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.