



**Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Meeting, 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, October 21, 2025
Mines of Spain & E.B. Lyons Interpretive Center
8991 Bellevue Heights Rd.
Dubuque, Iowa
(A bit south of Dubuque on H-52. Look for signs)**

MINUTES

The meeting was called to order by Chair Katie Hammond

Present: Lisa Walsh(Des Moines County), Kirk Brandenburg (Lee County), Roger Thomas (Clayton County), Jane Regan, Val Reinke via zoom (Allamakee County), Katie Hammond (Louisa County), and Ann Geiger (Scott County)

Others Present: Daniel Yeh (IDOT Government & Community Relations), Andy Green (Sawmill Museum), Kevin Firnstahl, Eric Furnas (Muscatine County Development Director), Ed Raber (Dubuque County Zoning Administrator), Emily Whalen (Iowa DOT), Andy Skoog (River Stone Group, Inc.), and Martha Knapp.

The Commission was welcomed and given a brief introduction to the facilities.

Motion to approve July 21, 2025, minutes by Thomas seconded by Walsh and the motion carried.

Motion to approve the expense report by Thomas seconded by Brandenberger and the motion carried.

Thomas reviewed the new platform for the budget reports highlighting the expenditures for the annual meeting travel. It is part of the renewal of the reporting which included the travel requests among others. He also plans to extend an invitation of opportunities for funds through Travel Iowa for ads, TV, and podcasts. He hopes to have a representative at the next meeting.

Yeh presented the plans for travel impacted with the two-year closing of the Lansing Bridge across the Mississippi. He said the DOT is encouraging traffic to swing through Waukon. The Commission said it was concerned about the route that would drive tourists from the ICenters. Geiger had a prior map printed to distribute to the ICenters and welcome centers along the GRR. To address the visitor concerns with regard to the ICenters, the DOT will print an additional map and mail them to the ICenters highlighting the GRR.

National and State MRPC Committee reports

Culture and Heritage and Interpretive Center Reports

Geiger said discussion about the National Office's request for everyone to produce a passport included a request that Iowa's format might be shared by other states so they would be less work and match. Geiger said Iowa's passport was a work product of one of the members and would have to be discussed with her. Also, the subject of the Old Fort at Ft. Madison would be discussed at the next regular meeting set for January 6, 2026.



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Marketing

The possibility of a joint meeting with ERA regarding funding may occur.

Transportation

Still discussing signage with the MRT. The ability to use the signs would help with bicycle traffic.

Environment, Recreation, and Agriculture No report

Discussion of the large outdoor signs in front of the ICenters was raised at the conference, but there is no clear decision made yet. Iowa still needs signs for Fairport and the Discovery Center. Thomas said Effigy Mounds, a national site, would like a sign but one which was not so large. More discussion to come on that. Thomas also suggested an overlay for the existing signs to update.

Chairman's Report

Hammond said the Commission is still waiting for member approval from the state. She also said a new state rule has mandated training on Iowa Public Information Board and open meeting laws. She said, depending on who is sponsoring the training it can cost \$35+ and some are free. She will look for free ones for the commissioners.

National committee volunteers

Heritage and Culture – Geiger

Marketing – Brandenberger

Transportation – Walsh

Environment, Recreation, and Agriculture - Thomas & Hammond

Thomas said he would like to get our facebook page to the Interpretive Centers in hopes they would be more active in posting items.

Adjourned