

MICHIGAN TRAVEL COMMISSION MEETING  
RADISSON HOTEL -- LANSING, MICHIGAN  
FEBRUARY 12, 2008

Travel Commissioners Present

Christina MacInnes, Chair  
Ken Hayward, Vice Chair  
Frank Ettawageshik  
Judy Zehnder Keller  
Jerry Preston  
Art Tebo

Travel Commissioners Absent

Jim Berryman  
Rochelle Cotey  
Roger Curtis  
Tanya Heidelberg  
Patricia Mooradian  
Susan Sherer  
Frank Taylor

MEDC Travel Michigan Staff Present

Lisa Dancsok  
George Zimmermann  
Daiva Devereaux

1. WELCOME

Chris MacInnes welcomed everyone and thanked all those working with the Commission's five standing committees in implementing the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan. She had asked George Zimmermann to facilitate today's committee reports and assist with developing the Commission's presentation for the upcoming tourism conference.

2. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 14, 2007 MINUTES

Motion by Art Tebo, seconded by Frank Ettawageshik, to approve the minutes of the December 14, 2007 Travel Commission meeting as submitted. Motion passed unanimously.

3. TRAVEL COMMISSION NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

See attached.

4. TOURISM CONFERENCE PRESENTATION STRATEGY/DISCUSSION

George Zimmermann will draft a suggested outline for the Commission's presentation at the tourism conference. Lisa Dancsok offered her support and her staffs' assistance in working with the Commission to finalize their presentation. It was agreed that time for questions and answers from conference attendees should be built into the presentation. Also, a run-through of the presentation is scheduled for Sunday evening, April 13, 2008.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

Chris MacInnes suggested the standing committees meet before the tourism conference to discuss today's reports and incorporate the information into their future goals.

The group discussed whether the current committees were appropriately formed to do the required work and the possible need for adding committees. Specifically, the role of a marketing committee was raised, but it was agreed that this is a management function; i.e. this is an important part of Travel Michigan's responsibilities and should not be a specific Commission responsibility. It was agreed that existing committees should complete their current projects before the Commission considers any new committees or additional work.

George Zimmermann gave the budget update. While waiting for confirmation of additional funds, MEDC worked on a market analysis to determine how to best spend the new money. George asked the industry for their help in educating the legislature about the necessity of getting the increased funds by March 15. This is the deadline for making media buys in May in time for the big national push for the summer. This point was also stressed at the well attended MACVB Legislative Luncheon earlier in the day. He also indicated that the results of 2007 Longwood Study reporting on the State's advertising effectiveness will be ready for the Tourism Conference.

Lisa Dancsok discussed PGA marketing opportunities and leveraging as much international media coverage as possible through golf ads and fam trips around events.

6. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christina MacInnes  
Chair

George Zimmermann, V.P.  
Travel Michigan

## TRAVEL COMMISSION NEW COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

### **Governance/Policy Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to oversee a framework for efficient and effective collaborations and partnerships within the Commission as well as a broadly defined travel and tourism industry network. This committee will clarify and communicate the powers and responsibilities of the Commission and that of the committees that may be authorized from time to time. Examples of responsibilities may relate to succession planning for the Commission, developing job descriptions with performance expectations, tracking performance based on these expectations, and coordinating policy issues to support the sustainable development of Michigan's tourism industry.

#### Committee Roster:

Jerry Preston, Chair; Frank Ettawageshik, Vice Chair; Chris MacInnes, Marci Cisneros, Barb Barden, Linda Hoath, Lisa Meyers, Dan Trotochaud, Don Clingan, Steve Yencich, Chris Dansicak, Eric Rule

#### Near Term Committee Activities:

1. Recommend industry-qualified candidates for service on the Commission, create a Commissioner job description, define performance expectations and evaluate performance against expectations

Worked with the MEDC and Travel Michigan to encourage the Administration to fill vacancies on the Travel Commission with qualified individuals who are engaged in the industry.

Provided job description recommendations for an assistant to the Travel Commission.

2. Operate in accordance with the Commission's enabling legislation and governing documents

Recommended the scheduling of Commission meetings to coincide with other industry meetings as well as locating meetings throughout the State.

3. Review and recommend suggested changes to the by-laws

Asked for MEDC legal staff to review a recommended amendment to the Travel Commission Bylaws that would allow a member of the Travel Commission to continue to serve as a Commissioner until he/she resigns, is reappointed or their successor is appointed and sworn in. Legal staff did not recommend adoption as it would preclude the Governor's authority and would require legislative action for implementation.

4. Expand Commission membership to include ex officio membership of broadly representative industry associations such as TICOM, the Michigan Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus, and the Michigan Hotel, Motel, Resort Association

Considered expansion of the Travel Commission to include ex officio representatives from other industry organizations, but determined that the Travel Commission does not have the authority to do so, based on its delegated authority. It will, however, encourage industry representatives to be on the Travel Commission meeting agendas.

5. Pursue representation of the Travel Commission on the MEDC's Executive Committee

MEDC's process for establishing an ex-officio seat on their Executive Committee for the chair of the Travel Commission is nearing completion. Chris MacInnes is currently attending as a guest until the seat is created.

6. Study best practices for state tourism governance models and advance recommendations.

7. Committee members discussed their ongoing roles in coordinating policy issues and interfacing with industry lobbying efforts. They agreed to investigate the need for setting a formal advocacy policy for their committee's work.

8. Committee members also agreed to engage in developing a formal job description/criteria meant to codify expectations for each travel commissioner; including a system of individual accountability that could be used for self-assessment and performance reporting. This would be done to help establish a formalized structure for industry leadership and to provide succession planning.

### **Communications/Collaboration Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to coordinate Commission activities related to industry networking, communications, and collaboration. The committee will assess opportunities for building an effective industry communications system and enhance collaboration to achieve strategic objectives of Michigan's tourism industry.

#### Committee Roster:

Patricia Mooradian and George Moroz, Co-Chairs; Carol Eavou; Ron Garbinski; Rick Hert; Linda Hoath; Nancy Krupiarz; Dave Lorenz; Mickey MacWilliams; Joan O'Neill; Julie Pingston; Dan Sippel

#### Near Term Committee Activities:

1. Engage and participate, at least twice annually, in the Interagency Work Group (IWG) meetings, comprised of cabinet members, to help promote and coordinate tourism initiatives

The IWG is composed of Cabinet-level directors who meet regularly, but often with agendas that don't involve tourism. There also is a Cabinet Tourism Council, organized

by B. Anderson, composed of staff members from various departments and whose agenda is focused on tourism.

It was concluded that the Commission could bring issues to either group as appropriate and that Travel Michigan will update the Commission on actions by the Cabinet Tourism Council. It was also suggested that the Committee review the agendas of the IWG and the Cabinet Tourism Council for topics that may be relevant to the industry. Another recommendation was for this committee to develop a definitional listing of all groups engaged in tourism issues.

2. Participate in organizing and convening Michigan's annual statewide tourism conference

- Encourage governor's endorsement of conference

G. Moroz spoke to the Governor personally in December encouraging her to consider appearing/participating in the 2008 conference. He sent a follow-up letter to her reiterating that request and was informed by the Gov's scheduling office that it was "under consideration." At the end of January, G. Moroz discussed the same matter with the Gov's new COO who was very sympathetic to the invitation and indicated that he would recommend to the Gov that she participate. G. Moroz and P. Mooradian will reiterate the invitation when they meet with the Gov on Feb 19.

- Participate in planning the conference agenda

It was determined that the planning for the 2008 Conference was well underway and that the Committee would not have much opportunity to influence this year's event. One Committee member served on the Conference Planning Committee and in that role suggested that the conference be organized to attract broader participation; both appear and be more inclusive of the tourism industry; and have strong, compelling and inspiring speakers.

The Committee also thought it important that our annual statewide tourism conference really be positioned as the industry's "major event," where the state's tourism agenda for the year ahead is presented. This conference should be designed to encourage broad-based industry participation and be a catalyst for developing a shared action agenda among the industry.

A member of this Committee will be the Travel Commission's representative on the tourism conference planning committee.

- Review other states' best practices for tourism conferences and make recommendations that will elevate the level of Michigan's conference, including boosting annual attendance

Committee discussed their experiences at various state travel/tourism conferences. In addition to the recommendations cited above and based on materials from other conferences (e.g., The Illinois Governor's Conference on Tourism), we further

recommend that future Michigan tourism conferences be presented as the annual conference for Michigan's tourism industry, not just Travel Michigan and/or the lodging industry. Other recommendations include: offering diverse educational tracks at the conference for the industry's diverse sectors (attendees at the Illinois conference could earn continuing education credits); secure more attendance/participation by Administration officials and state legislators; offer training sessions on policy advocacy; offer opportunities for major statewide organizations (e.g., MACVB, TICOM, TIME, to better define themselves, their missions and agendas; each year, adopt a compelling and relevant conference theme; offer sessions that would be particularly interesting to legislators; offer some interesting & fun off-site opportunities for participants; organize sector networking session opportunities; bring in expert speakers with national and international perspectives; make a concerted effort to invite representatives of sectors typically absent from the conference; awards presented should be recognize more of the industry's many sectors and not be so hotel-specific.

### 3. Expand MEDC's Strategic Plan to include the tourism industry as a priority

Committee understands that Commission Chair C. MacInnes has been named an Ex Officio member of the MEDC Executive Committee. TICOM advocated with J. Epolito that Travel Michigan receive the lion's share of the 2008-09 Promote Michigan funding approved by the State Legislature.

### 4. Identify new opportunities to recognize and award collaboration

Committee agreed that because collaboration was recognized as the preferred modus operandi throughout all sections of the Strategic Plan, an award(s) recognizing collaboration should be the premiere recognition vehicle presented at the conference. Recipients of such an award could come from any tourism sector. Committee further agreed that the intention to present this major new award(s) recognizing innovative tourism collaboration should be announced at the 2008 conference. The first presentation of the new award would be made at the 2009 conference. (Such anticipation might even encourage attempts at innovative collaboration over the next year.) These special awards could also offer a way to further involve the Governor (e.g., like the annual Governors Awards for Arts and Culture).

## **Research /Technical Assistance Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to coordinate development of a research and technical assistance system to guide private- and public-sector investments to opportunities that offer the highest rate of return on investment.

### Committee Roster:

Ken Hayward and Annette Rummel, Co-Chairs; Allen Crater; Dan Sippel; Lisa Shanley; Dave Morris

Near Term Committee Activities:

1. Define near-term research needs and lead charge for implementation

- Enhance accessibility of research to industry members
- Identify industry research needs
- Track Michigan State University's travel and tourism resource center and provide input

The Committee report was given by Ken Hayward who summarized the presentation in his February 12, 2008 memo.

" It was agreed that providing research to the industry is important.

The survey indicates that the industry would like Travel Michigan to work with an outside firm with reports running through the Research Committee to the Travel Commission.

The industry wants the outside agency to do the work and Travel Michigan to be the gatekeeper, to provide the information to the appropriate parties, who will then set up a system to provide it to the industry.

It is agreed that sufficient resources and staffing need to be dedicated to make this a sustainable program.

It is the Research Committee's recommendation to start a search process to look at firms that will be able to formulate a plan, a budget, and a timeline for the work to be done. "

Attached are copies of "A Survey of The Research Needs of the Michigan Travel Industry Survey Findings" and "A Survey of The Research Needs of the Michigan Travel Industry Conclusions."

Discussion followed on clarifying roles and responsibilities in successfully completing the research request. Committee members will be responsible for developing the language and issuing the request for proposal (RFP). The Travel Commission and Travel Michigan will act as gatekeepers for the process.

Motion by Jerry Preston, seconded by Frank Ettawageshik, to approve the Research/Technical Committee's request to move forward in developing and issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP). Motion approved unanimously.

**Funding Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to develop resources for those initiatives identified by the sub-committees supporting the Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan.

Committee Roster:

Susan Sherer, Chair; Art Tebo, Co-Chair; Steve Yencich; Michael O'Callaghan; Bill Ninivaggi; Sue Bila; Tom Nemachek; Rich Studley; K. Moore; Brad VanDommelen

Near Term Committee Activities:

1. Support promotional funding advocacy as advised
2. Submit a plan for approval that lists resources to support the activities recommended in the strategic plan and identified by sub-committees.
3. Investigate other state tourism funding models to determine “best practices.”

Committee Report:

This committee has met three times to determine goals and objectives. Committee participation has been low and vigorous discussion ensued regarding overall advocacy at the legislative level and how the funds should be used. The decision was made to provide unified support regarding allocation of dollars to the Pure Michigan campaign executed by Travel Michigan. Further, we determined the Michigan Lodging and Tourism Association was best equipped to lead the legislative effort and we would support this effort as requested.

We do not expect to secure or solicit funds from the State of Michigan or any other source identified as restricted to our effort. We will examine the sub-committee results and seek funding to support those initiatives identified with outreach to the industry partners, corporate sponsorship, grants or other approved methods.

Considerable discussion ensued regarding the appropriate role of the Travel Commission in advocating for funding for tourism. The consensus was that, because the Travel Commission is a body appointed by the Governor, it should generally be aligned with the Governor’s agenda. It was also agreed, however, that adequately funding tourism promotion is and should be a high priority of the industry and those that represent it.

**Hospitality Committee**

The purpose of this committee is to guide stewardship efforts that will deliver excellent customer services to Michigan’s tourists. Facilitating development of a hospitality certification program in Michigan may help accomplish this.

Committee Roster:

Judy Zehnder Keller, Mary Kerr and Mary Riddermann, Co-Chairs; Karen Gagnon; Barb Fails; Jane Bertsch; Julie Hales-Smith

Near Term Committee Activities:

1. Institutionalize hospitality training and certification
  - Consider utilizing MSU Extension Services and Michigan Works! program

Judy Zehnder Keller presented her Committee's report (attached). This Committee completed its charge and will be conducting their pilot program on April 21 in Boyne City. She also noted that she needs a logo approved by Travel Michigan for this program, and approval of the certificate that will be presented at the successful completion of this program. The Committee will meet again to evaluate the pilot program. The Committee

sees its future role as serving in an advisory capacity by encouraging others to take the training.