



**Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Board of Directors Meeting
Conference Call
November 9, 2007**

Minutes

Participants (* Voting Members):

Patsy Ramacitti – Pilot
*Bill Seratt– Pilot Pro-Tem (MS-MRPC)
*Bob Miller - Secretary (WI-MRPC) (ERA
Committee Co-Chair)
Andy Golfis – Pilot Emeritus
*Craig Mitkes (proxy) (IL-MRPC)
*Al Lorenz (WI-MRPC)
*Rep. Sheldon Johnson (MN-MRPC)
*Bob Jost (proxy) (KY-MRPC)
*Faye Wilkinson (proxy) (MS-MRPC)
*John Sheehan (TN-MRPC)

Other Participants :

Carol Zoff – Transportation Co-Chair
Rich Nowack – Transportation Co-Chair
Lyn Pilch – National Office

Absent
*Garland Hayes - Treasurer (AR-MRPC)
*Chuck Morse (LA-MRPC)
*Frank Nickell (MO-MRPC)

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Pilot Ramacitti called the meeting to order at 9:03am, November 9. A quorum was present.

- **Past Meeting Minutes**
Minutes from September 21-22, 2007 meeting were reviewed. Motion by Illinois to approve minutes. 2nd by Wisconsin. Minutes approved unanimously.
- **Approval of Agenda:** Motion by Kentucky to approve the agenda. 2nd by Illinois. Agenda approved unanimously.
- **2007 Financials:** Pilch explained there would be no Financial Report. Instead, a December meeting is set to review the financial report of 2007 and budget for 2008.
- **Executive Committee Report:** Ramacitti reported that the Executive Committee is reviewing a change to the Environment, Recreation and Agriculture Committee to take Recreation out of the committee and create a Tourism and Recreation Committee that deals specifically with these issues. Some suggestions include having some of the Marketing Committee representatives be reassigned to a Tourism and Recreation Technical Committee. The Executive Committee is also suggesting that the MRC consider assigning members directly to the MRPC Marketing Committee. More review and discussion needs to be done on this item and updates will be made as these initiatives are further developed.

The Executive Committee discussed a trip to DC in 2008 and will need the support of MRPC members who are familiar with the process. Golfis stated that Congressman Oberstar would be a wise resource, however due to his commitments in Minnesota, it's unclear how available he will be. Ramacitti agreed that he would be an excellent resource and could help put

together a meeting call in DC. She also added that they would be mindful of the legislative calendar to plan a visit when the members are in session.

Nowack from Illinois asked whether a plan had been drafted for the trip. Ramacitti clarified that the trip is still in the discussion stage, but that a plan and white paper would be presented to the Board for review when it was available. Nowack added that if a white paper was available, each state could lay the groundwork in their state prior to the visit. Ramacitti confirmed Nowack's suggestion is a part of the plan and reiterated that more information would follow.

The Executive Board and the board should review the status of past legislative decisions, such as the water bill and the MRPC original statement to have no opinion on the bill. Perhaps, Ramacitti stated, that decision would be revisited. Nowack agreed that this would be an excellent opportunity to marry efforts with the water bill and have contact with the Army Corps of Engineers. Ramacitti noted the MRPC should review the water bill and watch for the updates. The Senate has voted to override the President's veto of the reauthorization of the water bill. However, this bill does not appropriate funding. Everyone should send updates on the status of the water bill to the National Office for distribution.

To review requested changes to the Bylaws, Ramacitti reminded the Board that the Bylaws Committee would need to be activated. Motion to activate the Bylaws committee by Mississippi. 2nd by Illinois. Motion carried unanimously.

The committee assignments were reviewed by Ramacitti. Motion to approve the assignments was made by Mississippi. 2nd by Wisconsin. Discussion of the motion by Illinois noted that no Illinois representation was on the Standing Committees. Illinois representative suggested adding Sen. Sullivan. The amended committee assignments for approval include:

<u>Awards Committee</u>	<u>Nomination Committee</u>	<u>Bylaws Committee</u>	<u>Resolutions Committee</u>
Gene Enke (Chair)	Andy Golfis (Chair)	Art Ollie (Chair)	Alma Blair (Chair)
Nancy Clark	Greg Pruitt	Bob Kennedy	Sheronne Mulry
Al Lorenz	Don Frerichs	Frank Nickell	
Patsy Ramacitti	Gene Enke	Sen. John Sullivan	
		Pat Young	

Motion carried unanimously.

- **Approve 2008 Work Plan**: Pilch reviewed the 2008 Committee Work Plan. Motion to approve the 2008 Work Plan by Illinois. 2nd by Mississippi. Discussion by Wisconsin to clarify bullet number three under the Environment, Recreation and Agriculture Work Plan.

Miller explained the ERA Committee's goal is to create a resource library of plans from each state that have been used to address city, county, township, etc issues dealing with building as models for planning. Kentucky added that anything pertaining to viewsapes on land along the river would be beneficial to collect and that is what the ERA is looking to do. Golfis added that US Parks Scenic Rivers Plan would be a good resource.

Ramacitti wanted it to be clear that the MRPC cannot dictate how an area protects or preserves the riverfront. Nowack added that there was a movement to have plans that address these issues and that Illinois had updated theirs in the 90s. He also noted that the Transportation Committee does an investment summary of plans but it doesn't include

summaries that fit the issues of the ERA committee's interest. He recommended that the comprehensive plans be reviewed and that the ERA committee discuss their interest with Transportation Committee as they may have some ideas.

Kentucky added that these are educational materials to allow other areas to see how these issues have been addressed. Ramacitti asked that ERA committee define their use for the plans and ask the Board for assistance in collecting them. Miller agreed and said ERA hopes to have an on-line resource library to direct interested parties to review.

Golfis noted that ERA committee should work with Transportation committee on this issue. Nowack said that a discussion of ERA and Transportation committees working together had already been discussed by him and Zoff, which would fit this objective. Nowack added that ERA and Transportation committees met briefly and talked about plans that were done in the 70s. He thought an internal process to review this plan would be a good one. Motion carried unanimously.

- **Semi-Annual Meeting Update:** Pilch noted that Thiede-Barnet has been working with Mississippi, particularly Wilkinson on planning the Semi-Annual Meeting. Pilch asked Mississippi to continue the update. Mississippi noted that most of the speakers are secured. The agenda calls for the attendees to take a ride on the river on Friday. A golf tournament and evening party will be hosted for those who come in on Wednesday. Thursday and Friday will be the meeting. Registration information will be available before Christmas. Mississippi updated information on the hotel rates but noted that these prices are still being negotiated. Attendees will need to fly into Jackson, Mississippi and rent a car to get to Vicksburg. Mississippi confirmed that the dates are April 9-11, 2008.
- **70th Anniversary Update**
Ramacitti indicated that since Mississippi MRPC is planning a river trip during the Semi-Annual Meeting, Iowa will change their river trip to a trip to the John Deere facility and museum. Ramacitti reminded everyone to use the Anniversary Seals and requested more for her use. Illinois asked for more information on the geocaching event. Ramacitti said an update would be given by the Marketing Committee during the committee reports.
- **State Reports**
Ramacitti reminded the state chairs or proxies and technical committee chairs to stick to the 3-minute time limit. Ramacitti gave Iowa's update in the absence of an Iowa commission member. Iowa is actively participating in the 70th anniversary geocaching event. Iowa just hosted three stakeholder meetings and although the meetings were in smaller communities, they had excellent participation. Iowa will present their model for other states to use to engage their stakeholders

Illinois reported that they have not met since the meeting in Quincy. They are working on a strategic plan and a review their membership.

Minnesota reported that they have had two meetings to select regional commissioners They have also taken a group out to go geocaching in preparation of the 70th anniversary event.

Mississippi has been primarily working on planning the Semi-annual Meeting. A new national Scenic Byway Coordinator has been hired. The contact information will be sent to the National Office.

Ramacitti reminded each state to update their state information to the National Office. The National Office has recently done a mailing with this information and requests its timely return.

Tennessee reported that they are making progress and moving forward.

Wisconsin has completed their fall marketing campaign and is now working on their spring marketing plan. They need to define some elements of the spring campaign and evaluate the fall campaign. Wisconsin is currently reviewing their second and third year marketing plan and what it contains. Financing for the organization is under review and they are defining their long term funding needs and are establishing a fundraising plan. They are also working on planning a legislative meeting in February as well as reappointment of the representatives up for reappointment or replacement for those stepping down. Wisconsin has contracted with their marketing firm for another year.

Kentucky had elections at the state level and new commissioners are possible. Several names will probably stay the same as they aren't expected to change.

- **Technical Committee Reports**

Culture and Heritage is working on developing themes with the MRC. Their next meeting is set for November 16th.

Transportation committee has sent a web link to two projects that they are working on. Ramacitti noted that it took too long for the projects to download. Other board members report similar problems. Some board members requested the projects be delivered in a hard copy. Zoff said a hard copy version would not display the animation in the PowerPoint. Seratt mentioned putting them on CD to allow for faster download and preserve the ability to view the animation. The National Office agreed to send out CDs of the projects except to Mississippi. Zoff requested time during the Semi-Annual meeting to present the projects. The National Office will review the agenda to seek time for that presentation. **The Transportation committee will meet in December and would like to review the Board's comments at that time.**

ERA committee is working on creating an inventory of agritourism assets to prepare a promotional piece. Miller emphasized that each state needs to get their assets to the National Office by February.

Marketing committee report was given by Seratt who noted that they are working on the geocaching event and will provide more information on the specifics once they are completed.

- **Other Business**

Rep. Johnson asked that a reminder go out for the next meeting. The National Office agreed.

Mississippi extends a welcome to Vicksburg for the Semi-Annual Meeting.

Meeting concluded at 10:11am

Next Meeting: Friday, December 14th at 9:00 am CST.

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