



Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission
July 18, 2022 10:00 a.m.
Freedom Bank
210 South Main Street, Elkader

Statement: The members of the Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission are holding this meeting by electronic means pursuant to the provisions of the Iowa Open Meetings Law, Section 21.8, Code of Iowa. Interested parties may attend in-person or join the meeting by conference call by dialing: 312 626 6799 6*Meeting code 826 1950 1928 Passcode: 453728. The *phone line will be active shortly before the meeting and discontinued immediately after the meeting ends.

MRPC Call to order and roll call

Present: Martin Graber, Lisa Walsh, Roger Thomas, Paul Carroll, Jim Janet, Jerod McGovern, and Ann Geiger

Absent: Leslie Webster, Jane Regan

Others: Emily Whaley

Welcome and introductions

Approval of April 29, 2022 minutes

Motion to approve the minutes by Janet seconded by Walsh, and the motion carried.

Review and approval of Treasurer's report

Motion to approve the minutes by Thomas, seconded by Hammond, and the motion carried.

Budget discuss allocate for rest of year

Motion to approve the ad for the fall Travel Iowa in the amount of \$10,600 by Mayer seconded by Walsh, and motion carried with McGovern abstaining.

Discussion regarding dues to the National Office. Dues are \$15,000 and last year the Commission paid \$7,500. Janet said policy and procedures need to be followed for performance and we should pay the dues.

The Commission discussed specifics as to why the dues were not paid in total last year, and if they should be paid in total this year. In addition to the dissatisfaction with the performance of Pilch and Barnett, Geiger and Walsh said the board is not following its own policies. Non-paying members are voting and are in decisions-making positions. Graber said he is not sure the entire board is aware of why there is dissatisfaction in Iowa with the organization. Thomas suggested Graber write a letter to the Pilot and copy each of the board members with Iowa's position. Geiger will send a copy of the contract with Pilch and Barnett to each of the Commissioners.



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Motion by Janet to pay the national dues at \$7,500 with the balance being paid after consideration of the response to the letter by the Iowa Commission later in the year. Seconded by Walsh. The motion carried with McGovern opposed.

Tentative list for attendance to the annual meeting in Memphis in September: Walsh, Geiger, Hammond, Janett with the rest of the Commission still considering.

Iowa is responsible for a portion of the program at the annual meeting to address how it gets as many responses to its ads.

Pike Project

Carroll said he is beginning to work on the Pike project and will hopefully have a video this fall to provide to the ICenters. Graber said he will talk with Watkins and Carroll said there is a group of reinactors in Missouri to see if something can be done this fall and locate the group of reinactors who have the keel boats.

National committee appointments and Reports

Marketing Committee – No report other than website

Transportation – Going well. Shape files are being sent to the National Office, and are pushing to get them done by the DOT is working on P&B to get things done.

Environment, Recreation and Agriculture – No report

Heritage and Culture - There are some ICenters that need to be approved.

Chairman's Report

Already covered in other portions of the meeting.

Comments from Interpretive Centers

Driftless Center. Janatt said it is very busy with people who are anxious to get out after Covid.

Toolesboro. Hammond said the number of international visitors is down. Siding being replaced by State Historical Society. Planted Buffalo Grass on mounds and burning it to preserve the prairie grass. They are working on promotions. Camp Langwood Education Center is being improved.

Mines of Spain. McGovern said the facility is open for the first time in a while. The Mississippi River Museum is seeing huge numbers of visitors, and will give all the school children an outdoor experience with new displays and projects. It also added STEM to its program. The museum just updated its comp plan. County is using rescue money for tourism and to the Field of Dreams to increase and do improvements.



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Carroll went to Burlington for a Viking cruise line public meeting. Thanked Walsh for the invitation and networked afterward.

Reports and Updates

National Rivers Hall of Fame nominations – Janett said he wants to nominate John Bickel, and Geiger suggested submitting for Young. More information to follow.

Zebulon Pike project – Some of the summer radio ads included reference to the project.

Kiosks – Mayer said the MRPC grant application has been submitted. Sept. 2022 funding will be released and will be continued over several years. MRPC funding will be a few years out. All the details have been sent. Specifics on who is writing final the grants is not known as yet.

Travel Iowa come will be launching new web site this month. Mayer will review to see how the MRPC will be impacted. Facebook hits are up 52% in last 28 days to 1,143 people with 2,67 regular followers. Geiger said she thought that was good considering the page is fairly new.

ICenter reviews. Geiger reminded the Commissioners to visit the ICenters in their county and to send them to her. She will send them as a group to the National Office.

Rail Merger. Geiger gave an update on the potential merger of the Canadian Pacific and Santa Fe railroads which will add 14 more trains to its schedule moving crude oil from Canada to Mexico along parts of Iowa's Great River Road and next to the Mississippi River. She said the trains would cross from Illinois to Iowa at Sabula and run down Iowa's east coast to the south side of Muscatine where it would turn west. Portions of the tracks run less than 50 feet from the river, and trains go off the tracks regularly. An example is the coal car that dumped into the river near Lansing a few weeks ago. Janett said there were 5 cars that dumped into the river. The Iowa Environmental Committee said if the oil dumps into the river, it will not pool but go into the river bottom and stay. Geiger spoke with the Surface Transportation Board (STB) and the Environmental Committee and both said they would like to hear from citizens. Geiger will send information to the Commissioners to encourage people to respond to the STB which has the final say.

Future meeting date October 17 - Toolesboro

Adjourn for Foundation meeting