

Minutes

Travel Federation of Iowa Board of Directors Meeting Via Conference Call, Monday, November 23, 2009

Participants: Catherine Bergman , Linda Bacon, Lori Chappell, Pete Malmberg, Kirk Brandenberger, Kim Burger, Kathy Dirks, Tom Kuhlman, Shirley Phillips, Carrie Koelker, Michele Walker, Ann Vogelbacher, Nancy Landess, Craig Patterson and Amy Campbell.

Absent: Julie Allesee, Dee Polak and Kristie Wetjen

- 1. Call to Order:** President Pete Malmberg called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.
- 2. Approval of minutes:** It was moved and seconded (Koelker/Bergman) to approve the September minutes as distributed. CARRIED.
- 3. Treasurer's Report:** the budget summary report and balance sheet were distributed in advance of the meeting. It was moved and seconded (Phillips/Dirks) to approve the report as presented. CARRIED.

4. Committee Reports:

District Leaders: Committee members Catherine Bergman, Julie Allesee and Amy Campbell. Catherine Bergman reported the district leader sign-up list is being finalized. The regions will work to recruit district leaders at their meetings and the goal is to have each district covered. An email will be sent to those who served as district leaders last year, but who have not signed up this year, asking if they are willing to serve again.

District leader sign up at the tourism conference did not go as well as expected. Board members wondered why this might be. Ideas suggested included varying comfort levels talking to legislators, and some wondered if industry members are discouraged due to budget situations. TFI will be added to the exhibitor black-out sheet for next year's conference to encourage attendees to stop by the booth.

Due to a misunderstanding, the Voter Voice system has been in "demo mode" since the conference which is why those trying to email their legislators were unable to do so. Voter Voice has been reactivated and is now "active."

Legislative Showcase: Committee members Kathy Dirks, Carrie Koelker, Michele Walker and Ann Vogelbacher. Dirks reported the space contract with the Fairgrounds is signed and expressed her appreciation to the fair for allowing TFI to use the space. No additional fees are expected for 2010 but fees may be something TFI needs to consider in future years due to budget cuts. Susan Kloster is the new contact with Freeman

Decorating Company and Susan has familiarized herself with last year's event information.

Booth registrations are coming in with 10 booths reserved to date and 21 RSVP's for the legislative seminar. The regions will continue to promote the showcase and seminar at the region meetings and through communications to their members. Those exhibiting at the showcase will be encouraged to wear region apparel items since each region recently offered these items for sale.

Showcase invitations: each region is taking invitations to their region meetings in November, December and January and asking attendees to write a personal note on the invitations to their legislators. Invitations will be mailed to the home addresses of legislators in January and will be distributed at the State Capitol the day of the event as well.

Legislative Showcase Luncheon & Program: Committee members Ann Vogelbacher and Carrie Koelker. Vogelbacher reported the Ramada Tropics Resort & Conference Center was awarded the bid to host the legislative luncheon. This will be the site for the joint CITR/IGTA meeting to be held the following day as well. A plated luncheon will be served for the legislative seminar. Wes Ehrecke with Iowa Gaming Association has agreed to sponsor the showcase again this year and Vogelbacher will send an invoice for the sponsorship which is currently \$1,500.

TFI Booth/Exhibit Legislative Showcase: Committee members Kristie Wetjen and Kirk Brandenburger. Priorities will be on display in the TFI booth and the schedule for staffing the TFI booth at the legislative showcase in February was distributed by email previously and follows below:

5:00 to 5:30 PM	Dee & Kirk
5:30 to 6:00 PM	Lori, Shirley, Kristie
6:00 to 6:30 PM	Michele, Pete, Kim
6:30 to 7:00 PM	Ann, Julie, Tom
7:00 to 7:30 PM	Kathy & Catherine
7:30 to 8:00 PM	Carrie & Linda

Board Orientation & Bylaws Review: Committee members Shirley Phillips, Kirk Brandenburger and Kim Burger. Shirley Phillips reported the bylaws have been reviewed. The items of concern regarding electronic votes, notification of meetings and requirements for a quorum are covered in the bylaws. Kim Burger reported orientation information is in the process of being developed.

5. Discussion Items:

(A) Talking Points (formerly position papers). Talking points will be developed for each of the TFI priorities. The goal is to have each talking point have a consistent

format and design that will match the look of the fact booklets and showcase invitations. The following volunteered to work on the talking points:

1) **Build the Budget:** Ann Vogelbacher and Lori Chappell will work on this with Amy & Craig.

2) **Save Our Summers:** Shirley Phillips and Tom Kuhlman will work on this with Amy & Craig.

3) **Fund our Attractions:** Amy reported she will work on this with Kristie Wetjen.

(B) Statistics (SILO tax, hotel motel tax, sales tax, etc.). Board members discussed the statistics can be overwhelming. The goal is to use the statistics to show the impact the school start date has on tourism revenues. Michele Walker, Shirley Phillips and Tom Kuhlman agreed to work on these. LuAnn Reinders may be able to provide some assistance as well and Julie Allesee will be asked if she is interested in working on this too. Lori Chappell mentioned Angie Lewis with the Senate Republican Caucus Staff may have some helpful information.

(C) Filing of required reports for legislative showcase, etc. Amy will get an opinion from Charlie Smithson regarding what reports need to be filed for the legislative showcase, etc.

(D) Guidance for the use of Voter Voice/District Leaders. Board members discussed the use of Voter Voice/District Leaders. If additional issues arise beyond the scope of the group's priorities, all board members will be emailed and asked to vote on the issue within a certain time.

6. Iowa Tourism Office Report: Nancy Landess reported:

* 283 attended the Iowa Tourism Conference and expenses came in under budget. The silent auction raised more money than last year. A follow-up survey sent to attendees showed the breakfast buffet was a hit; there was some confusion associated with signing up for the off site sessions; and that attendees did not like the smoke at the facility.

* The 2010 Travel Guide is printed and headed to the bindery. The quantity of the travel guides to be printed will not be reduced this year because it would not result in a significant cost savings since paper, etc. had already been purchased.

* Programs impacted by the 10% across the board budget cuts.

- Co-op advertising program – space is being limited in some of the publications because there is not funding for partial pages. The arrival date for the space reservation forms will be used to determine advertiser placement.

- Television advertising has been reduced by approximately \$97,000.

- Funding amounts were reduced for the region grant programs.

- Iowa Tourism Unity Day will not be held this year.

- IDED has experienced two lay-offs of non-contract employees and one retirement

- The Governor has ordered a review of all tax credits.
- Additional cuts and the impacts of these are being developed. More information will be shared at the town meetings with the tourism regions.
- * The new format at the National Tour Association (NTA) went well. The state tourism office and other DMO's from Iowa participated in this marketplace.
- * The Iowa Lottery is interested in doing another promotion this summer featuring the 25th Anniversary of the lottery. Additional information will be distributed to the industry to gauge interest in participating. The partnership in the summer of 2009 resulted in nearly \$1 million in advertising promoting Iowa events and attractions.

7. Lobbyist Report: Craig Patterson and Amy Campbell reported:

* It is unknown at this time how far reaching the budget cuts and impacts of these will be. The Revenue Estimating Conference numbers showed September was down and October was still down. It is not known if another round of budget cuts will be coming yet this current fiscal year.

* Tax credits are of a huge concern. It will be important for communities to talk about programs used the most and how these impact communities. Some legislators view tax credits as a budget drain versus a way to build for the future.

* The schedule for the session has been reduced to 80 days which will save several million dollars. This pushes the schedule up for funnel dates, etc. The first funnel date is February 12 which is good timing with the Legislative Showcase on February 9. The second funnel date is March 5 and March 31 will be the 80th day of the session. It is not expected the session will end on time and many are guessing it will be a 90 day session.

* As budget talks continue it will be critical for TFI to promote tourism as a revenue generating industry and to focus on the return on investment that tourism provides. Some are saying an additional 10% cut on top of previous cuts may be coming for FY 2011.

8. Adjournment: It was moved and seconded (Kuhlman/Dirks) to adjourn the meeting at 12:40 p.m. CARRIED.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ann Vogelbacher, Secretary 2009-2010