

Western Iowa Tourism Region Annual Meeting June 5, 2019 •Manning Hausbarn Heritage Park Konferenz Centre

President Freda Dammann called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and explained the meeting packet. Manning Mayor Harvey Dales gave a brief welcome to the community.

Approval of the Agenda: James Kessler moved to approve the agenda with Andy Milam seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Approval of the June 2018 Annual Meeting Minutes: Julie Hering Kent moved to approve with Kenner Baxter seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Financial Report: Kenner Baxter, finance officer, reviewed the report. She thanked everyone for their support this past year. Members are listed in the Annual Report in your packets. We expect to close this year with a modest positive balance. A year-end budget report will be provided at the Sept. 18th meeting in Sanborn.

An annual review will again be conducted by our accounting firm and a full report should be ready by Sept. 1st to send to the Iowa Economic Development Authority and for our membership.

Merideth Maranville moved to approve the report with Cheryl Warner seconding the motion. Motion carried.

State Tourism Office Report: Jessica O'Riley reported that they are currently taking reservations for the FY20 Co-op program until June 30th. Contact LuAnn Reinders with any questions as there is a wait list for several opportunities.

- Interviews are progressing for the Tourism Outreach & Engagement Coordinator and Content Development Coordinator positions. They are also working to fill the vacancy created by Brooke Miller's move to Minnesota.
- They are pursuing bids for the 2020 Iowa Tourism Conference in Des Moines, Mar. 2 - 4.
- There is an easy way to share your community content with the Iowa Tourism Office, connect your Instagram Business Accounts with them via CrowdRiff (the visual marketing platform they use) so your information goes directly to them. Instructions were included in the E-Traveler and if you missed it, you can find archived issues at traveliowa.com under Industry Partners.
- The 99 Parks campaign launched on April 22nd to inspire more travelers to explore our county parks this summer. The list includes one county conservation-managed park from each county. You can find a list at [traveliowa.com/99 parks](http://traveliowa.com/99_parks). People are encouraged to share this information on social media with #ThisIowa and #99Parks.
- The Integrated Marketing campaign has begun, both the consumer and business components. To get a feel for the campaign, go to thisiowa.com where you can be inspired to move to Iowa or easily navigate to the Tourism or Business and Community Development sites.

Travel Federation of Iowa report: Andy Milam reported.

- The Hotel- Motel Tax bill did not make it this session so look for a revised bill next session. We will still be asking for the change from 30 days to 90 days to collect hotel/motel tax for the entire stay. As far as we can tell, the Associated Contractors were the biggest opponent to this bill. This bill was negotiated right up until the last minute of the session.

- Since the Tourism Conference isn't until next March, we hope that those of you who signed up for District Leaders will continue to serve. What can you do? This summer & fall meet with your legislators, explain to them:
 - Tourism is an important industry to Iowa - \$8.5 billion industry
 - \$ 507.1 million generated in tax dollars
 - Tourism brings people to Iowa for their first impression – hoping they will stay to live and work here.

American Bus Association Marketplace – Mark Eckman reported and explained that Omaha will be hosting for the first time at the CHI Center in January of 2020. Since these bus tour operators do not travel much in Iowa or Nebraska, they are looking for “What’s New?” There are some FAM tours through Western Iowa and there may be other sponsorship opportunities so contact Mark if you are interested.

Trip Advisor News & Updates: Information is in your packet to update your entries so you receive more publicity and reviews.

Election of Board Members & Officers: Jessica Brownmiller reported for the nominations committee with the following nominations: Board members for a 3 - year term: Blair Weigum - Chamber & Development Council of Crawford County, Jayme Riedell - Kings Pointe Resort, and John Westergaard – City of Lake View. Also nominated for officers: Andy Milam – President; Kenner Baxter – Vice President; and Kiana Johnson – Finance officer. President Dammann asked for any other nominations from the floor. There being no further nominations, Pat Fleshner moved to approve and select the slate of board members and officers as presented with Bob Mortensen seconding the motion. Motion carried.

Recognition of Board Members and committee members: President Dammann recognized the following board members:

Kenner Baxter, Cass Co. Tourism & Baxter Cycles
 Josee Beier, Mills County
 Jessica Brownmiller, City of Le Mars
 Kathy Dirks, Harrison Co. Historical Village and Welcome Center
 Kiana Johnson, O'Brien County Economic Development
 Julie Hering Kent, Cherokee Chamber of Commerce
 Merideth Maranville – Clarinda
 Andy Milam, Shrine of the Grotto of Redemption
 Erika Newton, Sioux City

The following committee members were also recognized:

2019 Iowa Tourism Awards Selection committee:
 Jill Heisterkamp, Calhoun Co. Economic Development
 Freda Dammann, Manning Hausbarn Heritage Park

Iowa Tourism Grant Review Committee:
 Brian Kessler, Dickinson Co. Freedom Rock
 De Heaton: Corning Opera House
 Freda Dammann, Manning Hausbarn Heritage Park
 Julie Hering Kent, Cherokee Chamber of Commerce
 Kathy Fiscus, WattaWay, Pottawattamie County
 Lana White, Mills Co. Tourism
 Shelly Greving, Emerge Marketing Solution

2019 Iowa Tourism Conference Committee:
Rebecca Castle, Golden Hills RC&D

Iowa Group Travel Association
Michaela Brown, Brown's Theater, Le Mars
Mark Eckman, Unleash Council Bluffs

Travel Federation of Iowa Board Members
Lisa Riggs, Danish Windmill Corporation
Kathy Dirks, Harrison Co. Historical Village & Iowa Welcome Center
Andy Milam, Shrine of the Grotto of Redemption
Rebecca Peters: Okoboji Tourism
Shirley Phillips also serves on TFI.

Iowa DOT TODS Committee
Shirley Phillips, Western Iowa Tourism Region

President Dammann also thanked Shirley & Jane Berger, the staff of Western Iowa Tourism Region.

Andy Milam, incoming president, presented President Freda Dammann with a gift for her year of service.

Annual Report: President Dammann pointed out that the Annual Report was included in the packets and extras were on the sharing table.

Clay County Fair: Shirley reported that there is still one space open at the Clay County Fair, an afternoon shift from 2:30 – 8 p.m. on Wed., Sept. 11th.

Meeting Bids: The group was reminded that meeting bids for hosting membership meetings are due by Friday, June 7th if you're interested.

Meeting adjourned: Andy Milam moved the meeting be adjourned with Jessica Brownmiller seconding the motion. Meeting adjourned.

Featured speaker: Jeff Beals, "Can you close the sale and bring more visitors and money to your attraction and community?"

Respectfully submitted,
Shirley Phillips, Executive Director