

US 23 Heritage Route Management Council

Chair Marlana MacNeill called the meeting to order at 10:07 a.m., January 5, 2010, at the Maritime Heritage Center, Alpena, MI

Attendees: *Greg Sundin, City of Alpena; *Karen Sanderson, Alcona County Heritage Route Committee/City of Harrisville; *Ken Gauthier, Alpena County/Sanborn Twp. Supervisor; *Anne Belanger and Brian Wagner, Presque Isle; Beverly Bodem, Sen. Stamas' office; *Belle Flora, Oscoda/Coastal Coalition; *Trish Schmidt, Iosco/Oscoda Twp.; *Marlana MacNeill, Alcona Co Road Comm./Heritage Route; Brandon Schroeder, Sea Grant; Dan Mullen, DNR; Joseph Sancimino, Arenac; and Denise Cline, NEMCOG.
(*)Denotes voting members

Absent: Cheboygan County, MDOT, Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary, USFS, Private Sector Tourism, and EMCOG.

Motion by Anne Belanger, support by Trish Schmidt to approve the December 1, 2009 minutes. Motion carried.

Eco-tourism speaker Georg Schluender was unable to attend. He is the NEMCOG volunteer who is trying to create eco-tourism related businesses in NE Michigan. He will try to get to the February meeting.

REPORTS--many of the counties did not meet in December, Cheboygan was absent. Joseph Sancimino said **Arenac** is getting organized and working on several projects.

Presque Isle is in the process of reorganization and reestablishing county committees. They are also funding their commitment for the Pure Michigan campaign.

Coastal Coalition is collecting the promised funding for the Pure Michigan campaign. They have also asked each county for the placement of "dots" on a map, i.e., places of interest to visitors/tourists along the route.

DNR—Dan Mullen reported on the pending merger of the DNR and DEQ by mid January. They are restructuring to utilize both entities resources. Dan has also applied for a grant to pave the multi-use trail within the Harrisville State Park.

Sea Grant—Brandon Schroeder reported that there will be a teacher focused workshop January 15, 2010 featuring stewardship of natural resources. There still is availability so let Brandon know. There will also be a regional networking meeting February 4, 2010.

Scenic By-Ways Grant—The grant funding application is not open yet but Pete Hanses, MDOT, urged us to apply and ask for all that we need. Suggestions from our group were a marketing program as opposed to a marketing plan. We also strongly suggested that we include funding to hire "staff time" from NEMCOG to coordinate and collate the many marketing studies that have been done for our area and implement the best from these plans.

Website—Denise reported that not much can be done with LIAA until February as the OK didn't come until December from Lansing. Jim Muratzki from LIAA will call during our

February meeting and will be at our March meeting. We now need information from each county team. This information can be sent to Denise. Information needed:

- Inventory assets
- Photos
- Possibly start the list and then back the list up with photos
- County “stories”

Keep in mind that we are, but not limited to, a recreation corridor.

We had a great discussion on how we’d like the website to look. It was agreed the site will be more pictorial than lists of text and should be set up to always bring the viewer back to our home page so not to lose the visitors/guests after they’ve explored any of the links. Consensus about the overall appeal and image was reached quickly and easily after critiquing other Heritage Route websites. Input from the six counties is crucial (see bulleted items above) and immediate, meaning SOONER THAN LATER!!! Denise will also look into obtaining pictures from the MDOT photographer.

The next meeting will be February 2, 2010 at 10:00 am at the Maritime Center.

Motion to adjourn at 11:50 am.

Submitted by: Karen Sanderson, Secretary