

Minutes of Board Meeting – Washburn County Tourism Association
Tuesday, July 19, 2022 | 8:30 a.m.
Washburn County Highway Department | 1600 Co. Hwy. H | Spooner, WI 54801

1. Meeting was called to order at 8:32 a.m. by Sue Churchill
2. Roll Call:

| | Sue Churchill | Jill Dunlavy | Maureen Hoffman | Steve Janetski | Nikki Janisin | Cristina Masterjohn | Joe McGrath | Sharon Paine | Victor Sacco | | |
|---------|---------------|--------------|-----------------|----------------|---------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| Present | X | | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | | |
| Absent | | X | | | | | | | | | |

Others present: Doug Lein, Lisa Olson, Michelle Martin, Kaitlin Hanson, Sara Hubin

3. Masterjohn made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by McGrath. Motion carried.
4. Minutes of the June meeting were circulated. Masterjohn moved to approve as presented, seconded by Hoffman. Motion carried.
5. The Financial reports were circulated for review. McGrath moved to receive the July financial report as presented, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried.
6. **Correspondence:** Thank you from Spooner Area Chamber of Commerce
7. **WCTA Bylaw Revisions:** Bylaws were reviewed again with the following recommended revisions: Article VI, Section 1 to include that all meetings are open to the public other than closed session; Article VI, Section 6 to clarify notice of all meetings, update the posting requirement to 48 hours prior and narrow down the delivery notice, as well as clarify that those interested in receiving meeting notice should contact the Executive Director. No other recommendations were made. Janetski made a motion to approve the recommended bylaw changes, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried. (ATTACHED)
8. **Taste of Washburn County Gala:** Kaitlin shared that after meeting with Heartwood and discussing numbers/counts/etc., an updated budget was created. Expenses would amount to just under \$13,000 therefore sponsorships would come into play to help cover those expenses so the tickets sold would be proceeds towards the event. Sponsorships would include a sponsor for each course of the meal served (5 Total); an entertainment sponsor (1 Available); as well as gold & silver level sponsors. Kaitlin estimates that about 160 tickets will be sold for the event. Michelle & Kaitlin felt that to execute the event in the most successful way possible, pushing this back to late summer of 2023 would be most effective. A date will be secured before the 2023 Official Guide goes to print to ensure the event is listed in there. McGrath made a motion to approve the event budget, seconded by Paine. Motion carried.
9. **2023 Budget:** A revised draft of the 2023 budget was presented. The budget includes a \$40,000 stipend for health insurance as well as a \$40,000 request to the county board to offer health insurance for full-time employees as directed by the board. McGrath made a motion to submit the budget to the county, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried.
10. **Welcome to Washburn County Signs:** Michelle shared that the cost of the signs has increased since the last quote. WCTA was approved for \$7,250 from Washburn County and \$7,000 from the DMO grant to purchase two signs. Michelle recommended that the board pull the additional \$2,800 from unallocated funds to fully fund the two sign projects for 2022. Locations are being secured at Highway 63 SB at the Sawyer County line and Highway 53 NB at the Barron County line. Michelle reviewed traffic counts to determine sign locations and created a prioritized list to continue the sign project as funds become available. Sacco made a motion to approve the additional funds to cover the two signs, seconded by Paine. Motion carried.
11. **Simpleview Update:**

- a. The website advertising program is complete and baseline data is being collected on the website with in-house content and the Platinum members' featured listings. Due to Visitor Guide sales beginning next week, they will begin website sales in early October.
- b. The team continues to schedule one day per week to focus on the CMS & CRM. Most of the front end of the website has been completed. There are still a few pages left, but those should be completed yet this summer. Michelle will then transition into SEO. Kaitlin will remain focused on the CRM, keeping business listings up to date and utilizing the benefits tracking.

12. **Marketing Update:**

- a. WCTA has booked the Duluth Wedding Show: Fall Showcase on September 18th. The team anticipates that the Destination Wedding video as well as the Destination Wedding marketing piece will be available prior to the show. Michelle asked any board members who are interested in joining Kaitlin at the wedding show to reach out to her.
- b. The first day of Destinations Bound filming was completed on July 14th. It was a tight schedule, but the team was able to complete the Flavors & Arts of WashCo segments, as well as a portion of the Attractions segment. Filming will be completed on July 22nd with the Trails, Namekagon River, and Attractions segments.
- c. Midwest Living is doing quite well at this time. The leads from last week were over 300 interested visitors. That will likely be peak with the leads winding down as we head into the fall season.
- d. The summer campaign is winding down and the fall campaign will ramp up in August
- e. Earned Media: Coverage on Tourism Economic Impact; Heartwood Resort article
- f. The Kids' Scavenger Hunt brochure updates have been completed. The Group Tour Mailer is still in the process of updates & confirming group information; we're hopeful that the mailer will be ready to go in August.
- g. The Second Homeowner Mailing was mailed out in June. Samples are available for anyone interested. All invoices have been sent out for those businesses that placed an ad.
- h. The Mobile Visitor Information Kiosk has been ordered and design is underway. The team is hopeful that the kiosk will be done in time for Town & Country Days at the beginning of September
- i. The annual photo contest wraps up at the end of August; the team will be promoting the contest on social media over the next month
- j. Website & Visitor Statistics were shared. (ATTACHED)

13. **Outreach Update:**

- a. Michelle & Kaitlin will be presenting at the Washburn County Board Meeting this evening
- b. Kaitlin made guide deliveries & had some Birchwood Business Visits mid-June
- c. Michelle & Kaitlin attended a Business after 5 for Coldwell Banker in Minong in June; Michelle attended a Business after 5 for The Chocolate Studio & Trillium Home in June
- d. Michelle & Kaitlin attended the Spooner BID meeting in June
- e. The Networking & Outreach Event and Best of WashCo Awards on June 21st went well. In the future, the team recommends that we hold that event in early December to announce the Best of WashCo winners prior to the visitor guide coming out.
- f. Membership Goal: \$13,030.80 has been raised of the \$20,000 goal for 2022 with the large membership/visitor guide sales kicking off this week
- g. Michelle participated in a Travel Wisconsin website discussion to help improve the Travel Wisconsin website
- h. The team participated in a video for Spooner Health

14. **Operational Update:**

- a. The WCTA team made it through another rodeo week with record advance sales. Only 76 days until rodeo ticket sales begin again.
- b. Michelle worked with Jamie at Advance Printing to create a large-scale map of Northwest Wisconsin and Washburn County. The map is now up in the visitor center lobby and has been a huge hit for walk-in traffic
- c. Kaitlin has updated & rearranged some of the gift shop displays; updated signage is in the works to better showcase the local products & about the creator. The Chieftain Wild Rice has been restocked & there are Spooner Rodeo shirts on consignment. There is room for 1 to 2 more consignors if anyone knows of any local producers/artists who may be interested.

- d. The Visitor Center signage project is going well. Michelle needs to draw up a map for setbacks for the City of Spooner and then they will issue the sign permit so that the sign can be ordered. Lakes Gas was kind enough to allow WCTA to place the sign on their property.
 - e. 2023 Guide Mailing will be sent out today. The mailing is currently only going to 2022 advertisers due to the limited space. After renewal of ads the team can then make prospective calls to those who would like to participate.
 - f. Reminder to Executive/Personnel Committee members to sign the bank signature card today
15. **Citizen Comment:** Lisa from Best Western shared that their team won the Best Western Chairman's Award as well as a Housekeeping Award; Doug from the Wisconsin Lumberjacks shared that they are working on converting the arena to LED lighting, that ice would be back in on August 11th and training camp would begin on August 20th. The season opener will be on September 23rd.
16. **Possible Future Agenda Items:** Search Engine Optimization
17. Motion to adjourn was made by Masterjohn, seconded by Hoffman. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:35 a.m.

Next Board Meeting Date:

Tuesday, August 9, 2022

Washburn County Highway Department | 1600 Co. Hwy H | Spooner, WI 54801