

Minutes of Board Meeting – Washburn County Tourism Association
Tuesday, August 10, 2021 | 8:30 a.m.
Washburn County Highway Department | 1600 Co. Hwy. H | Spooner, WI 54801

1. Meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. by Sue Churchill.
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				
Absent			X					X	X		

Others present: Jill Dunlavy, Doug Lein, Michelle Martin, Kaitlin Hanson

3. McGrath made a motion to approve the agenda, seconded by Masterjohn. Motion carried.
4. Minutes of the July meeting were circulated. Masterjohn moved to approve as presented, seconded by McGrath. Motion carried.
5. The Financial reports were circulated for review. Masterjohn moved to receive the financial reports for August as presented, seconded by McGrath. Motion carried.
6. Citizen Comment: Doug Lein from Jersey's and the Wisconsin Lumberjacks updated on the Canadian Border reopening and shared that the home opener in Spooner will be September 24th & 25th. In addition, there will be 40+ home games bringing significant business to the area.
7. Correspondence: Letter from Dept. of Revenue regarding Certificate of Exempt Status for purchases, Invitation from Rolling Hills ATV & Snowmobile Club to their Landowners' Picnic, Resignation letter from Colene Vivian
8. **Mid-Term Vacancies & Appointments:** Jill Dunlavy submitted an application to serve on the Board of Directors for the Shell Lake area. McGrath made a motion to appoint her to serve in that position for a partial term until the Annual Meeting, seconded by Churchill. Motion carried. Discussion was had on officer positions with Colene resigning from the board as President. Sue Churchill expressed interest in taking on the President role. Michelle called for other interested parties; none came forward. Masterjohn made a motion to elect Churchill as President, seconded by Berlin. Motion carried. Michelle asked if there was any interest in the Vice President position. Janisin shared that she may be interested, but would like to meet with Michelle first. Vice President election will be on the September agenda.
9. **Bank Signature Card:** The bank signature card will need to be updated once all officer positions are filled. This will be on the September agenda as well.
10. **Finance Committee Report:** Michelle shared an overview of the Finance Committee Meeting. Masterjohn made a motion to approve the Finance Committee Meeting minutes, seconded by Dunlavy. Motion carried. (ATTACHED)
11. **Room Tax Research Committee:** Michelle shared the recommendation from Finance/Fundraising Committee to form a Room Tax Research Committee to review room tax. The meeting will be open to anyone to attend, but Michelle asked for three representatives from the board to be appointed to the committee to bring forward a recommendation to the full board. Sue Churchill, Cristina Masterjohn, and Joe McGrath volunteered for the committee. A meeting will be set in the near future with input from the Regional Tourism Specialists.
12. **Marketing Update:**
 - a. Public Relations:
 - Washburn County was mentioned in an article titled "14 Best ATV Trails in Wisconsin" on Offroadingpro.com
 - Washburn County was mentioned in the intro of Our Wisconsin magazine in the inside front cover. The intro talked about the Namekagon River: Wisconsin's Moving National Park and referenced Washburn County in the fourth sentence. There was also an article about Shell Lake and the history of the Shell Lake Boat Company on page 6.
 - Stone Lake Cranberry Festival received a mention on page 7 of Up North Action in the "Cranberry Fields Forever" article.
 - The Minong Wild River ATV Campground was mentioned in an article on WTMJ.com

- The team is still waiting on a proposal from Turner for our additional PR work for the remainder of the week.
- b. Marketing: Fall placements are out there and will continue to go out through the end of September. Winter marketing planning is also underway. The Arts & Antiques brochure is being revised this week and will be sent to print by next week.
- c. Group Tour: Michelle signed on with Circle Wisconsin again as a Premier Member. Advertising has also been placed with Premier Travel Media to make a good group push this winter for group travel planning. As new staff is trained in and the new CRM system is implemented, the team will be making a push to work group tour leads going into the future.
- d. Northwest ITBEC Marketing Committee: The committee has approved a full redesign of the NorthwestWisconsin.com website.
- e. Blogs
 - Fall blogs have been updated and are live on the website; will be coming out on social media throughout the fall season.
 - ATVing in the Fall Colors is in the works this week
- f. Website Updates
 - The Fall Color page has been updated and the Fall Color Theme will roll out early next week
- g. WCTA Monthly Statistics Report (ATTACHED)

13. **Outreach Update:**

- a. Kaitlin has attended both the Spooner & Minong Chamber Meetings since the last WCTA Board Meeting. The Minong Marketing committee will be meeting towards the end of this month to go through the Minong Chamber website to make suggestions for updates to the website to be presented at their upcoming September meeting
- b. Michelle attended the Birchwood Chamber Meeting as well as the Spooner BID meeting. Discussion was had at the Spooner BID meeting regarding the 2022 road construction. Birchwood Chamber showcased their new website updates as well as several ideas for future promotion including a lodging referral program within their community.
- c. Kaitlin & Michelle are beginning to get the ball rolling for the planning of Local Economy Day as part of the Leadership Washburn County program. People still wanting to participate can sign up online for the upcoming classes.
- d. An industry newsletter will be going out this week with information about the grants that are recently announced as well as Visitor Guide information.
- e. Kaitlin & Michelle will be attending a meeting tomorrow morning with the Spooner BID and DOT in regards to the construction in Spooner for 2022. An update will be given at the next board meeting about what was talked about.

14. **Operational Update:**

- a. Washburn County Tourism Assn. received a Travel Information Center Grant for \$1,901.
- b. Michelle will be emailing out the Conflict of Interest Policy and an acknowledgement form to sign and return. For those board members in person, a copy of the policy is available for review and forms are here to be signed.
- c. Michelle & Kaitlin have hired a new team member, Kimi Leach. Her training will begin Thursday & Friday. Be sure to stop into the Visitor Center to say "hello" to WCTA's newest member of the team!
- d. Visitor Center seasonal staff - Allison has her last day today before heading back to college and Leah will be working for another week before finishing up for the summer.
- e. The gift shop has been doing very well, currently sales are just over \$1300 which excludes the sales of Plat Books and consignment items (i.e. The Potter's Shed). A full inventory was done over the last week due to losing the item library when trying to set up Square Online. There is a discount bin with t-shirts, some sweatshirts, and knick-knack souvenir items to try & streamline the gift shop items a little better.
- f. A Rodeo Ticketing recap meeting was held with the Rodeo Committee to go over the new AudienceView program and processes. The team will be trying to work out some of the kinks in the program prior to tickets going on sale October 1st.
- g. The team's main priorities are Visitor Guide Sales (Kaitlin is lead) and Simpleview Implementation (Michelle is lead). These two projects will take up the majority of the team's time during the next 3-4 months.
- h. Simpleview Implementation Update - Data for the CRM has been forwarded to the Simpleview team. The goal for launching a portion of the CRM for visitor data is September 1st. The timeline at this point for launch of the website as well as full use of the CRM is December 6th.
- i. Visitor Guide sales are ahead of last year at this time. Staff did send out the contract mailing sooner than last year due to being unsure how staffing would look after August rolled around. Most of the ads that have come in at this point are repeat advertisers with the exception of a new quarter page ad and a business upgrading from a 1/16 page to a half page. Kaitlin & Michelle will

continue to monitor the size of ads & quantity coming through in case there needs to be an upgrade to the page count in the book. Currently it is set at 56 but, if need be, the book will be upgraded to a 64. By the September board meeting there will be better insight on that as sales will almost be wrapped up.

15. **Citizen Comment:** Robin Berlin inquired on the status of the Spooner Lake Campground. Joe McGrath shared some concerns regarding campgrounds on the Minong Flowage as well as some issues they have been facing with wake boats. Robin Berlin inquired about the weed issues in Spooner Lake. Joe McGrath shared what the Minong Flowage has been doing in regard to Aquatic Invasive Species.
16. **Possible Future Agenda Items:** Mid-Term Appointments/Election for Vice President, Bank Signature Card
17. Motion to adjourn was made by Masterjohn, seconded by Dunlavy. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:24 a.m.

Next Board Meeting Date:

Tuesday, September 14, 2021

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