



Mississippi River Parkway Commission

222 State Street, Suite 400 • Madison, WI 53703
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Mississippi River Parkway Commission Culture & Heritage Committee Notes

Friday, February 8, 2008
10:00 a.m.

Participants:

Elaine Baxter (IA-MRPC)
Frank Fiorenza (WI-MRPC)
Frank Nickell (MO-MRPC)
Sheronne Mulry (MN-MRPC)
Faye Wilkinson (MS-MRPC)
Alvin Meyer (AR-MRPC)
Ann Ventress (MS-MRPC)
Pat Young (MS-MRPC)
Ruth Hawkins (AR-MRPC)
Regina Faden (MO-MRPC)
Matt Burns (IL-MRPC)

Other Participants:

Carli Thiede– Pilch & Barnet
Lyn Pilch – Pilch & Barnet

Hawkins called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Minutes

Wilkinson had a correction to the November 16, 2007 minutes. National Office will make the correction. AR motion to approve the minutes. Second by WI.

Work Plan Review

I. Interpretive Centers

Hawkins asked the status of each state updating Thiede on their IC visits to discuss reciprocal link postings. Thiede informed the committee that she has not received any updates from the committee since the November conference call. A few of the states gave mini-updates as to where they are at on this task. Hawkins mentioned that each state should simply call or visit their IC's websites to check the status of the reciprocal link being posted. She also mentioned how important this task is and requested that this task be completed by the Semi-Annual meeting in Vicksburg. The committee agreed.

Next the committee reviewed/discussed the Criteria for Selecting Form as well as the Nomination Form. Based on the five questions on the criteria form, it was decided we would do the following:



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- 1) Does your center interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river with a high level of quality? **Keep this question.**
- 2) Are you willing to carry the Great River Road Map? For reference or for sale? **Instead of asking if they are willing, we will require them to carry the map.** Pilch explained that a new 24-page booklet will be designed to replace the current GRR Travel Planner & Guide as well as the Mississippi River Treasures booklet. Each state will be getting a two page spread in the booklet and there will be fold out map in the inside, with all the IC's listed on the back. A copy of this map will be sent to each IC, free of charge, to post at their center. Then a form will be sent to each IC asking them how many booklets they would like to order for their center. **By doing this, we can keep the printing and shipping costs down.**
- 3) Are you open to the public on a published, regular basis? **Keep this question.**
- 4) Will you ensure the MRPC that front line personnel, who have contact with the public, are aware of the Great River Road? **Keep this question; however change the word "aware" to "knowledgeable".**
- 5) Is there an entrance fee? **It was decided that this question be removed.**

A comment was made that the criteria did not ask if the IC was handicap accessible or ask the proximity of the center to the GRR. After further discussion, it was decided that we would combine the Criteria for Selection form into the Nomination Form. The following changes would then be made to the Nomination Form:

- 1) Add to section III that it is required that each IC post the www.experiencemississippiriver.com link on their website
- 2) In the Intro paragraph, change the word Mississippi River to Great River Road.
- 3) In section II, question #2, change the word "aware" to "knowledgeable".
- 4) In section III, change the word "factories" to "factors" in the first sentence.
- 5) In the Process section, put a standard deadline for all Nominations Forms to be turned in as August 1. The committee will continue to review nominations at the Annual MRPC meeting each year. Motion by IA. Second by WI.
- 6) In the Process section, change all references of the National Mississippi River Museum & Aquarium to the National MPRC Office.
- 7) Add any items from the Criteria for Selection form that are not already on the Nomination Form.
- 8) There was discussion regarding question #4 in Section II. Pilch commented that each state is given \$500 that they can choose to use for signage at the IC's in their state who do not have the funds. This money came from a Scenic Byway Grant. Baxter asked if another grant could be applied for and Pilch explained that that would entail each state agreeing to use monies from their state funds. This has not happened. It was agreed that this question would be left as is, however a



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discussion would be held at the next C&H meeting in Vickburg, MS about getting a sign erected at the centers who do not have funds.

Thiede will make the necessary changes to this form and distribute it to the committee for further discussion at the next C&H meeting in Vicksburg, MS.

II. Interpretive Plan

Fiorenza asked that the 2003 statistics in the Plan be updated so they are current. Hawkins said she would be able to pull these figures. This information will then be posted to the website and the IC's can download the new pages for their Plans.

III. Themed Itineraries

Hawkins mentioned that she feels the committee has been a bit confused as to what this task all entails. Pilch explained that the MRC is creating themed itineraries that they will take with them to group travel shows over the next few years. These itineraries, however, are not specific to just travels along the GRR. They include travel itineraries throughout each state. Pilch is asking that the C&H committee create GRR themed itineraries per state that focus more on travel plans pertaining to the GRR. The MRC will then distribute these plans with theirs and travel planners will then have a broader range of itineraries to choose from. Pilch also asked that each state not only create travel itineraries for their state, but also work with other states to bundle travel plans together (Northern, Middle, and Southern states). Each state can send Thiede bullets of their itineraries and the National Office will format them into a travel itinerary format.

The committee requested that the National Office provide examples of these itineraries. It was commented that MS has a list of examples which can be found at www.visitmississippi.org/itineraries/themes.asp.

Each state will provide a status report at the next C&H meeting in Vicksburg, MS. This would entail providing their tentative travel destinations for their itineraries. This would also be a good time for each state to discuss this openly with their entire state commission to generate more ideas/feedback.

IV. Oral Histories

Hawkins mentioned that she feels the committee has been a bit confused as to what this task all entails. It was agreed in November that each state would do two oral histories which will later be posted to the website for download. A discussion was made about the Oral History questions. Many expressed that quite a few of these questions are quite in depth and somewhat intrusive. However, it was expressed that these are just suggestions and do not necessarily need to be used. Thiede will update this list of questions to read "this is a list of possible questions for a person who earns their livelihood on the river. Other questions may come to mind for other people you interview".



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Pilch explained the process Pilch & Barnet used to create the WI Audio Tours. They were given a list of possible folks to interview in WI. The first step was to do a mini-interview over the phone to see what their story was, then they put together four to five questions based on their situation and the rest of the interview was done naturally. Pilch also mentioned that a copy of the audio tour could be sent to any committee members who would like to listen to it. You can also access the audio tour at <http://www.greatriverroadstories.com/audiotour.php>.

Hawkins commented that the sample Oral History Release form needed to be updated. Any reference of the Dubuque County Historical Society needs to say MRPC and she commented that a clause needed to be added letting the interviewee know that by giving their permission they do not give up any copyrights to the interview and that they will be able to review the interview and make any edits at their sole discretion. Ruth will update this release form and send it to the National office who will in turn distribute it to the committee.

Each state will bring to the next C&H meeting in Vicksburg, MS two possible candidates to interview. Further discussion will then be done at that meeting.

Other Business/Announcements

MS reminded everyone to register for the Semi-Annual MRPC Meeting scheduled for April 9-11, 2008 in Vicksburg, MS.

Meeting adjourned 11:20 a.m.