



State of Wisconsin

Scott Walker, Governor

Governor's Council on Tourism

Paul Upchurch, Chair

Governor's Council Minutes

November 15, 2018

The Charmant Hotel

La Crosse, WI

I. Council Roll Call: Council Secretary, James Bolen took the Roll Call. Those present, absent and guests were:

PRESENT: Representative Jill Billings, James Bolen, Cindy Burzinski, Paul Cunningham, Apache Danforth, AJ Frels, Brian Kelsey, Stephanie Klett, Joe Klimczak, Kathy Kopp, Michelle Martin, Mary McPhetridge, Christian Overland, Lola Roeh, Representative Travis Tranel, George Tzougros

EXCUSED: Deb Archer, Senator Janet Bewley, Stanton Peter Helland, Senator Terry Moulton, Paul Upchurch

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Klavas, Shelly Harkins, Lisa Marshall, Shane Brossard, Heidi Schultz, Chelsey Bence, Andrew Nussbaum

II. Call Meeting to Order and Welcome

Council Vice Chair Brian Kelsey

Council Vice Chair Brian Kelsey called the meeting to order at 10:03a.m.

III. Approval of August 21, 2018 Minutes

Council Vice Chair Brian Kelsey

Cindy Burzinski made the motion to approve the August 21, 2018 minutes. Lola Roeh seconded the motion. Motion carried. Minutes approved.

IV. Introduction of New Staff and Reorganization

**Secretary Stephanie Klett
and Deputy Secretary Sarah Klavas**

Secretary Klett gave an overview of the department's recent reorganization and noted position changes. Klett welcomed new Executive Staff Assistant Chelsey Bence. Klett then introduced Shane Brossard as the new Marketing Director. Deputy Secretary Klavas commented on the recent reorganization of the department, noting it was the assessment of how technology will enhance the way the department does marketing that was the basis for change.

V. Appearances Review

Secretary Klett outlined a few of the many appearances she has participated in since the previous Council meeting. These included a visit to Sand Valley Golf Resort in Rome; The 21st Upper Midwest Visitors Bureau Convention held in Lake Geneva; tours of six recently opened Hendricks Properties in Beloit; Hayward and Sawyer County CVB events and a listening session with Representative Stafsholt along the Red Cedar State Trail.



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VI. Campaigns and Promotions

Secretary Stephanie Klett and Shane Brossard

Secretary Klett and Shane Brossard shared a sneak peek of the Summer 2019 Travel Wisconsin commercial featuring Donald Driver. Klett noted that a 2-year contract was negotiated for Donald Driver. Driver will also attend WIGCOT 2019. Brossard spoke about the current winter creative campaign that will promote both indoor and outdoor activities. The campaign includes the popular Supper Club campaign and a Ski Deals promotion. The department also recently launched the snow conditions report which features a redesign. Klett thanked the Council's Marketing Committee for their excellent leadership, advice and teamwork, noting that the committee and department have come together to promote what is true and authentic to Wisconsin.

Lisa Marshall gave an update and showed a sample of the fall press kit and spoke about Wisconsin's popularity regarding craft beer. She introduced the winter story ideas her team will pitch. They are Fat Tire biking and the Ice Castles.

VII. Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism (WIGCOT)

**Secretary Stephanie Klett
and Deputy Secretary Sarah Klavas**

Deputy Secretary Klavas announced that WIGCOT will be held March 17-19, 2018 at the Kalahari Resort in Wisconsin Dells. Sponsorship development is currently underway. The Council was asked to report back on ideas for additional sponsors and keynote speakers. Klavas explained that tourism awards are also underway. Anyone with suggestions for nominees should submit a nomination.

VIII. Council Strategic Discussion

Secretary Stephanie Klett, All

1. Funding Challenges at the County and local level

Secretary Klett explained that at a state level, the Governor and legislature have been very supportive of the Department of Tourism budget, however, communities and counties remain challenged. The Council discussed room tax concerns and how important it is to continue to educate and teach counties the importance of the power of tourism. Council members also noted the need to form relationships before there is a budget crisis, as well as to stay in contact with local legislators who can be a voice for tourism. There was a consensus to share the invite to WIGCOT with County Supervisors or Chairs so they can see firsthand the impact and enthusiasm of the tourism industry. The Council also recommended that Tourism could develop an educational toolkit for use by the Regional Tourism Specialists and the tourism industry.

2. Workforce Issues

Joint discussion was conducted about the workforce shortage of both international and local workers, and the importance of tourism in Wisconsin's workforce. Housing remains an issue in attracting



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employees as does the J1 program at the national level. Ideas including scholarships for students to attend WIGCOT and programming for those attendees on the hospitality sector as a career path.

IX. New/Old Business

Council Vice Chair Brian Kelsey

Brian Kelsey reminded council members to track the expiration of their terms. 2019 council meeting dates have not yet been established. Chelsey Bence will send out a survey to determine the best date for a January meeting. Klavas mentioned that the January meeting is the election of officers and typically includes a report of the previous year's Governor's Council on Tourism activities.

Shelly Harkins presented an update on Travel Green Wisconsin noting that there will be some changes implemented based on recommendations from the August Council meeting. These elements include having membership enrollment with a one-time fee and no additional renewal fees. Harkins indicated the application will also be simplified and made available online.

Klett, Klavas and Marshall, all appointees of the Walker Administration, thanked the Council for their leadership and each said a few brief words about their next steps after January 7, 2019. Council members had an opportunity to speak to and reflect on the success of the Department over the past 8 years.

X. International Update

Deputy Secretary Sarah Klavas

Deputy Secretary Klavas gave an international update and noted that David Spiegelberg will be travelling to China through the Great Lakes of North America, on an exploratory marketing mission. Klavas explained that the Midwest states who partner to market internationally have all held or will hold Ryder Cup golf tournaments. This enables the moniker "This is Ryder Cup Country" to be relevant and a strong hook for all to work with.

XI. Adjournment

Council Vice Chair Brian Kelsey

Council motioned to adjourn the meeting. Council Vice Chair Brian Kelsey adjourned the meeting at 1:39p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

James Bolen, Council Secretary

Approved by Brian Kelsey, Vice Chair