



State of Wisconsin

Tony Evers, Governor

Ben Popp, Chair

Wisconsin Council on Tourism Minutes
Thursday, October 14, 2021
Epic, 1979 Milky Way, Verona, WI + virtual attendance participation

I. Roll Call

PRESENT: Secretary-designee Anne Sayers, Darren Bush, Dr. Natalie Chin, Dr. Robert Davis, Genyne Edwards, A.J. Frels, Michelle Martin, Mary McPhetridge, Ben Popp, Denise Stillman, Missy Tracy, Krystal Westfahl, Christian Overland, Senator Joan Ballweg, Senator Jeff Smith, Representative Shelia Stubbs, Representative Travis Tranel, George Tzougros

EXCUSED: Deb Carey, Nathan Gordon, Luke Zahm,

II. Call Meeting to Order and Welcome

Ben Popp called the meeting to order at 10:04am.

III. Approval of May 12, 2021 Minutes

Christian Overland made a motion to approve the May 12, 2021 minutes. Krystal Westfahl seconded the motion. Further discussion included a question on whether the first sentence of section VII was specifically determined by the Council. Consensus from the Council was to resolve the uncertainty by removing the first sentence of section VII. Christian Overland moved for a motion to amend the May 12, 2021 minutes. Representative Tranel seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Review legal advice re: Council scope of authority

Mike Van Sicklen, DOA legal counsel reviewed the memorandum of law circulated to Council members in June 2021 addressing the Council's statutory scope of authority.

DOA is official provider of legal services to the Department and to the Wisconsin Council on Tourism.

V. COVID relief funding updates

Secretary-designee Sayers provided an overview (amounts and timelines) of COVID relief funds related to travel and tourism from calendar years 2020 and 2021.

Christian Overland provided an update on the Historical Society, and the activity of many of their historical sites as a result of COVID relief funding.

VI. Election to Fill Two Openings on the Marketing Committee

Nominations were accepted in advance of the meeting and from the floor. Mary McPhetridge nominated Michelle Martin. Ben Popp nominated Denise Stillman. Committee members cast



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voice votes for two total members. Both candidates received 17 votes and were elected to serve on the Marketing Committee.

VII. Marketing Report

Department of Tourism's Chief Marketing Officer Shane Brossard delivered a Brand Strategy presentation. This included highlights from the summer and fall 2021 campaigns and highlighted in-state and out-of-state target markets. Brossard also shared an overview of media investments and arrivals from six new out of state target markets, and data on 2021 recovery in comparison to the Midwest competitive set. A question arose about cost per arrival which was noted as a follow up item.

VIII. Vote on Logo Trademark Recommendation

DOA Legal Counsel advised that the Council make a formal recommendation to the Department to further protect the Travel Wisconsin logo by applying for federal registration. Legal Counsel previously secured the protection of state registration for the Travel Wisconsin logo because of the significant value of the logo.

Chair Ben Popp asked the Council if they would like to take up a motion for a formal recommendation to the Department to pursue federal protection for the logo. Krystal Westfahl motioned for recommendation. Darren Bush seconded the motion. Further discussion on the question occurred. Legal Counsel confirmed the recommendation would be for the Department to further protect the unique color, font, and shape of the logo and wording. Council members had additional discussion around the question. Legal Counsel advised that increasing protection federally of the logo would make it easier to license and sub license; the Department would have the ability to better control it. The registration would also better protect the logo on any future merchandising. No further discussion. All in favor Motion passed unanimously.

IX. Meetings and Conventions Committee Report

Meetings and Conventions Committee Chair A.J. Frels provided a report out on the work of the committee, which has met twice since the last Council meeting. He updated Council on:

1. **Tradeshows:** the committee recently had a booth at the Connect Marketplace tradeshow in Tampa, attended by 850 meeting planners.
2. **Brand position and marketing strategy:** to assist in our state's recovery, and to further grow our share of the meetings market, the committee has requested presentations from three marketing firms that have experience in developing strategies for positioning in this market. This will assist to raise awareness, drive brand and perception, and generate leads to move in the direction of DMO's.
3. **M&C Video Project:** the committee will be launching a video project this month showcasing five conference centers and the unique characteristics of the connected destination cities to help attract more meetings and conventions.



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X. Concluding remarks and update on Department business by Secretary-designee Sayers

Secretary-designee Anne Sayers provided an update from the Department, highlighting that leisure travel rebound looks to be positive, but the range of the rebound is mixed in terms of geography and category. Positive attendance recorded over the summer months were highlighted, including Mile of Music, Wisconsin State Fair, EAA, Ishnala Supper Club, and Circus World to name a few.

Secretary-designee Sayers touched on five main areas of focus for the Department in the immediate future:

1. Driving perception and awareness
2. Maximizing leisure travel
3. Advancing meetings and conventions
4. Increasing industry support by arming the industry with needed tools and resources
5. Championing tourism

XI. Next meeting topics

The Council will look to hold their next meeting in March 2022, aligning with WIGCOT (Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism). Information will be shared in the coming days.

XII. Adjourn

Representative Tranel made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Christian Overland. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 12:02pm.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary McPhetridge, Secretary
Approved by Ben Popp, Chair