

Minutes of Annual Meeting – Washburn County Tourism Association
Tuesday, May 11, 2021 8:30 a.m.
Washburn County Economic Development Corp. | 208 Vine Street | Spooner, WI 54801

1. Meeting was called to order at 8:33 a.m. by Joe McGrath.
2. Roll Call:

	Robin Berlin	Sue Churchill	Nikki Janisin	Rene Magnuson	Joe McGrath	Victor Sacco	Liza Temple	Colene Vivian	Cristina Masterjohn		
Present		X	X	X	X	X			X		
Absent	X						X	X			

Others present: Steve Janetski, Sharon Paine, Billy Rosner, Joel Zimmerman, Julie Fox, Michelle Martin, Kaitlin Hanson

3. Sacco made a motion to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Magnuson. Motion carried.
4. WCTA Proposed Bylaw Revision: Michelle read the proposed bylaw revisions. Masterjohn made a motion to forward to the June Meeting for final approval, seconded by Sacco. Motion carried. (ATTACHED)
5. Thank You to Outgoing Board Members: Rene Magnuson who completed her term and will not be re-running was presented with a jacket as a token of appreciation for her service. Michelle also announced that Liza Temple will be resigning at this time with the hope that she could re-join the board again the future. The board expressed their appreciation for her service as well.
6. WCTA Annual Report: Michelle & Kaitlin presented the 2020 Annual Report and took recommendations for updates from the Board. The annual report will be updated and filed. (ATTACHED)
7. Election of Board Members: Churchill made a motion to elect Steve Janetski and Sharon Paine to fill the open Birchwood and Stone Lake seats, seconded by Sacco. Motion carried. Masterjohn made a motion to re-elect Churchill and Sacco to a second full term, seconded by Janisin. Motion carried. Welcome and Congratulations!
8. Motion to adjourn was made by Masterjohn, seconded by Sacco. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Minutes of Board Meeting – Washburn County Tourism Association
Tuesday, May 11, 2021 Immediately Following Annual Meeting
Washburn County Economic Development Corp. | 208 Vine Street | Spooner, WI 54801

1. Meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by Joe McGrath.
2. Roll Call:

	Robin Berlin	Sue Churchill	Steve Janetski	Nikki Janisin	Cristina Masterjohn	Joe McGrath	Sharon Paine	Victor Sacco	Colene Vivian		
Present		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Absent	X								X		

Others present: Billy Rosner, Joel Zimmerman, Julie Fox, Michelle Martin, Kaitlin Hanson

3. Masterjohn made a motion to approve agenda as presented, seconded by Janetski. Motion carried.
4. Minutes of the April meeting were circulated. Janisin moved to approve as presented, seconded by Sacco Motion carried.
5. The Financial reports were circulated for review. Sacco moved to receive the financial reports for May as presented, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried.
6. Citizen Comment: None
7. Correspondence: Press release regarding economic impact; Print bid letter for 2022 visitor guide
8. **Election of Officers:** Churchill made a motion to nominate Colene Vivian for President. McGrath called for any other nominations; no other members came forward. Churchill made a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Vivian, seconded by Janisin. Motion carried. Sacco made a motion to nominate Sue Churchill for Vice President. McGrath called for any other nominations; no other members came forward. Masterjohn made a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Churchill, seconded by Sacco. Motion carried. Sacco made a motion to nominate Joe McGrath for Treasurer. McGrath called for any other nominations; no other members came forward. Sacco made a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for McGrath, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried. Churchill made a motion to nominate Victor Sacco for Secretary. McGrath called for any other nominations; no other members came forward. Churchill made a motion to close nominations and cast a unanimous ballot for Sacco, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried. Congratulations to our new officers!
9. **Visitor Guide Bid Decision:** Michelle presented the four quotes that were received at the office for production of the 2020 Washburn County Visitor Guide. Bids were received from Advance Printing, Lure Creative Design, Terry Tobin Graphic Design/LaCrosse Graphics, and Towns & Associates. Churchill made a motion to approve the bid from Advance Printing, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried.
10. **Bank Signature Card:** Discussion was had on bank signers. Masterjohn made a motion to approve the Executive Committee (Colene Vivian, Sue Churchill, Joe McGrath, Victor Sacco) as well as Executive Director (Michelle Martin) to be authorized signers on the bank signature card, seconded by Sacco. Motion carried.
11. **Strategic Planning Final Report:** Michelle shared the final strategic planning report and thanked Julie for her and Drew's work on the project. Discussion was had on the remaining recommendations as well as the need to review the plan periodically to ensure that we are continuing that work. Masterjohn made a motion to review the strategic planning recommendations on a semi-annual basis, seconded by Janetski. Motion carried. (ATTACHED)
12. **WCTA Purchasing Policy:** The board reviewed the second draft of the purchasing policy. Discussion was had on adding a line about preference to previous vendors who have given us a great product. Michelle will re-work that section and bring a draft to the June meeting. Sacco made a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried.
13. **Photo & Video Asset Request Policy:** The board reviewed the proposed Photo & Video Asset Request Policy. Discussion was had on adding a line preventing someone from using the images or video for profit, charging a fee for use, as well as the ability to revoke the use privilege. Michelle will do additional research and bring the policy back to the June meeting for review.
14. **Social Media Influencer Contract:** Kaitlin reported that the contract is being sent to legal and will be ready by the time our first social media influencer arrives in June.
15. **Brand Guidelines Draft:** Michelle presented the draft of the brand guidelines. Discussion was had on the brand promise. Michelle asked that any additions or suggestions be emailed to her. This will be a working document and will be updated continuously.
16. **Marketing Update:**
 - a. Public Relations:
 - Hilary Burg, a travel writer for Travel Wisconsin, came to the area on April 16-28. Her tour schedule included stops at Perlick Distillery, WI Great Northern Railroad, Shell Lake Beach, Hunt Hill Audubon Sanctuary, Namekagon River Visitor Center, and many more. Her lodging was hosted by Heartwood Resort. We look forward to seeing the article in the coming weeks.
 - Received feature in the "Five Must-Experience Wisconsin ATV Trails" on Travel Wisconsin
 - Midwest Rider's editor reached out as he came across our ATV Scenic Tour and requested resources for a large feature in their publication. We will share when we have that in hand. Initial conversation indicated a very strong earned media impact.
 - b. Marketing: WI Outdoor News, WATVA.org, Midwest Rider, Chicago Life Magazine, Midwest Outdoors Native & Inbox Marketing have all been submitted or have run already. Our summer theme is outdoor focused and all about making memories with family and friends.

- c. Northwest ITBEC Marketing Committee - Ads are doing well; receiving a lot of information requests right now
- d. Namekagon River Project - Working with the partners to get another contract set up with North of Eight Marketing for blogs for 2021 & early 2022. Social media & the Namekagon website are still producing good referrals even without the marketing dollars behind that campaign.
- e. 2nd Homeowner Mailing is in the proofing stages; we've asked the printer to have it mailed the week of the 17th if possible. It may be the week of Memorial Day if they're running behind.
- f. The wayside has opened for the season and the team has fully stocked the information racks. We plan to go out once per week in the shoulder season and twice per week during peak season to keep that stocked.
- g. Blogs
 - Made in WashCo: Crystal Creek launched
 - Hidden Gems: Birchwood, Minong & Long Lake are now complete; Spooner is up next, followed by Shell Lake and Stone Lake. At the end, we'll be wrapping up with a larger Washburn County hidden gems article
 - Selfie Spots & Photo Ops is scheduled to be posted this week
- h. Website Updates
 - We now have coupons live on listings and our coupons page. We've also printed those and have them at the visitor center for visitors to grab. So far we have five participating businesses. If you know of a business that could benefit, please have them reach out to us.
- i. WCTA Monthly Statistics Report (ATTACHED)

17. **Outreach Update:**

- a. Our list of business visits has increased to 18+ businesses between new businesses or new owners throughout the area that we will begin scheduling visits with.
 - So far I have heard from Joe & Sue that they would like to help out and be a WCTA Board Representative on these visits. If anyone else is interested please let me know.
- b. A local chamber reached out and they are still interested in partnering with us for assistance on their marketing efforts. With that being said we may need to look at staffing and funding models sooner than our team had anticipated.
- c. An email was sent to our chamber communities to figure out when we can have another collaborative meeting. We are aiming for the end of this month.
- d. Kaitlin attended the Spooner & Minong Chamber meetings, Michelle had a WI Governor's Council on Tourism Meeting with another one planned for this week.
- e. WI Dept of Tourism was in Washburn County for a photo shoot Monday, May 3rd - their stops included fishing at Shell Lake, Perlick Distillery, WI Great Northern Railroad, canoeing on the Namekagon with Jack's Canoe
- f. Industry News will be going out this week, and Kaitlin will aim to have this go out shortly after board meetings each month. The WashCo Compass e-newsletter goes out the 3rd Thursday of each month to 3,389 opted in subscribers
- g. Wisconsin Great Northern Railroad - Michelle took a tour of the new Zephyr trains & also tried to assist Greg in acquiring an up to date group tour mailing list. Unfortunately, Circle Wisconsin won't share that unless he becomes a member
- h. Michelle has been talking to Mike from Washburn Co. Forestry as we've had an abundance of inquiries on ATV trail opening. Our organizations are working together on messaging to make sure that visitors understand why the trails have yet to open. We're hoping that by putting out positive messaging before folks ask the question, we'll have much more understanding and happy visitors.

18. **Operational Update:**

- a. For those of you who don't know, Kaitlin was nominated for a Rising Star award for the Wisconsin Governor's Tourism Awards. While she didn't take home the award, trust me when I say, she is the Rising Star of Washburn County. The tourism industry in this county wouldn't be the same without her. Let's give a huge round of applause to Kaitlin.
- b. Visitor Center Renovation & Attraction Display - The visitor center is complete and it looks amazing. The new display is up and while it took a lot of time, we feel the finished product will be well worth it for our visitors. Folks who have seen it have been really impressed with the information and of course the photo opp as well. Thank you to our partners: Madeline Roberts (UW Extension Natural Resource Educator), Craig Roberts (WI DNR), Spooner Fish Hatchery Team, Washburn County Lakes & Rivers

Association, Washburn County Historical Society, Inter-County Cooperative Publishing, and White Birch Printing. Kaitlin met with Sara from UW-Stevens Point to pick up My Lakeshore Field Journals to use as a giveaway for the display.

- c. Hiring has begun for the open Visitor Experience Representative positions. We will be looking to hire two staff members for two to three days a week as Debbie's last day will be on Friday, May 21st.
 - d. Tax information has been sent over to our accountant
 - e. Audit Committee is being scheduled; running into some scheduling conflicts, but we'll have it done soon.
 - f. We will be applying for the Travel Information Center Grant in June.
 - g. Accounts Receivable is nearly current. We still have a handful of checks we're waiting on, but we are hopeful that they will be in soon. We are beginning to send more regular statement reminders to help with that.
 - h. Gift Shop Ordering - MV Sport has been contacted for placing a shirt order with the Washburn County logo on them again. We are looking at hooded sweatshirts (same as previous orders - different colors) and a crew neck sweatshirt. The gift shop will have new consignors joining - Foss Woodworkings with Wisconsin shaped cutting boards and wooden Wisconsin themed magnets & Jack Pine Creations (Bob Andrea, local artist) with puzzles made from his paintings
 - i. Staube Computers is working on setting us up with a server to better share/access files between our computers. This will have an automatic backup as well. The goal is that the server will be large enough to store not only our files but our extensive photo and video library as well. Once this is accomplished, we'll reach out to our videographer to find out how to transfer our b-roll onto the server as well.
19. **Citizen Comment:** Billy Rosner (Wild Country Outfitters) thanked Kaitlin & Michelle for their work and shared the impact that it's had on his business. He also recommended looking into the television option that was shared with the team in the past.
 20. **Possible Future Agenda Items:** 2022 Budget, Purchasing Policy, Photo & Video Asset Request Policy, Social Media Influencer Contract
 21. Motion to adjourn was made by Sacco, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:12 a.m.

Next Board Meeting Date:

Board Meeting– Tuesday, June 8, 2021

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