



**Iowa Mississippi River Parkway Commission
Meeting, 10:00 a.m. January 26, 2024
Hurstville Interpretive Center
18670 63rd Street, Maquoketa, IA 52060**

Chairman Martin Graber called the meeting to order.

Present: Lisa Walsh, Lesley Weber, Paula Mayer, Roger Thomas, Jim Janett, and Ann Geiger

Others Present: Emily Whaley, DOT, Jessica Wagner, DNR

Wagner welcomed the Commission and gave a brief history of the Hurstville Center. She said in 2000 the wetlands were disrupted due to road work on Highway 61. Later the land was given to the county and the nature center opened. The Center presents programs for public schools teaching anything dealing with wetlands. In addition, the center does home school programs with a focus on Iowa wildlife.

Items to be added to the Agenda

Mayer said Iowa Public Television offered to use footage by the national office it shot on Iowa's east coast. Thomas suggested asking if some of the existing material from each county could be added. Mayer will check.

Motion by Webster, with a second by Thomas, to approve of October 10th meeting minutes with a clerical correction to an amount from \$1,500 to \$15,000. The motion carried.

Motion by Walsh, with a with a second by Janett, to approve the minutes of the October 30th call-in meeting. Motion carried.

Motion by Thomas, with a second by Walsh, to approve the Treasurer's report. The motion carried.

Budget discussion

Mayer said she can obtain a service to send up to 5,000 emails for free. She said it is another way to spread information about the MRPC. The Commission requested she pursue.

The Commission discussed running the annual radio ads. Walsh said Leadership Iowa was focusing on younger people as is IDA. After discussion of the timeframe for last year's ads, Mayer suggested contacting the radio stations for the best 10-week time frame to run the ads. Geiger will contact the stations for quotes.

Motion by Mayer, with a second by Walsh, to approve a Not-to-Exceed amount of \$12,000 for quotes for radio ads. Motion carried.

Geiger said she was contacted by some visitor centers about obtaining the tear sheets. Graber said in his opinion the more information the Commission can distribute the better. Mayer will get bids for tear sheets to include the visitor centers in the area.

With regard to the possible elimination of the MRPC Commission by the State of Iowa, Graber said this is the time to send letters of support for the Commission, because the legislature does not have a bill written as yet.

Chairman's Report

The national office is concerned about the number of states having problems with budgets. It is also looking for possible sites for future conventions. Normally they are scheduled three years out. Webster suggested volunteering to host a convention in Burlington. Both Walsh and Geiger were not in favor at this time.

National Committee Reports

Marketing Committee – The Committee discussed budget concerns and how to better promote the Great River Road.

Transportation – No report

Environment, Recreation and Agriculture – Discussed how to get better technical assistance.

Culture and Heritage – More discussion as to how to explain the ICenters and improving the application process. Currently applications are not available on the website. There was also a movement to approve the application without waiting for the annual meeting.

Iowa Scenic Byways – Webster said there was discussion about having a booth at the Iowa State Fair, but it was not decided.

The next meeting will be scheduled for April 19th in Dubuque. Site and exact date to be decided later.

Adjourn for Foundation Report