

Western Iowa Tourism Region Meeting Minutes July 26, 2017 • Nodaway Valley Historical Museum, Clarinda

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Erika Newton at 10:30 a.m. as she introduced Jon Herzberg, Page County Supervisor to provide the welcome. Ron Sanson of the Nodaway Museum also spoke about all the museums in Clarinda - the Glenn Miller Birthplace Society, the Carnegie Art Museum and the Nodaway Museum and encouraged everyone to visit.

President Newton went over the **contents of the packets:** Today's agenda, the 2017-18 meeting schedule on the back, information on the Clay County Fair Booster Van coming today, information on the speaker, Tammy Rogers, for the September meeting in Manning, minutes, financial report, Tourism Conference information, District Leader job description and sign up sheet and an evaluation sheet for the speakers.

Approval of the agenda: Lana White moved to approve the agenda with James Kessler seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of the February 2017 Meeting Minutes: Sandra Leninger moved to approve with Pat Hume seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Freda Dammann presented the report and noted that all records had been submitted to our accountant for review for the state. She noted that the counties either have received or will receive their annual invoices for partnership and of course private membership is ongoing and will be billed on their anniversary dates.

Everyone worked hard to end the 2017 year with a balanced budget.

Jill Heisterkamp moved to approve the report with Doris McElwain seconding. Motion carried.

State Tourism Office Report: President Newton introduced LuAnn Reinders and Amy Zeigler to provide the report: Aug 7th is the deadline for the travel guide entries; the new Travel Guide will have some enhancements and a committee has been working on these, as well as new criteria to be included in the future travel guides. There was some discussion as those attractions not open 40 hours a week or seasonally will be eliminated from the guide but will remain on the website.

The Iowa Tourism Conference is Oct. 25- 27 in Sioux City at the Convention Center - early registration ends Sept. 21st. Please consider contributing to the Silent Auction. You can register online at Traveliowa.com/conference. This year's Tourism Awards deadline is August 25th - be sure to submit awards nominations.

Iowa Tourism Conference: There was a sheet in the packet with information regarding lodging opportunities, tourism award nominations due Aug. 25th, and Tourism Conference Scholarship applications due Aug. 11th. Shirley encouraged everyone to submit a Tourism Award nomination as we have so many great things in Western Iowa. She also encourage everyone to register for the conference as the committee has been working hard to bring great sessions and talented speakers to Sioux City.

Plans now call for the next Iowa Tourism Conference to be Feb. 6-8, 2019 at Prairie Meadows in Altoona, so she encouraged everyone to take advantage of this last fall conference located in Western Iowa.

Travel Federation of Iowa: Shirley reported the following:

- Budgets for all state agencies were severely cut this session before during & after the session. You may be aware that there were some staff reductions in the tourism office.
- Regional funding has also been cut with the \$15,000 from each region budget to go to the Iowa Tourism Grant funds. Please take advantage of the grant opportunities.
- Region Tourism marketing funding did not survive in the standings bill this year.
- We're told the School Start date may surface again so be aware if you hear anything from your local schools about this.
- We've lost some legislators this summer from death so there will be or have been special elections. Western Iowa lost Rep. Forristall from Pottawattamie County to cancer. Rep. Jon Jacobsen is the new legislator so introduce yourself.
- There is a District Leader sign up in your packet as well as a District Leader job description. Please consider this and get to know your legislator this summer.
- There will be an annual TFI Legislative survey coming out soon so we encourage you to take it and help set the legislative agenda for next session.
- The budget is extremely short and there may need to be a special session of the legislature to move money from the emergency fund to the general fund.

Shirley encouraged everyone to remember that Tourism is a \$8 + billion industry annually for Iowa and it also generates \$466.7 million in tax revenue - far more than most industries in the state. She is still working with Iowa Economic Development Authority to determine the ranking of tourism in the state's industries.

Freedom Rock Information for the Clay County Fair: Shirley reported that James & Brian Kessler have offered to work the Western Iowa Tourism Region booth on the last Sunday of the Fair, Sept. 17th, and promote all the Freedom Rocks in Western Iowa. Please send your brochures to the WITR office to be included.

The **next meeting will be Wed., Sept. 20, 2017** at the Hausbarn Conference Center in Manning. There is more information on the back of your agenda. Our speaker Tammy Rogers will help you empower your boards and inspire leadership.

Introductions were held with people sharing an upcoming event.

Clay County Fair Centennial Booster Van: was in the parking lot so members could visit and pick up information on the upcoming Fair on Sept. 9 - 17. They have been planning this Centennial celebration for many years and we thank them for the opportunity to have a booth presence there.

With no further business, James Kessler moved to **adjourn** with Jill Heisterkamp seconding the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Lunch and Speakers followed the meeting with LuAnn Reinders and Amy Zeigler from the State Tourism Office speaking about Engaging with the Iowa Tourism Marketing and Staying Up-to-date with the Iowa Tourism website.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Phillips