

TRAVEL NORTHWEST WISCONSIN TOURISM COMMITTEE

February 6, 2025

Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Mary McPhetridge called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Mary McPhetridge, Ashland Chamber; Mary Motiff, Bayfield County; Chuck Anderson, Burnett County; Sue Leonard, Chippewa Chamber; Melissa Copp, Mercer Chamber; Brad Bearson, Polk County; Mindy Simons, Hayward Lakes VCB; Kaitlin Horsch, Washburn County Tourism; Jim Crandall, Bayfield County; and Nick Trimner, Price County. **EXCUSED:** Brandi Nelson, Barron County and Lindsey Conley, Douglas County. **ABSENT:** Angela Shields, Phillips Chamber and Suzanne Vohs, Rusk County. **OTHERS PRESENT:** Christopher Jennings, Travel Wisconsin. **WCA STAFF:** Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Motion by Simons, second by Horsch, to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2024 meeting. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Sarah Diedrick-Kasdorf reviewed the financial reports from 2024 and 2025.

- 2024 Financial Report: Revenues totaled \$42,342.77; expenses paid in 2024 totaled \$20,517.64; the account balance at the end of 2024 totaled \$46,648.47. The 2024 budget should be closed out with a budget surplus of \$15,165.95.
- 2025 Financial Report: As of February 4, 2025, revenues totaled \$33,000; expenses paid totaled \$3,460.38 (2024 budget expenditures); the account balance is \$76,188.09.

REVIEW HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Members were reminded to provide their updates for the Outdoor and Trails Guide. Members were also reminded that county Facebook posts were run in January and will continue to run until the North of Eight contract starts. Counties can submit filler posts as well.

2025 GOVERNOR'S FISHING OPENER:

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Host County:

- Warren Knowles Award Nominations: Two nominations were received. A decision will be made once Brandi Nelson is back from leave.
- Sponsorships: Requests will be sent to returning sponsors. Dave Armstrong (Barron County) is seeking local sponsors.
- There are a number of items that need to be addressed to get the committee back on the timeline.
- Invitations need to be sent out in February.
- If Barron County is planning a fishing contest that needs to be completed as well.

Travel Northwest Wisconsin:

- Mindy offered to assist with registration – the registration list needs to be vetted (legislators, dignitaries, PR, news stations); check in on the day of the event.
- Mary McPhetridge will work on sponsorships.
- Chuck Anderson is the lead for food and beverage.
- Melissa will consider serving as the lead for PR/press releases. Mary McPhetridge, Kaitlin and Melissa will meet to discuss PR.
- Kaitlin will set up a fishing opener subcommittee meeting. Future hosts should participate in subcommittee meetings. Mindy, Sue and Brad volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. The subcommittee will discuss several issues, including the banquet agenda/emcee.
- Christopher Jennings will double-check on state attendees – DNR, Office of Outdoor Recreation. Kaitlin will contact the Governor's office.

2025 MARKETING PLAN AND BUDGET: Mary Motiff provided a report from the Marketing Subcommittee.

- Social Media Posts – North of Eight Contract: TNW received a list of 52 posts from North of Eight. The subcommittee met with our North of Eight contact. Once TNW approves the list of photos and posts from North of Eight, they will be downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet. Mary Motiff will email out the list. Counties need to review their posts. Once the posts are approved, Melissa will schedule. Based on scheduling, the posts can last one or two years. Let Mary Motiff know if you have an adventure sport photo (e.g., ziplining) as one is needed – Brad Bearson has an adventure post. A photo from Price County is also needed.
- Facebook Posts: TNW will also post its own content on Facebook. Mary Motiff will provide access to the Facebook page so counties can load their own posts. Counties will schedule their own posts once each month – only one post per day can be scheduled. If you need assistance with posts, contact a member of the Marketing Committee. Guidelines for Facebook posts can be found in the Marketing Folder on the Google Drive (Facebook/Criteria/Example).

- Travel Guide: The cover will keep the same look as the previous edition with all seasons represented. Back cover – remove some of the wording. Discussion occurred regarding the addition of a QR code for the Travel Northwest Wisconsin website. Each county needs to check its ¼ page ad – addresses should link to the Travel Northwest Wisconsin website. Need to follow up with Lindsey on Douglas County's updates.
- Corridor Map: Requests for updates have not been sent out yet. Counties can start reviewing the current map and note any updates. The map should reflect connecting primary corridor trails. The committee will use NWRPC to get the maps changed.
- Other 2025 Projects: Mary McPhetridge and Melissa are working on the March/April On Wisconsin Outdoors ad. The Department of Tourism Co-op ad running from February 10-23 will focus on ice fishing.

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM/TRAVEL WISCONSIN REPORT:

Christopher Jennings reported on the following: winter campaign started January 2, it is focused on digital so can pivot if the weather changes, snow is a challenge this year; Winter Snow Report – UTV-ATV allowed only when snowmobile trails are closed; WIGCOT to be held March 9-11, theme is Boundless; Office of Outdoor Recreation created a do-it-yourself economic impact report; submit your "What's New in Wisconsin" to the 2025 list; sent inquiry to the Secretary's office regarding the Fishing Opener. Discussion occurred regarding the lack of use of snowmobiling and ATVing in the winter campaign, and the lack of use of motorized sports advertising by Travel Wisconsin – when will Travel Wisconsin put up an ATV trail page.

REVIEW HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS: Everyone should send Mary Motiff Facebook information/logins so she can give administrative access to the Travel Wisconsin page. Guide info needs to be completed – need new guide by the Fishing Opener. If you have contacts for Wisconsin suppliers (shirts, stickers, etc.) please send to director@discoverpolkcountywi.com. Sarah will send out homework assignments prior to the next meeting.

DISCUSSION OF FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: Fishing Opener – Warren Knowles Award.

NEXT MEETING DATE: The next meeting is scheduled for March 6, 2025.

ADJOURN: Chair McPhetridge adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.