



State of Wisconsin

Tony Evers, Governor

Ben Popp, Chair

Wisconsin Council on Tourism Minutes Wednesday, November 16, 2022 Wade House Historical Site Greenbush, WI

I. Roll Call

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

EXCUSED: Dr. Bert Davis, Luke Zahm

II. Call Meeting to Order and Welcome

Ben Popp called the meeting to order at 12:31pm.

III. Approval of May 23, 2022 Minutes

A.J. Frels made a motion to approve the May 23, 2022 minutes. Denise Stillman seconded the motion. No further discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

IV. Committee Reports

Committee chairs or staff leads representing each of the seven Department of Tourism committees provided updates on the recent work of the committees. The Council heard from the following:

- Meetings and Conventions Committee report provided by A.J. Frels
- Sports Marketing Committee report provided by Dawn Zanoni
- Meetings Mean Business, Ready Set Go! and Joint Effort Marketing Committee reports provided by Heidi Schultz
- Office of Outdoor Recreation Committee report provided by Ben Popp
- Diversity, Equity, Accessibility and Inclusion Committee report provided by Krystal Westfahl
- Marketing Committee Report provided by Missy Tracy

V. Marketing Campaigns

Travel Wisconsin Chief Marketing Officer Shane Brossard shared an update, recapping the Summer 2022 campaign, Summer 2022 events campaign and Fall 2022 Campaign, and previewed the upcoming Winter 2023 campaign and Wisconsin Traveler Magazine. The summer



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2022 campaign saw impressions up 41% compared to 2021, resulting in 2.88 million clicks, up 37%. The winter 2022 campaign will launch January 3 and run through February 26, 2023.

VI. Meetings, Conventions & Sports Updates

Office of Marketing Services Director Dawn Zanoni shared that the number of meetings booked in-state has returned to pre-pandemic levels. The groups have launched their first campaign to attract events with the messaging 'It all comes together in Wisconsin'. This digital marketing campaign was launched in July.

VII. Office of Outdoor Recreation Updates

Office of Outdoor Recreation Director Mary Monroe Brown provided an update on the Office's recent work. The office continues to build strong networks within the state's outdoor industry, serving as a hub of tools, resources, connections and guidance between the places, activities, and businesses of outdoor recreation.

2022 saw the development of a workforce attraction booklet which serves as a free resource for organizations to assist with recruitment and talent attraction.

The office will continue to address economic development, workforce attraction, stewardship and education to move the industry forward in Wisconsin. This follows a record-breaking year in 2021 when the outdoor recreation industry recorded \$862 billion in economic output nationwide.

VIII. WIGCOT Discussion

Office of Marketing Services Director Dawn Zanoni shared details of the 2023 Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism (WIGCOT) with Council members. The conference will take place March 12-14, 2023 in Green Bay. The 2023 WIGCOT theme is 'BIG' and will incorporate an agenda that is being built based on attendee feedback from 2022. Council members should watch for email correspondence with registration information and are encouraged to attend.

IX. Secretary-designee's Report

Secretary-designee Anne Sayers provided an update from the Department, highlighting key updates in the following areas:

The summer tourism season closed out, setting multiple records for event attendance. Travel Wisconsin's webpage presence and PR efforts continues to grow, with the most events to date entered on our website in 2022 and 4.2 billion impressions reached from third party media outlets.

Wisconsin continues to regularly outpace most of our competitors and the national average in recovery efforts since the beginning of the pandemic.



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Federal Covid Relief funds of more than \$200 million to the Tourism industry, including \$7.5 million directly to the Department of Tourism helped tourism surge back. In 2021 Tourism saw double-digit growth in economic impact in each of our 72 counties.

Although slightly increased, Tourism's base budget is not far above previous budgets dating back to 2011. This proves difficult as costs across the board continue to rise. A cost comparison of the Summer '21 versus Summer '22 campaign production showed costs to capture and create the same campaign up 54%.

X. Next Meeting Topics

Ben Popp announced that the next meeting of the Wisconsin Council on Tourism will be held in April 2023. There will not be a meeting held during WIGCOT 2023, as it conflicted with session attendance for attendees and staff.

XI. Adjournment

Krystal Westfahl made a motion to adjourn. Seconded by Senator Smith. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 2:43pm.

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