



**Western Iowa Tourism Region Meeting Minutes
Sept. 21, 2016 • Kossuth County Agricultural & Motorsports Museum • Algona**

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by President Erika Newton at 10:30 a.m.

Welcome: Erika introduced Algona Mayor Lynn R. Kueck. The mayor reported that they expect \$85 million in retail sales this year. Their local option sales tax is paying for their new city hall and Snap On Corporation which makes the large tool boxes has 400 employees. Their second largest employer is Pharmacist Mutual Insurance Co. with 300 employees and their Hormel Plant provides 50 million pounds of Pepperoni per year to Pappa Murphy's Pizza.

Packet: President Newton went over the packet of information.

Approval of Agenda: James Kessler moved to approve with Cora Lahr seconding. Motion carried.

Approval of July 2016 Meeting Minutes: Becky Hatting moved to approve with Pat Hume seconding. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Shirley Phillips presented the financials and asked for questions. Kathy Dirks moved to approve with Julie Hering-Kent seconding. Motion carried.

State Tourism Office Report: Nicole Shalla reported the Tourism Conference registration is now \$230.

- She thanked Kiana Johnson who helped select the Tourism Awards this year.
- Jenna Beary is the new partnerships coordinator.
- The new Tourism Economic Impact information is available on traveliowa.com.
- There is fall content on the website now & the fall color updates have started on social media.
- Jessica O'Riley is in Detroit this week pitching stories to the Midwest Travel writers.
- The Enhance Iowa Board will meet for the first time on Oct. 12th. The Tourism representative is Derek Lunstrom from Osceola Tourism.
- Ten Sports Authority marketing awards were given this week.
- Sixty six Tourism Grants were awarded.
- Listings at Traveliowa.com have been updated for mobile. You can still add photos and videos.
- 2017 Iowa Travel guide is scheduled for a February release.
- There are 4 cover potentials this year and there will be a contest on line again. Please vote for your favorite cover.
- There is still a need for Silent Auction items for the Tourism Conference.

Taskforces:

Membership: Pat Hume reported that we have one new member - Pudgy Pumpkin Gift Shop in Red Oak. The contact is Elaine Holland.

Advertising: Shonna reported that we are investigating advertising options and they will be presented soon.

Travel Federation of Iowa: Andy Milam reported that the **2017 Legislative Showcase date has been set for Jan. 31, 2017.** Please mark your calendars and registration will be available at the Tourism Conference in Bettendorf.

District Leaders. Thanks to all who have agreed to serve again this year. There is still room and it's a good time to learn when you have mentors in your district to help you. You'll hear more this afternoon from Craig Patterson.

Tourism Industry Survey. Andy thanked all who took the survey. We had 216 Responses and 57 people took it from Western Iowa. The Legislative Committee is working on the results so you'll hear at the Tourism Conference and of course we'll communicate through our weekly emails.

Special Projects: Shirley reported on the following:

Photography - only 9 people answered the survey that they needed more photography so we'll continue to work on this. If you have great photos to share with the region, please do.

Itineraries - There was a questionnaire in the packets and she asked them to fill it out and leave it with your name tag on the way out. Also we will be attaching this to a Weekly Email so you will have it electronically and you can use it whenever you give a speech in your local area. Just ask the participants at your meetings to fill it out.

Customer Appreciation • Hospitality Training - We've announced this before and the three regions have agreed upon the curriculum. WITR will host 10 sessions in our region and so far all of them have been spoken for. All sessions will be scheduled through the presenters.

Trip Advisor information: Shirley went over the Trip Advisor handouts in the packet. She has only reviewed a few properties but already has 2,742 followers, so it is well received. The information explains how to put your properties on Trip Advisor and also how to review properties.

Adjourn: Andy Milam moved to adjourn with Kathy Dirks seconding. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted:
Shirley Phillips

Speakers:

Craig Patterson, Campbell-Patterson Consulting LLP, spoke about advocacy, how to become a district leader and how to stay in touch with your legislators throughout the year.

Tom Hazelton, CEO of Iowa's County Conservation System, spoke about the \$851 million annual economic impact of our county park system, how we can work together and also about legislation affecting our Resource Enhancement & Protection Funding and the Natural Resources & Outdoor Recreation Fund.