

Western Iowa Tourism Region Meeting
March 23, 2022 • Wells Visitor Center & Ice Cream Parlor

President Kenner Baxter called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m.

Welcome: Mike Wells, CEO & Chief Engagement Officer for Wells Enterprises, welcomed us to Le Mars and shared their vision for tourism in the community.

Approval of Agenda: Brian Kessler moved to approve the agenda, with Kiana Johnson seconding the motion. *Motion carried.*

Approval of February 2022 Minutes: Bob Mortensen moved to approve the minutes, with Jayme Quirk seconding the motion. *Motion carried.*

Financial Report: Jayme Quirk presented the report. Everything is in order for this time of year. John Westergaard moved to approve the report with Jessica Brownmiller seconding the motion. *Motion carried.*

State Tourism Office Report: Amy Zeigler

The Iowa Department of Education announced a new partnership with the Iowa Restaurant Association Education Foundation, Iowa Hotel and Lodging Association, Iowa Gaming Association, Iowa Travel Industry Partners, Iowa Wholesale Beer Distributors Association, Iowa Tourism Office and Iowa Association of Career and Technical Education to develop new promotional materials to highlight a wide range of exciting and fulfilling careers in hospitality and tourism fields in Iowa.

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) is again partnering with the University of Northern Iowa to undertake a survey to assess the current economic conditions and ongoing impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on Iowa's businesses and nonprofit organizations.

As part of our [This Is Iowa](#) campaign, we are relaunching an energizing 30 second ad called "Secrets." It's visually stunning and sure to inspire people to think of Iowa as a place to visit, live and work. The spot will reach millions of Americans across the country via broadcast, streaming and social networks.

Thank you to those that were able to attend the Iowa Tourism Office update on March 17. If you were unable to attend you can find the recording on the website. The dates for the remaining 2022 series (at 2 p.m.) are: Thursdays: May 19; July 21; Sept. 15; Nov. 17.

Last date for early registration to the Iowa Tourism Conference is April 1st. Lodging at the Des Moines Marriott Downtown are \$109/night with room cut off on April 4th. There are a number of great speakers lined up.

Travel guides – when ordering, order the number of guides you want, not the cases.

T-Bone Trail Report: Shirley reported that she and Jay Goodvin, the Iowa Gallivant, have been working with the counties scheduled for the 2022 Western Iowa T Bone Trail in April and May so far. There have been many changes of restaurants and of course, because of the human trafficking requirement for lodging, there have been changes there as well. Please help your local lodging become certified. It includes a 25-minute video and a short test per employee.

Then the facility applies for certification of the premise itself. Please remember that county conservation offices with cabins must be certified as well.

Our 2022 trail begins on April 22, the lodging facilities will have videos and promotion so these properties must be certified. If you need more information, let Shirley know.

Travel Federation of Iowa report: Shirley reported that TFI is keeping up with legislation and because this is an election year, there has not been many controversial issues arise. The IWILL – Iowa Water Land & Legacy (incorporates programs for trails and water quality boosting economic development projects)– is still very much alive. Iowans voted to support this in 2010 but it has never been funded. TFI is registered in support of this bill.

Redistricting has occurred and chances are you may not have the same legislators as you currently know. Please take the time to know your candidates and which issues they support in regard to you and your community. We'll be sharing information as it becomes available.

TFI is once again hosting the Silent Auction at the Iowa Tourism Conference.

Clay County Fair 2022: We have once again been offered the opportunity to exhibit at the fair September 10-18. This is free to our members to participate. Please let Shirley know if you are interested in promoting your attraction and community for half or full day shifts.

Central Iowa Marketplace: Included in your meeting packet was a signup sheet for the marketplace to be held Nov. 2nd in Ankeny. If you are looking for group travel, this may be an opportunity for you.

Million dollar Meeting and Event Incentive: The Iowa Restaurant Association and newly created Iowa Lodging Association was awarded the RFP from IEDA to provide incentives that encourage overnight stays in Iowa. There will be a webinar on April 6th at 9 a.m. so you can learn more about this program.

Next meeting: Our next meeting which will be our Annual Meeting, be held June 8, 2022 at Bluebird Hill near Atlantic.

Adjourn: Kiana Johnson moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:22 a.m. with John Westergaard seconding the motion. Meeting Adjourned.

Speaker following the meeting Bernadette Rixner from the Siouxland Coalition for Human Trafficking.

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Phillips