



State of Wisconsin

Tony Evers, Governor

Ben Popp, Chair

Wisconsin Council on Tourism Minutes Tuesday, October 27, 2020 Teleconference

I. Council Roll Call

PRESENT: Secretary-designee Sara Meaney, Deb Archer, Darren Bush, Deborah Carey, Dr. Robert Davis, Genyne Edwards, A.J. Frels, Nathan Gordon, Kathy Kopp, Michelle Martin, Mary McPhetridge, Ben Popp, Missy Tracy, Krystal Westfahl, Luke Zahm, Senator Janet Bewley, Representative Jill Billings, Senator André Jacque, Christian Overland, George Tzougros

EXCUSED: Representative Travis Tranel

STAFF PRESENT: Deputy Secretary Anne Sayers, Dawn Zaroni, Shane Brossard, Heidi Schultz, Chelsey Bence

II. Call Meeting to Order and Welcome

Ben Popp called the meeting to order at 10:00AM. New Members Deb Carey, Luke Zahm, and Missy Tracy introduced themselves to the Council.

III. Approval of May 15, 2020 Minutes

Kathy Kopp made the motion to approve the May 15, 2020 minutes. A.J. Frels seconded the motion. There was no further discussion.

IV. Committee Report Outs

Following a refreshed committee structure, seven committees actively operate in support of the Strategic Plan's imperative to engage partners across the state in shared goal and vision. Chairs or staff leads of these seven committees provided report-outs of their progress and ongoing work:

- Meetings and Conventions/Ready, Set, Go! Committee report provided by A.J. Frels
- Sports Marketing Committee report provided by Dawn Zaroni
- Travel Information Center Committee report provided by Heidi Schultz
- Joint Effort Marketing Committee report provided by Heidi Schultz
- Office of Outdoor Recreation Committee report provided by Ben Popp
- Diversity, Equity, Accessibility, and Inclusion Committee report provided by Dr. Robert Davis
- Marketing Committee report provided by Darren Bush



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V. Secretary-designee Report

Secretary-designee Meaney recognized the incredible work being done of the seven committees. Secretary-designee Meaney then provided an update on the various ways that the Department of Tourism has responded to COVID, highlighting how the department has shifted to continue to lift up its partners across the state in the following ways:

- Providing industry surveys, with five total surveys having been sent out.
- Working closely with golf course partners to help their reopening during Safer At Home
- Providing an Office of Outdoor Recreation toolkit with unified messaging from DHS and the DNR encouraging people to get outside and recreate
- Amplified the first round of the We're All In grant program to help keep local businesses open
- Held two sweepstakes highlighting Wisconsin's unique lodging options and travel itineraries encouraging people to explore Wisconsin which yielded high public engagement and partner support
- Resumed in-state advertising for the summer and fall campaigns

Secretary-designee Meaney commented on the economic impact of COVID-19, acknowledging the immense amount of revenue lost, but focused on the Department of Tourism's recovery efforts. This includes nearly \$12 million in CARES act funding through the TRAVEL grants that was advocated for and is now being awarded to 158 entities across the state.

VI. Topics for Future Discussion

Chelsey Bence shared a reminder for Council members to complete the Annual Public Records Training.

Ben Popp reminded members of the Council when talking to the media to be clear they are not speaking on behalf of the council unless previously authorized to. It was agreed there will be additional discussion on this topic at a future meeting.

Ben Popp reminded Council members that the next meeting of the Council will likely be in 2021, in which case an election of new officers will be held as set forth by the newly-adopted bylaws.

VII. Adjournment

Deb Archer made a motion to adjourn. AJ Frels seconded the motion. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 12:01PM.

Respectfully Submitted by Mary McPhetridge, Secretary

Approved by Ben Popp, Chair