



22 EAST MIFFLIN STREET, SUITE 900  
MADISON, WI 53703  
TOLL FREE: 1.866.404.2700  
PHONE: 608.663.7188  
FAX: 608.663.7189  
WICOUNTIES.ORG

## **NORTHWEST ITBEC TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Friday, March 25, 2022  
10:00 a.m.

Northwest Regional Planning Commission  
Spooner, WI

### **MINUTES**

**CALL TO ORDER:** Northwest ITBEC Tourism Committee Chair Stan Buchanan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

**ROLL CALL:** Mary McPhetridge, Ashland County; Ken Schmitt, Chippewa County; Chuck Anderson, Burnett County; Stan Buchanan, Barron County. **REMOTE PARTICIPANTS:** Michelle Martin, Washburn County; Laura Palzkill, Price County; Colleen Foxwell, Polk County; Mary Motiff, Bayfield County; Sherry Beckman, Sawyer County; Rita Franzoi, Iron County. **EXCUSED:** Nikky Farmakes, Douglas County; Andy Albarado, Rusk County. **STAFF:** Bill Korrer, Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) Field Services Representative. **OTHERS:** Kaitlin Hanson, Washburn County Tourism; Julie Fox, Wisconsin Department of Tourism; Kevin Klucas, Burnett County Tourism. **STAFF PARTICIPATING REMOTELY:** Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf, Wisconsin Counties Association.

#### **APPROVAL OF FEBRUARY 18, 2022 TOURISM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES:** Motion by McPhetridge, second by Schmitt, to approve the February 18, 2022 Tourism Advisory Committee meeting minutes as printed. Motion carried.

**CHAIR'S REMARKS:** Chair Stan Buchanan apologized for missing the last meeting and welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

**PROJECT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:** Bill Korrer told the Committee that he heard Andy Albarado was offered the County Administrator position in Sawyer County. Mr. Korrer also reminded the Committee their appointments expire on April 19, 2022 and should let their county clerk know if they are interested in continuing to serve.

- a. WCA Opioid Lawsuit: Bill Korrer provided an update on the WCA Opioid Lawsuit Litigation to the Committee. Discussion followed.

- b. Northwoods Rail Transit Commission: Bill Korrer said that Watco, the parent company of the Fox Valley & Lake Superior Rail System (FOXY Rail System) moves any commodity nationally; and on this railroad, it's primarily products for the metals, forest products, building materials, chemicals, propane, and fuel industries. They control 261 miles of track, with interchange points with Canadian National in Appleton, Green Bay, Spencer, and Wausau. FOXY also has a dedicated salesman out talking to potential users.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:** Bill Korrer reviewed the latest financial report with the Committee. The 2022 dues have been received from all 12 member counties. Three checks were issued since the last meeting, totaling \$718.34. There is an undesignated fund balance of \$26,054.29.

**GOVERNOR'S FISHING OPENER EVENT PLANNING UPDATE:** Michelle Martin and Kaitlin Hanson reviewed the Governor's Fishing Opener plan with the Committee. Ms. Martin is looking for volunteers to help lead a couple of the event categories: registration and invitees, larger sponsorships, food & beverage, PR & marketing, family fishing day, and fish fry tickets. Chuck Anderson will handle the food & beverage; Mary McPhetridge will handle registration/invitees; Laura Palzkill will do sponsorships; Michelle Martin & Mary Motiff will work on PR/Marketing & Family Fishing day; Kevin Klucas & Rita Franzoi volunteered for the Fish Fry tickets; Sherry Beckman will work with the silent auction; and Mary McPhetridge offered to help with the food service. Michelle said that they are exploring the possibility of a pow-wow as a Saturday activity. They are also exploring contracting with a service to bring in some bloggers to increase social media exposure.

- a. Budget: Due to the sponsor input, they are bringing back t-shirts this year. This development means an event budget increase of \$3,000. This is strictly informational to the Committee; no action is needed.
- b. Sponsors: Kaitlin Hanson said they are proposing that a single "Event Title Sponsor" level be created, at a discounted price this year due to the late creation. This level of support would be \$7,500. They have an interested sponsor but are waiting for direction from the Committee. Motion by McPhetridge, second by Schmitt, to create a single "Event Title Sponsor" level with a contribution amount of \$7,500 and give the host county the ability to negotiate a reduced contribution, if necessary. Motion carried.

**WEBSITE UPDATE PROGRESS REPORT:** Mary Motiff screen-shared some of the updates and changes that have been completed on the website refresh. Ms. Motiff added that the site needs the Trails Guide file from the creator and as always, we need more county photos in high resolution, wide angle, landscape mode format. The current site has square photos and new ones are needed to be enlarged for the revamped website.

**2022 MARKETING PLAN STATUS REPORT:** Bill Korrer reviewed the 2022 marketing plan with the Committee. The only hiccup so far is that SnowTracks.com has raised their rates; Laura Palzkill is the lead person and will try and work with them.

**DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM REPORT:** Julie Fox said it was nice to see many of the committee members in person at WIGCOT for the first time in two years. There was a Summer Campaign webinar ahead of the April 4th kickoff. The winter campaign is wrapping up and requested a list of closed trails. The National Travel & Tourism Week is the first full week in May; however, the Department is holding back the tourism impact numbers release until June. Ms. Fox concluded by saying the Department is looking ahead to fall already.

**DISCUSSION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:** Add SnowTracks under the Marketing Plan; election of officers (if the meeting date is mid-May or later).

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** A Doodle Poll will go out to determine the best date for the Committee members.

**ADJOURNMENT:** Motion by Anderson, second by Foxwell, to adjourn at 11:32 a.m.  
Motion carried.