

## **Western Iowa Tourism Region Annual Meeting**

**June 23, 2021 • 10:30 a.m. • Humboldt**

**Call to Order: President** Andy Milam called the meeting to order at 10:36 a.m. at 716 Main in Humboldt.

**Welcome:** Travis Goedken, City Administrator welcomed everyone to Humboldt.

**Approval of Agenda:** Becky Fear Hatting moved to approve the agenda with Kenner Baxter seconding the motion. Motion carried

**Approval of 2019 Annual Meeting Minutes:** Bob Mortensen moved to approve with Brian Kessler seconding the motion. Motion carried.

**Financial Report** – Kiana Johnson, Finance Officer, presented the report with a review through May 2021.. There are two expenses over 100% - postage and education – postage for fulfillment and the education included two years of Zoom subscription and virtual trainings. The counties have all been invoiced for their annual partnership dues.

Our annual review will be conducted by our accounting firm in Atlantic after the end of the fiscal year and will be provided to the state before Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> as well as the board members.

Becky Fear Hatting moved to approve the financial report with Jill Heisterkamp seconding. Motion carried.

**State Tourism Report** – Katie Kenne presented the report.

- **Strategic Plan:** They have had their initial kickoff meeting with Coraggio Group, they are starting on gathering background information, research points and interviews. Tentatively – industry/stakeholder survey in July, working groups established in late July, tourism forums held throughout the state in September.
- **Marketing Co-op:** Reservations are closed and notifications will be sent by July 2.
- **Regional Sports Authority Districts:** Applications available now and due at 4 p.m. on July 9.
- **Park Passport:** Very successful re-launch! Relaunched on May 27 and from that day through Sunday, June 6, we've had 2,445 NEW sign-ups – 1,000+ of those were on the day of the relaunch. In that week and a half, we've also tracked 2,533 park check-ins and Memorial Day at 500 check-ins just that day alone. If not aware, AARP Iowa is sponsoring the passport prizes this year with new t-shirts, Fitbits, and monthly prize packs with outdoor supplies like a Yeti cooler, stand-up paddleboard, camping tent, etc.
- **Year of the Road Trip:** Year of the Road Trip has launched! The travel website has been refreshed and they've started incorporating the messaging into social and advertising. Partner toolkit in the works. Working on additional "Fuel Your Road Trip" incentive campaign as part of Year of the Road Trip – launching in the next week.
- **Family Week:** For the first time, the Iowa High School Athletic Association and Iowa Girls High School Athletic Union have [announced a moratorium](#) on high school sports and activities for a week this summer. From July 25-August 1, these organizations are encouraging families to prioritize time outside of sports, rest, and relaxation. Please join in supporting a statewide Family Week marketing campaign by educating your local attractions, hotels and restaurants and encouraging them to provide special offers during the week of July 25-August 1. We have created a [newsletter article](#) and [flyer](#) you can use to communicate with your partners. ACTION: Please use these materials and share any special offers your community will be promoting for inclusion on [traveliowa.com](http://traveliowa.com).

**Travel Federation of Iowa:** Andy Milam reported on this year's legislation and our lost opportunity of having \$5 million for the tourism industry. We are more united than ever in pursuing a dedicated stream of funding for tourism. We will continue to support IEDA's efforts.

Establish a relationship with your legislators this summer, and give them your contact information so they can reach out to you during session. There is always room for more District Leaders, which allows you to receive information from the lobbyists. Sign up with Shirley.

**The T-bone Trail Western Iowa:** Sara Slater, Audubon County Tourism, reported that this was a small idea that grew during 2020 and now that 2021 is open, we are happy to have Jay Goodvin, the Iowa Gallivant, pursuing the best steak in each county, unique lodging opportunities and attractions to visit. Statistics from social media from April 1<sup>st</sup> when we started announcing till June 23<sup>rd</sup> are 315,200 Facebook reach of Western Iowa posts on the T-Bone Trail and the Iowa Gallivant. Western Iowa Facebook views of videos on T-Bone Trail and Iowa Gallivant: 115,000; and Western Iowa blog post views of 6,000.

**Clay County Fair opportunity:** Shirley Phillips reported that the Clay County Fair has once again offered us a free booth at the fair from Sept. 11 – 19. You can sign up for a half-day shift or a whole day shift. There were 297,000 visitors in 2019. Contact Shirley for more information.

**Election of Board members & officers:** Merideth Maranville of the nominations committee presented a slate of members and officers:

**Board Members:** Kiana Johnson, O'Brien County Economic Development; Kathy Dirks, Harrison County Historical Village & Welcome Center; Freda Dammann, Manning Hausbarn Heritage Park

**Officers:**

President – Kenner Baxter

Vice President – Kiana Johnson

Finance Officer – Jayme Riedell

Past President – Andy Milam

After a request for nominations from the floor, Becky Hatting moved to approve the board members and officers as presented. Lisa Riggs seconded. Motion carried. Congratulations to all.

**Recognition of board members and committees:** Without committed volunteers and participation in efforts to complete our action plans, our organization cannot be effective. We thank them all for their service. President Milam thanked the Board and the staff, Shirley and Jane, as well.

**Recognition of outgoing president:** Kenner Baxter presented Andy Milam, outgoing president, with a gift and thanked him for serving these past two years as president of the region.

**Annual Report:** President Milam referred to the annual reports in the packets and noted that they should be shared with their boards and supervisors.

**Adjournment:** Becky Fear Hatting moved to adjourn with Merideth Maranville seconding the motion. Meeting was adjourned followed by lunch and our special speaker, Holly Hoffman.

*Our mission: The Western Iowa Tourism Region connects, develops and promotes the tourism industry in Western Iowa.*