

US23 Management Council Minutes
December 11, 2012

Meeting called to order at 1:02pm by Anne Bellanger. 26 people were in attendance.

Introductions: Patty O'Donnell was introduced as the new MDOT Heritage Route person. Introductions of people who were in attendance also as a round table was completed.

Approval of Minutes: Motion made by Karen Sanderson to accept minutes as presented and seconded by Dave Wentworth. Motion carried.

BUSINESS:

Amendment to ByLaws: Need an Arts & Culture seat created. Motion made by Belle Flora to amend the by-laws to include a seat for MACNE and seconded by Karen Sanderson. Motion carried. Motion to appoint Mary Ellen Jones by Belle Flora and seconded by Greg Sundin. Motion carried. Mary Ellen has the Art Trail and past projects such as the passport pkg and website experience.

Telling the Story: This project is back in play. Grant of \$47,050 was awarded and received. The focus to be on Natural Resources and Maritime history. This project will start in Arenac County, then the mid section of the Heritage Route and then Cheboygan. Focus on a subject to tie all videos together and have public access for people to get to.

US23 South Alpena Gateway Project: A beautification project. The Management Council has a provision in the current plan. Problems: Deteriorated or abandoned buildings, Blight, Signage, Power lines, Curb Cuts. We need to possibly look at projects to do in the future on US23. In Alpena, currently a group of volunteers, business owners are trying to clean up. They are working with local government and organizations with a branding or the rebirth of the city. They currently have a facebook page called: Taking Pride in Alpena.

Art Trails: Sent a letter of inquiry for an art place grant. There are grants available. Counties, Towns asked to identify art and cultural projects. So far 81 arts, venues have been identified along US 23. This goes from Standish to Mackinaw City. Looking for mobile apps or signage.

Up North Trails: Over 100 are involved in this project. We are in need of equestrian trails yet and help with identifying them \$83,000 has been awarded thus far for this project. North West Michigan has submitted a grant request to try to match funding brought in for Northeast Michigan. This will always be an ongoing work on the website for events and etc. Facebook page: Up North Trails.
Need to look at assets needed for snowmobiles also. Example: gas stations, eateries to finish maps for this project.

State Heritage Route Program: Now called Michigan Byways. Group looked at possible new logos and agreed that the word Pure needs to be added to the logo. There will be a 2 page promotional piece for each route. Discussion on Heritage Route markers and byways signs. But our logo is too close to a MI road sign. Denise to call and get more information on new signage and for signage along the route where intersecting roads join.
Pure MI: We are listed under road trips then heritage route tours on the website. We feel we need to be more accessible so people can find all heritage routes in the state.

Recognition: Sunrise Coast was featured in Midwest Living and Blue Magazine. Also was featured on the Weather Channel website for a week.

Marketing and Finance Report: The grant is down \$7,000 for 2012. We are awarded \$15,150 for SPR and \$13,850 for MTF. What is recommended: Work on legislative for permanent and consistent funding.
Form a Non Profit.

Merchandise development to fun non-profit.

1. List of businesses in each city.
2. Work with CVB's and Chambers to identify partners for product development.

Do we work with a lawyer to become a non-profit? Discussion ensued. \$400.00 to apply for non-profit. Makes you a grant recipient qualifier. Could apply as a direct recipient then. We need to come up with a strategy for this group to sustain and move forward in the result of no grant being awarded to further us. ***Motion to explore the establishment of a 501-C3 to function and do marketing for the US23 Heritage Route by Belle Flora and seconded by Dave Wentworth.***

Discussion: Use a fiduciary 501-C3 until ours is granted for us to raise funds. Need for 501-C status is to develop merchandise for advertising and to receive grants. This group would be absorbed into the new when the establishment takes place. Belle Flora to check to see if we qualify for status. All county reps need to their County board and make sure they are all ok with this board moving forward with this. The Marketing committee to get together by next meeting. Denise will send out bullet points for reps to take back to the county to cover. Motion carried.

Alpena Update: Branding exercise DDI company came to Alpena. Their findings found that Alpena needs a central gathering spot (downtown plaza). Working with other entities to work on a design concept and stakeholders group. Site being considered is behind Center building in Alpena.

Dockhand Classes: Were held June 6&7, 2012. Classroom instruction part was successful. Bill of \$2,500.00 received for textbooks and instructors. \$850.00 has been received so far for tuition. There is \$850.00 collected from 3 other entities and the remaining \$850.00 will be received in the next 30 days. NEMCOG collected the money for this project. They will pay what they have collected and pay the remainder as soon as it comes in.

Wine and Hops: Have been meeting regularly. People will travel over 2 hours for the experience. They are working on forming partnerships.

REPORTS:

NE Michigan Great Lakes: Working on school youth programs. Hook, Line and Dinner has a partnership with Sea Grant. They are looking for Charter Industry and Food Industry partnerships. Fisheries history – Looking for artifacts and history that can create a statewide tourism plan to drive people to the Alpena area.

Sunrise Coastal Coalition: 5 out of 6 counties are participating. Arenac thru Presque County. State total change to \$25,000 now needed per campaign. Summer campaign will allow matching funds. Hoping to get thru to the Fall campaign. May be able to reach out of state market campaigns.

MDOT: Summer 2013 program sheet was passed out. The US23 focus in 2013 is in Iosco County, Greenbush, Alpena and Rogers City.

DNR: Working on developing a group for fundraising. Ocqueoc falls was a great success in 2012. Working on site trails now. The Recreation Passport was developed to collect money. Currently working on ORV snowmobile trails also as state has made changes. Change in marketing plan as South East Michigan doesn't participate. Cost will be \$11.00 in 2012.

Perks program has 1400 businesses participating that people who buy recreation passes can use and get initial \$11.00 investment back.

They are working on trails and linking with cities, towns etc. Focus on this project until 2014.

USFS: Hot and dry summer. Lots of use of the Au Sable. They were up 5000 visitors from 2011. Best numbers since 2002. Campground numbers were down in 2012. Participated in a National Survey for 2012. This survey is competed every 5 years. They found that Hunting, fishing, and hiking uses are needed for their facility as upgrades. They now have a trail tech back in line for trails

They are looking at working with a group that does extreme sports in June of 2013.

Heritage Coast and Rowing: In process of restoring a boat. Hoping to build two on Huron Shores and 3 in the UP. Off Shore Gran Prix will be June 21-23rd in 2013. 35-45 boats are expected. Looking for 20,000 to 35,000 visitors in the Tawas Area for 2013. Hoping for antique boats for display and other static displays for viewing.

County Reports:

Iosco County: Baldwin township has expanded 6 miles of bike trails from Tawas Point to almost the Arenac County line.

NEMCOG: Report available to all members at mtg.

Gateway Project: Implementation needed: 1. Tell The Story, 2. Grants, Work with business web links.

Planning: 1. Non Profit Status, 2. Partner with merchandising, 3. US23 Gateway: Look at partnership on Feb5th

Motion made by Dave Wentworth to let Denise allocate her resources as she sees fit and to add a #4 that states other. Seconded by Karen Sanderson. Discussion: There are serious concerns of US23 Gateway and adding that to Denise's projects. Motion carried. 2 nay's.

Next meeting will be February 2013. A doodle poll for date will come in email form.

Meeting adjourned at 3:40pm.

Respectfully Submitted:

Sue Stein