

**Governor's Council Agenda  
October 17, 2013  
Department of Tourism  
201 West Washington Avenue  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Conference Room  
Madison, WI 53703**

Council Roll Call: Council Chair Paul Upchurch took the Roll Call. Those present and excused were:

PRESENT: Deb Archer, James Bolen, Ellsworth Brown, Cindy Burzinski, Paul Cunningham, Allyson Gommer, Senator Dave Hansen, Pete Helland, Brian Kelsey, Stephanie Klett, Kathy Kopp, Scott Krause, Lola Roeh, George Tzougros, Paul Upchurch, Stacey Watson

STAFF PRESENT: Sarah Klavas, Joellyn Merz, Dawn Zaroni, Patrick Reinsma, Kelly Borde, Amy Bayer

EXCUSED: Representative Jill Billings, Representative Dean Kaufert, Joe Klimczak, Senator Terry Moulton

VISITORS: Dennis Duchene (Kenosha CVB), Wendy Hielsberg (Oshkosh CVB), Dave Blank (Real Racine), Christine Rebout (Janesville CVB), Trish Pugal (Wisconsin Hotel & Lodging Association), Julia Hertel (WACVB), Pam Seidel (Fox Cities CVB), Scott Teuber (Wisconsin River Outing)

**I. Call to Order**

**Paul Upchurch**

Chair Paul Upchurch called the meeting to order by introducing the New Council Members: Alysson Gommer and Scott Krause. Members of Department of Tourism staff were also introduced.

**II. Open Election for Council Secretary**

**Paul Upchurch**

Brian Kelsey nominated James Bolen to become the new Council Secretary. Stacey Watson seconded the nomination. The Council held a vote and James Bolen was unanimously elected as Council Secretary.

**III. Approval of Minutes**

**Paul Upchurch**

Lola Roeh made the motion to approve the minutes from May 16, 2013. Cindy Burzinski seconded the motion. Motion carried. Minutes approved.

**IV. Secretary's Report**

**1. Connect Marketplace**

**Stephanie Klett & Paul Upchurch**

- Secretary Klett and Chair Paul Upchurch discussed the successful event held in August in Milwaukee. There was \$1 billion of revenue up for grabs between the sport events and meetings that were being booked at this event. Many attendees had never been to Milwaukee before and were impressed by the city, event and hospitality. VISIT Milwaukee has been working with Connect for 5 years to promote Wisconsin. This year was the largest attendance for the conference, thanks in part to the promotional efforts made the year before in New Orleans. Because of the successful event, several Wisconsin industry partners received business immediately.

- 2. National Governor's Association** **Stephanie Klett & Paul Upchurch**
- Milwaukee rolled out the red carpet for the nation's Governor's, their families, and statehouse staff during the first week of August for the National Governor's Association (NGA). One of many highlights was the Veteran's motorcycle ride that ended up at the Harley-Davidson Museum. Secretary Klett served as Master of Ceremony for the ride. Other Milwaukee area attractions featured during NGA were Miller Park and WI State Fair.
  - Governor Walker sent a follow-up letter to Governors, statehouse staff and leaders of other states, personally inviting them to bring their meetings to Wisconsin.
- 3. Harley-Davidson 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** **Stephanie Klett & Paul Upchurch**
- Not only Milwaukee, but the entire state was spotlighted this summer for the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Harley-Davidson. Stacey Watson emphasized the importance of this event to motorcyclists, many who have a life-long goal of getting to Milwaukee—the Motorcycling Mecca. This is a testament to the strength of the iconic Harley brand and what it means to consumers and visitors.
  - Secretary Klett attended the opening event where she had the opportunity to meet with corporate leadership and thank them for the impact they and the company have on the state. Stephanie was invited to join a Harley-Davidson Sales Mission to China and serve as a Wisconsin Ambassador. This would enhance the international marketing strategy that the Department has for future entry into the Chinese market.
  - Kathy Kopp mentioned Welcome Centers hosted events intended to greet riders coming to the state for the 110<sup>th</sup> Anniversary activities. Clearly the Wisconsin hospitality made an impression on visitors.
- 4. United States Travel Association Meeting (USTA)** **Stephanie Klett**
- USTA Board of Directors and their family members met at The American Club in Kohler for their summer Board of Directors meeting. Tourism leaders from around the country were impressed with the size of Lake Michigan, the beauty of the state and the first class customer service in Wisconsin. Many of these travel colleagues were in the state for the first time, so the Secretary was able, through her welcome remarks and presence, to sell the state and invite them back for a future visit.
- 5. Discover Wisconsin** **Stephanie Klett**
- Secretary Klett will host future episodes on Discover Wisconsin where she will illustrate the brand of fun and our unique travel offerings. Her expense to participate as the host is being fully funded by Discover Wisconsin. The shows are: Tribal Tourism Show, Culinary, and Accessible.
- 6. Educations Seminars for Travel Offices (ESTO), Richmond, Virginia** **Stephanie Klett**
- Secretary Klett and staff attended ESTO where they were joined by colleagues/members from across the country for networking and education. Stephanie mentioned the keynote speakers who made an impression with their message. This included Andrew McCarthy, Travel Editor for *National Geographic* and a former actor, and Eric Whitacre, who is the composer of the Virtual Chorus and who spoke about teamwork and leadership. The Department is working on getting him to present at WIGCOT.

## 7. Tribal Tourism

Stephanie Klett

- Tribal Consultation  
The annual State-Tribal Consultation was held at the Ho-Chunk Nation in August. The Department's work over the year was well-received by tribal leaders, Native American Tourism of Wisconsin (NATOW) members and the Department of Administration staff in attendance. This was the first year the recap was presented in a video format, which attendees felt was effective. Secretary Klett fielded questions and then presented NATOW with a \$200,000 check for their marketing programs. These dollars are statutory.
- New NATOW Director, Ernie Stevens III  
Secretary Klett announced that NATOW has recently hired a new director. Ernie Stevens III participated in the tribal consultation and the taping for the Tribal Tourism Discover Wisconsin Episode. Ernie is a member of the Oneida Nation. He has an application for a seat on the Governor's Council on Tourism under consideration as NATOW has long been a designated member.

## 8. Travel and Tourism Research Association (TTRA), Chicago

Stephanie Klett

Secretary and staff will attend the TTRA meeting in Chicago from October 28-30 for the Global Marketing Outlook Forum. This event gathers travel marketers/researchers to learn the latest in travel trends, recent travel data and opportunities to market under Brand USA.

## 9. WACVB Overview

Julia Hertel

- Julia Hertel reported that there are currently 39 members. WACVB opened a new membership category so smaller groups can now join. This has allowed more representation from around of the state.
- WACVB Fall Tourism Convention will be held November 7-8 in Wisconsin Rapids, and Council Members are encouraged to attend. Speakers include Ross Bernstein, Berkley Young, and Stephanie Klett. Julia thanked the Department for their sponsorship and registration assistance.
- WACVB has a lobbying component to their work and focus on such things as Room Tax Reform and School Start.
- WACVB and Department have been working together on the Sports Marketing and Meeting/Convention market segments. The primary focus right now is the new websites and marketing plans. Staff was recognized for their work on bringing this collaboration together especially the enormous work on content management.
- WACVB and Department worked hard at Connect Marketplace.
- WACVB meets every other month. Members are kept up-to-date via conference calls and board meetings.
- WACVB has a statewide membership with Destination Marketing International (DMI).
- Secretary Klett thanked WACVB members for their participation in events and by promoting events to legislators.
- Deb Archer mentioned that Wisconsin is admired for its Convention and Visitors Bureau group and is respected around the country.

## 10. Los Angeles Commercial Shoot

Stephanie Klett

Secretary Klett reported on Wisconsin Tourism creating pop culture history by reuniting the cast of *Airplane!*. Tourism held a press conference at Air Hollywood Studios where 12 major media outlets attended. The earned media from the event was \$7.6 million dollars and the ads have

not yet aired. The cast and directors will be at WIGCOT and many media outlets are interested in attending the conference.

#### **11. Biennial Report**

**Sarah Klavas**

Sarah Klavas reviewed the Biennial Report which is a comprehensive overview of the business of tourism for the past two years. This report will get posted online on the industry site.

#### **12. Atlantic City**

**Stephanie Klett**

Secretary Klett discussed her experiences at the Miss America pageant in September and the opportunity that it provided to promote Wisconsin. She did an interview with the major newspaper there.

#### **13. AIDS Walk Wisconsin**

**Stephanie Klett**

Secretary Klett thanked everyone for their assistance and support for the AIDS Walk, which raised even more funds than hoped. Because of this opportunity, the Department of Tourism was promoted throughout the state with heavy emphasis in Milwaukee.

### **V. Marketing & Public Relations**

#### **1. Marketing**

**Kelly Borde & Stacey Watson**

- Kelly Borde thanked members of the Marketing Committee of the Governor's Council on Tourism for their feedback, contributions and excellent teamwork on the seasonal advertising campaigns. She showed the Jordy Nelson fall ad, as well as examples of ad banners, out-of-home ads, and print ads for the Fall Campaign. The Jordy Nelson ad has commanded 250,000 online views to date. Kelly provided examples of the winter campaign. Winter television ads will launch in January in targeted markets of Chicago, Minneapolis, Milwaukee, and Madison. She discussed the Social Media Fall Playlist and the Packer Sponsorship (the sweepstake entries have surpassed the previous year). Kelly provided information about the first social co-op with Door County Coffee and Tea, who have excellent customer service and a real social media presence.
- Stacey Watson, chair of the committee thanked the team for their focus on Wisconsin brand of fun. She illustrated what Harley-Davidson does to ensure brand compliance by reviewing the tenants of the brand. Stacey commented on the tenants of our brand as a reminder that creative execution will be on brand when all of the benchmarks are incorporated.

#### **2. Geiger Press Tours**

**Sarah Klavas & Stephanie Klett on behalf of Lisa Marshall**

Earned media is on track to reach established goals.

- Wisconsin Dells: Travel Writers were impressed with Wisconsin Dells.
- Great River Road: Area is popular among Japanese visitors. There is a real interest in Laura Ingalls Wilder.
- Wisconsin Cranberry Association is working with Tourism: Korean media toured the bogs, which was well-received.
- Brian Kelsey reported on the recently completed Geiger Tour in Door County during fall colors.

### **VI. Wisconsin Governor's Conference on Tourism**

**Dawn Zanoni**

Dawn Zanoni first discussed upcoming Walk with Walker events in Trempealeau and Janesville. She also announced that the Northwood's Summit will be December 16-17 in Pembine at the Four Seasons Resort. Dawn is receiving a lot of interagency collaboration as the program gets created.

### **1. WIGCOT 2014 -- March 2-4**

**Dawn Zanoni**

- Amy Bayer will be assisting Council Members with hotel reservations and registration. While the headquarter hotel is sold out, we already have rooms set aside for the Council.
- The submission deadline for the five Governor's Tourism Awards is January 17.
- Keynote speaker Roger Brooks (presentation on destination development information) is confirmed and some other speakers are being contacted, including Eric Whitacre.
- At the last Council meeting, Dawn was asked to research creating a WIGCOT app. While the app is cost prohibitive, the website and social media team is working on optimizing across all platforms, as well as creating an e-publication.
- Department is focused on promoting the conference to a younger tourism audience by using social platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.
- Department contacted the Wisconsin Technical College System culinary departments to work with Grand Geneva for the Opening Reception.
- In honor of the Wisconsin Arts Board's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary there will be an Arts Track this year.
- More information about the conference will be provided at the January Council Meeting.

### **2. Council Meeting at WIGCOT**

**Sarah Klavas**

Sarah Klavas asked the Council for recommendations/feedback regarding the Council Meeting at WIGCOT. Lola Roeh indicated she likes that the audience is able to see how the Council works. The Council agreed they don't need anything changed; last year was a good model to follow. Discussion included that announcements and updates are a necessary component, Council should invite as many people as possible to the event, and the audience Q&A time is important. It's good for smaller communities to see what bigger communities are doing and try to figure out how to incorporate. It was suggested that a question and answer period is important and that pre-event communication should remind conference delegates to bring questions.

### **3. Legislative Team for WIGCOT**

**Sarah Klavas**

Sarah Klavas asked for suggestions on how to get legislators to the conference. Discussion ideas included a Legislative Breakfast on Tuesday, thinking about having them come on Monday because that day will be so full of marketing information, considering a bus trip from Madison so legislators could stay through lunch and be bussed back to Madison. It was noted that invitations will be mailed to both the offices and homes of legislators in an attempt to get the invitations directly to them. Klavas asked for input for Tourism Federation of Wisconsin.

## **VII. Research**

### **1. Longwood's and Tourism Economics**

**Sarah Klavas**

Sarah Klavas reported the Department has completed all of the necessary work for approving Longwood's as a sole source vendor, which includes one-year renewals for up to five years of research. Lola Roeh discussed their credibility and the value the company adds to our research. She thanked the Department of making this a priority because it is a major industry priority.

### **2. Website Research**

**Joellyn Merz**

- Joellyn Merz announced that travelwisconsin.com traffic is up 40% over the same time last year. Publication orders are also up by 30%. The new refreshed site has been working very hard, and along with a major emphasis on integrating with social media and including new articles, it appears to be working. The key is a highly integrated approach to all of the marketing efforts which is insured by having internal weekly integration meetings. The

- website has been tested for usability. Department received positive feedback on the look of the site. Users wanted to be able to filter more and view more images on individual pages. Department is working with ad groups that have articles driving people to the site.
- Research continues to be the cornerstone of all of our marketing decisions including those decisions impact the sites. Department has a content marketing strategy plan anchored by the research and regularly analyzed using established metrics. Department wants an in-depth look at where people are going once they are on the site, what users expect when they go to travelwisconsin.com and what is their preferred format (e.g., articles, blogs, videos, etc.). That is why continued testing is critical.
  - Layering the results of the usability with content studies will provide good insight.
  - The industry website has been refreshed. The information is mostly the same; however, there is cleaner, fresher look and some of the organizational elements have changed. There is a new section – How do you define fun? This section is meant to help others experience fun in the community as well as provide examples for how communities train staff to share fun with clients.

## **VIII. Committee Reports**

### **1. Marketing**

**Stacey Watson**

(See previous comments.) The Marketing Committee has been extremely helpful with keeping everything on brand. The Committee appreciates the opportunity to contribute to the work.

### **2. Joint Effort Marketing**

**Paul Upchurch**

- Grants have been distributed for 2013 with \$1.2M granted to 56 different projects. The ROI for JEM grants is estimated at \$3.7M. These grants are a phenomenal investment to grow tourism in parts of the state where they wouldn't necessarily have it. Sarah Klavas discussed the operational change in the department by moving all grants under the leadership of Abbie Hill for consistency on how they are reviewed, reported, and organized. Brian Kelsey thanked the Department and Wisconsin Arts Board for their help with awarding grants.
- Secretary Klett presented JEM grant check to James Bolen for "The Opener," which supports the summer opening of all events (golf, fishing, shopping, etc.).
- Secretary Klett presented JEM grant check to Cindy Burzinski for Destination Marketing in Vilas County for trail promotion.

### **3. Travel Information Center Grant**

**Cindy Burzinski**

Cindy Burzinski reported that out of the 19 applications received, 15 were awarded. The funds assist with paying for staff and things such as brochure racks at the centers.

### **4. Travel Green**

**Sarah Klavas reporting for Joe Klimczak**

Sarah Klavas reported that the Department is in the process of hiring a Marketing Assistant, who will work with the Travel Green program. A plan has been approved by the Travel Green Committee, which includes (1) Working with UW Whitewater to perform a research project on Travel Green businesses that have successfully used TG certification to lower costs; (2) Working on the RFPs for vendors whose contracts are up in December, including the Cadmus Group, and moving all contracts to expire at the same time of year; (3) Working with DNR staff on recycling components.

## 5. Sports

**James Bolen**

- James Bolen reported on Connect Marketplace. He and Dawn Zanoni represented the Sports Committee and met with planners to introduce them to the sports website, and locations throughout Wisconsin to hold events.
- Data suggests more people are now using the new Sports Wisconsin website. Stakeholders from around the state can upload information about their facilities and the types of events that can be held at their location. Another feature includes the ability to upload an RFP directly to the website. This website is making it easier for sports planners to choose Wisconsin as a destination.
- Since launching in August, traffic to site has increased 649%. Page views were up over 1000%. Over 70 business referrals have been picked up from the site. The response from the event planners has been positive.
- Ready Set Go Committee met and selected projects with a ROI of \$3.2M. A wide variety of sporting events were recommended for funding.
- Sports and Meetings & Conventions are working together to be featured in a single publication. This is being created by Collinson Media as part of an overall media buy and trade show participation presence.
- Stacey Watson discussed infusing the brand of fun into the sports and meetings market segments. James indicated he would appreciate having the Marketing Committee assist with brand compliance in these sectors. Secretary Klett directed the Marketing Committee to work with the other committees to serve as advisors for incorporating the brand.
- Kelly Borde indicated that Laughlin Constable is working with the committees to bring fun into all areas of creative and will work with the Deputy to fine-tune this
- Paul Upchurch announced the National Committee of Sports Commission will be meeting in Milwaukee in 2015. They will start pre-promoting soon.

## 6. Meetings & Convention

**Deb Archer**

- Deb Archer discussed the new Meet in Wisconsin website, which was transferred to the Department and rebranded. Deb thanked the Department and Dawn Zanoni for listening to the Meetings and Convention Committee's feedback. More planners are visiting the site and this will increase because the paid digital campaign is just launching.
- Seven Meetings Means Business Grants were distributed with a ROI of \$6.4M.
- Deb announced that exposure at Connect Marketplace was phenomenal. She would like to continue the strong presence at the Connect shows, even when the meeting site isn't in Wisconsin. Department has a 3-year sponsorship with Connect.
- The print guide for Sports and Meetings & Conventions will be distributed to Connect attendees along with being packaged with printed Collinson materials over the next year.
- Meetings & Convention would like to bring more relevant on-brand images into the website, and more photos are needed. The listings work much harder when a photo is present

## 7. International

**Sarah Klavas**

- Sarah Klavas reported on the efforts to increase international travel to Wisconsin.
- International Pow-Wow 2014 is in Chicago, where Wisconsin can be showcased. A Co-op program is trying to create a way to get more of the industry involved with the Pow-Wow and make it more affordable.
- Department is working on a post-FAM tour after the Chicago meeting focusing on "Water, Water Everywhere" including Milwaukee, Lake Geneva, and Madison. They are also working on some pre-FAM tours.

- Department rejoined Mississippi River Consortium, which is desirable to Japanese tourists.
- Sarah was elected as the Marketing Chair of Great Lakes USA, which gives Wisconsin more visibility.
- Deputy Secretary Fantle will be going to London to represent Wisconsin at the World Travel Market.
- This has been a busy fall for international tour operators and travel writers. Wisconsin has hosted 5 international groups in the last 2 weeks, including Japanese travel writers and German motorcycle magazine writers. Recently 15 tour operators/travel agents explored Wisconsin; half of the group toured Northern Wisconsin, while the other half toured Southern Wisconsin. This has been a perfect example of a cooperative market by industry partners getting involved. 20 different destinations have been highlighted in the past month.

#### **IX. Round Robin Update**

**Paul Upchurch**

1. Paul Cunningham provided an update for the Wisconsin Restaurant Association, which met in Wausau. The WRA is in support of the Room Tax Reform. Also discussed the Midwest Food Service Expo, which is occurring the week after WIGCOT.
2. Paul Cunningham provided an update for the Fond du Lac Chamber of Commerce. Thanks to the efforts of Craig Molitor from Fond du Lac CVB, the AGLOW conference was held there. Several representatives from Chambers and CVB were present. Paul also discussed Thelma, the revitalized Masonic Hall that has become a museum and music venue.
3. Allyson Gommer provided information about the Chippewa Falls area which hosted the German writers on the FAM tour. They were in town the same weekend as Oktoberfest and were able to meet with other German-speaking individuals. John McGivern from Milwaukee Public Television conducted several interviews in the area and filmed over 11 hours of footage. This will be aired on "Around the Corner with John McGivern."
4. Lola Roeh reported that Sheboygan County had one of the best summers on record. She also discussed that Illinois may be trying to infuse the element of fun in their website. In addition, "wellness" is taking a prominence for as a motivation for travel.
5. Senator Dave Hansen reported that Green Bay received a contract until 2020 for WIAA volleyball and basketball.
6. Secretary Klett talked about the weather's affect on tourism this summer. She also thanked the Northwoods industry partners that helped visitors navigate where to go, especially during the National Parks shutdown.

#### **X. January Election of Marketing Committee Members**

**Stephanie Klett & Paul Upchurch**

The Council was asked to think about nominations for the marketing committee. Elections will take place at the January Council Meeting. Eric Esser from the Governor's Office will provide more information on the election procedures.

#### **XI. Old Business**

Nothing to report.

#### **XII. New Business**

The date and location for the January meeting will be emailed to Council Members.

**XIII.Adjournment**

Brian Kelsey made the motion to adjourn the October 17, 2013, Council Meeting. Cindy Burzinski seconded the motion. Motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 2:02 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

James Bolen, Council Secretary  
October 23, 2013

Approved by Paul Upchurch, Chair  
October 30, 2013