



Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Meeting, 10:00 a.m. October 18, 2024
Discovery Park & Environmental Learning Center
3300 Cedar Street, Muscatine, Iowa
(563) 264-5922

DRAFT Minutes

Chairman Martin Graber called the meeting to order.

Present: Lisa Walsh, Paul Carroll, Roger Thomas, Katie Hammond and Ann Geiger

Absent: Paula Mayer

Others Present: Emily Whaley, DOT, Ann Carroll, Martha Knapp, Kevin Firnstahl, Rosemary Thomas

Approval of the minutes

Motion by Hammond to approve the minutes of the July 24, 2024 meeting, seconded by Walsh and the motion carried.

Approval of the Expense Report and Lang Sign Bill

Motion by Geiger to approve the Expense Report, seconded by Carroll and the motion carried

At the October meeting the Commission approved \$278.00 each for two large metal pole signs destroyed by storms in Ft. Madison and Keokuk. Both signs have been received and delivered. A bill on behalf of Lang Sign from the National office for \$398.68 for each sign. No notice had been given to the Commission by the National Office regarding the amount change.

Geiger said she contacted Lang Sign, and was informed the original notice sent by the National Office was used an estimate from 2020 and not the current prices.

Motion by Hammond to pay the difference between the estimate and final bill of the signs of in the amount of \$241.36. Seconded by Walsh. Motion carried.

Geiger distributed the 2024 annual report. She pointed out the disparity of economic benefit from the counties along the Road and the rest of the state's byways.

Walsh said Scenic America has money for trails. She is going to Pittsburg as a guest of Mark Falsone to get more information. The Burlington Bridge project funding was the only bridge project submitted last year. She said the National Office is submitting for work on the website. Falsone said they are not funding "soft" projects such as that and said he has told that to the National Office.



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Review of Guidance document Discussion tabled

Chairman's report

Graber said he volunteered to host an Iowa annual meeting in 2026 or 2027. The assumption by the commission is that it would be held in Muscatine. Ann Carroll said she hosts the riverboat cruises and has some ideas. Firnstahl hosts the boats in Dubuque and would also be a good resource. The Commission began discussions of possible programs.

Graber said it was time to discuss the election of officers. He said he would be willing, if asked, to serve another year. He would like to see the Commission secured with the state. Graber discussed it with Geiger and she said she was willing to continue if asked. Motion by Hammond with a second by Thomas to retain the existing officers. Motion carried.

Graber addressed the Montrose highway repair and is planning to speak with the mayor of Ft. Madison to see what help can be offered.

The commission is down three members. Firnstahl has been waiting to be appointed, and Carroll said he will not request reappointment because of his health. However, Ann, his sister, is interested and will apply. Geiger said she will get to Clinton to see if there is anyone there, and Thomas will check up north.

National committee Reports

Marketing Committee

Should Iowa be doing its own marketing – like Drive the GRR. The term “Happy Road” was on a brochure, and the Commission liked it. Gave a different feel to the traveler. Geiger will see if it is copyrighted, if possible.

Transportation

Good attendance at the meeting. Talking about bike trails. Also talked about getting the MRT signage acquisition. Each committee is giving \$5k for a potential acquisition. The vision of having a bike trail the length of the Road is still in play.

Environment, Recreation and Agriculture - Nothing

Heritage and Culture

Discussed adding parks as an information center. The application from Memphis with its linking of several parks along the river has been under discussion for a while, and whether it is viable or not will be discussed further this year.

The next meeting will be January 6, 2025 in Ft. Madison.