

**Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau
Board of Directors Virtual Meeting
Thursday, October 15, 2020**

8:00 a.m. Collinsville Gateway Center & via ZOOM

Present: John Hopkins, Lauren Pattan, Kristi Hyten, Mitch Bair, Michael Barker, Brian Campbell, Kim Durr, Cameo Holland, Tom Guarino, Sandy Hefner, Linda Jun, JD Lorton, Cathy Luttrell, Mike McCormick, Dave Miller, Patty Rotermund, Doug Stotler and Cindy Warke

Absent: Karen Brncic, Stacy Friedrich-Hinrichs and Erin Ventimiglia

Staff: Barbara Strack and Stephanie Tate

Guests: Julie Billeter and Josh Andres, Scheffel-Boyle

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by John Hopkins.

Opening remarks from Chairman: John welcomed everyone to the Board's hybrid in-person and virtual meeting. He thanked Cindy Warke and Mitch Bair for hosting the meeting at the Gateway Center. He also thanked the Tourism Bureau staff for continuing their tourism efforts. He highlighted the work done by the board Search Committee for their time spent pouring over 200 resumes and paring them down to 10 finalists for the President/CEO position. He thanked JD Lorton for holding interviews at The Winery at Aerie's Resort.

Audit Presentation by Scheffel-Boyle: The auditors presented the bureau's annual financial report providing a clean unqualified opinion of the financials. Julie Billeter commented and reviewed the details of the audit. Mike McCormick made a motion to accept the report. JD Lorton seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

Board Minutes: John asked the board to review the September board minutes and September financial statements. Dave Miller motioned to approve both the September board minutes and September financial statements. JD Lorton seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

REPORT OF BUREAU ACTIVITIES:

The Bureau is working with the Audubon Center, Pere Marquette State Park and National Great Rivers Museum to host a virtual Eagle Festival Saturday, Jan. 2. This will replace the annual in-person Alton Audubon Eagle Festival which has been sidelined due to COVID.

We just completed a 16-week joint marketing campaign with 19 IL CVB's highlighting Illinois road trips that had a combined reach of nearly 300,000 people during the campaign.

Bureau staff attended the dedication of Grafton's new Turtle, Frog and Fish sculptures on the city's riverfront.

The bureau's new mobile passports: Rivers, Routes & Refreshments and Walk with Lincoln have been downloaded by 103 people so far. We are currently working to create an Eagle Watcher's Mobile Passport which will include video provided by Pere Marquette State Park. The eagle pass should go live in December.

September marked the return of group tours to the region with one group arriving at the end of the month. Several more are scheduled for October.

The bureau has received the signed grant from IOT and are expecting the July – October portion of its LTCB Grant funds to be deposited in our account in the next week.

We have started our Partnership sales for the 2021 Spring/Summer Travel Guide, which will include the Fall/Winter Travel Guide as well.

Old Business: There was no Old Business

General Announcement: John Hopkins noted American Cruise Lines has reupped its commitment to the region with docking dates announced for 2021.

Cindy Warke reported the Gateway Center will hold a Halloween Monster Mash on Oct. 24.

Cameo Holland said the City of Alton was holding a Reverse Trunk or Treat event at the Liberty Bank Amphitheater on Oct. 30.

Dave Miller said the restaurant at the airport may be ready for a new tenant soon and asked for anyone interested in opening a new restaurant to contact him.

New Business: There was no new business.

Closed Session: A motion was made by Mike McCormick and seconded by JD Lorton to go into Closed Session to discuss hiring a new President/CEO. The motion was approved.

A motion was made by Kristi Hyten and seconded by Mike McCormick to come out of closed session.

Search Committee: A motion was made by JD Lorton and seconded by Mike McCormick to accept the recommendations of the board Search Committee and hire Cory Jobe as the new president/CEO of the Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau. He will serve a three-year contract starting Nov. 15, 2020. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Kristi Hyten and seconded by Mitch Bair.

Respectfully submitted by,

Barbara Strack
Interim President/CEO

Kristi Hyten
Secretary/Treasurer