

**MINUTES OF THE  
BI-STATE REGIONAL COMMISSION**

Wednesday, April 24, 2013, 3:30 p.m.  
Scott County Administration Building  
600 West Fourth Street  
Davenport, Iowa

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Minard – Chair, Banaszek, Callaway-Thompson, Earnhardt, Fox, Heninger, Hillman, Holmes, Kelly, Liddell, O’Boyle, Schloemer, Sorensen, Stoermer, Sunderbruch, Tank, Terry, Thodos, Welvaert

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Anderson, Austin, Burrage, Gallagher, Gluba, Goodwin, Gordon, Hopkins, Lawrence, Pauley, Rangel, Sherwin, Tossell, Volz, Washburn, Wells

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Joe Taylor, Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau (QCCVB) President/CEO; Cathy Foes, Henry County Tourism Bureau Director; Janet Morrow, Muscatine County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB); William Ratzburg and Tara Barney, Quad Cities Chamber of Commerce

**STAFF PRESENT:** Bulat, Grabowski, Hunt, McCullough, Miller, Moritz

Chair Minard called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

1. Approval of the March 27, 2013 Minutes. Mayor O’Boyle moved to approve the minutes of March 27, 2013 as presented. Mr. Stoermer seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
2. Treasurer’s Report. Ms. Kelly presented the Treasurer’s Report for the month ending March 31, 2013, noting an ending total bank and book balance of \$561,885.06. Mayor Welvaert moved the report be accepted as written and mailed. Ms. Earnhardt seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.
3. Finance and Personnel Committee.
  - a. Bills. Ms. Hillman presented the bills totaling \$75,940.39, as listed on the following bills listing and addendum dated April 24, 2013:

Bills List

Hurt, Norton & Associates, March 2013 legislative technical service (cost reimbursed by participating member governments)	\$ 7,750.00
Thomas A. Skorepa, P.C., Administrative Hearing Officer services (cost reimbursed by MUNICES)	3,325.00

Addendum

Bancard Center, VISA charge card expenses related to 1 staff attending the Dress Codes for the Workplace webinar; 1 staff attending the 2013 MAFC/ITTS/ KYTC Joint Annual Freight meeting; 1 staff attending the RTAC (Rural Transit Assistance Center) Spring Conference; Chief Elected & Administrative Officials lunch meeting (cost reimbursed by participants); Managers & Administrators luncheon meeting (cost reimbursed by participants);	2,295.97
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office supplies			
City of East Moline, Municipal Code Enforcement System proceeds			5,694.08
Louisa Ewert, Treasurer			5,234.48
05/2013	Rent	\$4,618.38	
05/2013	Internet Access	88.00	
03/2013	Printing	177.36	
03/2013	Supplies	51.00	
02-03/2013	Cell Phone	299.74*	
*(Partial costs reimbursed by HCEDP/Rural Accelerator Grant)			
City of Moline, Municipal Code Enforcement System proceeds			3,705.89
City of Rock Island, Municipal Code Enforcement System proceeds			47,934.97

Ms. Hillman moved approval of the bills totaling \$75,940.39 as presented above.  
 Mayor Fox seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

- b. Report on Progress on Commission’s FY 2012 Program Budget as of February 28, 2013. Ms. Hillman explained the Program Budget Status Report was distributed at the meeting. The Commission is 75.0% through the fiscal year with 67.0% expended and within budget.
  - c. Contracts/Grants for Consideration. There were no contracts for submission.
4. Report on Tourism Activities. Mr. Taylor, reported on tourism in the Quad Cities. He noted that in 2011, tourists to the area spent \$750 million on goods and services and generated \$11 million in direct tax revenue. The local tourism industry employed over 8,300 employees who earned \$132 million in wages.

He noted that the Quad Cities Area is a "drive destination," meaning that it offers visitors a close-to-home location for a great value. As a result, hotel occupancy rose by 10% in 2012. With gas prices declining, the QCA should attract even more visitors.

Some of the upcoming 2013 events to draw tourists include the Great Race and One State Together in the Arts in June, Heartland Jam Country Music Festival and Explore Illinois by Train Day in July, International Softball Congress World Tournament in August, and East West Riverfest in September.

Quad Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau (QCCVB) is also working on trail development to attract cyclists and pedestrians to the area. There is a QCCVB board of directors meeting to discuss trail development related to the American Discovery Trail and a conference set for November 1-3.

Mr. Taylor concluded that QCCVB is modernizing agency-wide by updating branding and marketing and updating visitor services like adding kiosks at the airport and new rail station. A meeting to reveal the results of a public input campaign will be held May 9 at 3 p.m. at the Rock Island Holiday Inn.

Ms. Foes said that the Henry County Tourism Bureau has been making great strides at marketing and getting information out about Henry County. She recently moved into a new office at the upgraded Kewanee Amtrak Station. The bureau has also created a new, full-color brochure highlighting activities within the county.

She reported that tourism is growing nationally, and Illinois is ranked fourth in the nation. In Henry County, the tourism industry was ranked fourth with 1,243 jobs, marking a 2.74% growth rate from 2001 to 2010. The industry is predicted to grow another 10% in the next five years.

From 2010 to 2011, travel expenditures increased by 9.9%, payroll increased by 5.5%, employment increased by 2.3%, state tax receipts increased by 5.7%, and local receipts increased by 6.6%. A new study funded by the Rural Jobs Accelerator Grant will report on tourism assessment, marketing

assessment, and leadership and tourism analysis. Results of the survey will be released June 12 and 13, and so far 60% of the surveys have been returned.

Finally, Ms. Foes noted that the bureau is studying whether the Hennepin Canal waterway can be rehabilitated to accommodate boat trips. The Hennepin Canal State Park shows an annual growth rate of 2% at a time when overall Illinois state park trips are down 1.25%. If updates are made to the canal by 2018, \$31.8 million in revenues would be generated in the first year of operation, and 958 full time tourism-related jobs would be created.

Ms. Morrow reported that Muscatine County is seeing the same increases and benefits as the other two bureaus. Visitors to the county spent \$76.9 million, 15.45% more than in 2010. In 2011, the county ranked 17th in tourism of all the Iowa counties, up from 18th in 2010. Local tax receipts increased by 15.48% from 2010 at \$890,000.

She concluded by saying that the Muscatine County Convention & Visitors Bureau is also increasing marketing efforts through a new website to be launched in June, visitors guides, and the use of social media. Upcoming events in Muscatine County include the Iowa State USBC WBA Bowling Tournament, soccer, That Was Then, This is Now Boat Show, and a Preservation Hall Jazz Band concert.

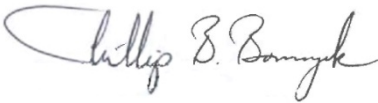
The three tourism representatives invited Commissioners to visit attractions within their area and enjoy local venues.

5. Questions or Comments by Commissioners. There were no questions or comments.
6. Other Business. Chair Minard presented Mayors Welvaert and Fox with certificates of appreciation for their service to the Commission. Mayor Welvaert served for eight years and was on the Executive, Finance and Personnel, and Transportation Policy Committees. Mayor Fox served for four years and was on the Transportation Policy Committee.

Mr. Ratzburg announced to the Commission that the Chamber of Commerce is working on a project to develop long-term growth opportunities for the region. The first step will be identifying the region's assets and gathering data. He explained that the visioning process will result in the identification of major long-term initiatives. The Chamber will be studying the Quad Cities MSA along with Clinton, Cedar, Muscatine, and Jackson Counties in Iowa and Whiteside County in Illinois. They will be getting assistance from a consulting firm, Innovation America.

7. Adjournment. The meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Phillip Banaszek  
Secretary