

WABASH RIVER HERITAGE CORRIDOR COMMISSION

**Meeting Minutes – May 9, 2007
Wabash Historical Center, Wabash, IN**

<p>Voting Members Present: DNR – Steve Morris (Director’s assignee) Huntington County – Mike Mettler Jay County – Faron Parr Knox County – Shane Cooper Miami County – Ken Einselen Sullivan County – John Gettinger Tippecanoe County – Norman (Lucky) Neiburger Vigo County – Keith Ruble (alternate) Wabash County – Ernest Passwater Warren County – Louise Jewell</p>		<p>Voting Members Absent w/o Proxy: Adams County Allen County Carroll County Cass County Gibson County Parke County Fountain County Vermillion County Wells County</p>
<p>Proxy Member Present Posey County – Ralph Weinzapfel to Marianna Weinzapfel</p>		<p>Non-Voting Members Not Present DNR-Historic Preservation and Archeology IDEM INDOT Office of Tourism</p>
<p>Non-Voting Members Present:</p>		<p>Guests: Don Jewell Stan Lambert – Wabash River Enhancent Corporation</p>
<p>Commission and DNR Staff Present: Ron James – WRHCC Executive Director</p>		

CALL TO ORDER

Norman (Lucky) Neiburger called the meeting to order at 1 PM. He asked everyone to introduce themselves and the county they represent.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE MARCH 14th MEETING MINUTES

Louise Jewell moved to accept the March minutes as written. Marianna Weinzapfel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

PRESIDENT’S REPORT

No report

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT (see attached)

Ron James referred to his report that was sent as an attachment to the meeting agenda.

FINANCE REPORT (see attached)

Steve Morris of DNR distributed a commission financial report showing the commission well under budget. After some discussion Marianna Weinzapfel moved that Steve Morris and Ron James coordinate to purchase memberships in various Wabash River corridor related organizations, sponsor corridor events and purchase necessary supplies. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Water Trail

Mike Mettler asked that each commission member review the water trail maps for their respective county and submit any additions or corrections for the next printings. The purchase of 50 roadway bridge signs is still moving forward. Water trail opening events for 2007 include Carroll County over Father's Day weekend in June and Vermillion County during the Little Italy festival over Labor Day weekend.

Banks of the Wabash

Ken Einselen and Louise Jewell reported the last regular meeting of Banks of the Wabash was held in Peru. They have since held the annual meeting at which they gave out 4 awards to individuals and organizations. Mike is concerned that Banks of the Wabash has struggled with getting a newsletter out and making updates to their website.

Legislative

Ron James reported that the Wabash River Heritage Corridor Fund was not funded in the state budget. The Commission operating fund ended up with an approximate 10% cut. In planning for the next biennial budget, Ron and John Gettinger are trying to set up a meeting with DNR Director, Rob Carter, to discuss the best way to proceed. Lucky Neiburger suggested a good marketing strategy is the Wabash River's importance with the upcoming state bicentennial.

OLD BUSINESS

River Odyssey – The River Odyssey exhibit is currently being hosted by the Minnetrista Center in Muncie. Ron James reported the opening event in Muncie was well attended. The paintings will be auctioned on August 25th in Carmel with a percentage of the proceeds being donated to the Wabash River corridor.

Uniform Distribution

Ron James distributed uniform shirts to members and reminded them to wear the shirts at public events.

WRHC Community & River Road signs

Louise Jewell recommended the commission purchase river road signs that are 18" x 24" with the logo near the top and blank space provided beneath the logo. Marianna Weinzapfel moved to bid out the purchase of 100 river road signs in hopes of obtaining a bid close to \$20 each. Ken Einselen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Louise Jewell moved the commission also bid out 100 river community signs done in a 24” square. Mike Mettler seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Indiana Rivers Rally 07

Louise Jewell reported the commission will contribute \$500 to sponsor an inducement for attendees to take the educational field trips at the Indiana Rivers Rally.

Indiana Trail Plan and Wabash & Erie Canal Towpath Trail status

Ray Irvin, Trails and Bikeways Director of INDOT, addressed the last meeting of the Towpath Trails Group. Ray encouraged the group to work locally to help make this trail a priority for the state. The group plans to join Banks of the Wabash.

Video of Wabash Heritage and sites of interest

Ron James reported getting a list of historical landmarks along the Wabash River and was overwhelmed by the number. Ron suggested commissioners from each county suggest sites worthy of 2 to 3 minutes of video time.

CILTI Art Opening, Midwest Land Conservation Conference, and the Mid America Trails & Greenways Conference

Steve Morris reported being a bit disappointed over the limited recognition of Wabash River Heritage Corridor Commission support of the CILTI Art exhibit. There were a lot of sponsors and only the top contributors were highlighted at the opening event. The commission made a significantly larger contribution toward the Midwest Land Conservation Conference and we received much better recognition at this event. Sponsorship of the Mid America Trails & Greenways Conference has not been paid yet, but should be processed before the end of the fiscal year. The Mid America Conference will be held December 9-12 in Chicago.

NEW BUSINESS

Commission Budget for 07/08

Mike Mettler moved the commission establish a budget for 07/08 by taking 10% from each of the spending categories as listed in the budget from 06/07. Ken Einselen seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Strategy Session with Director Carter

It was decided to have John Gettinger, Lucky Neiburger, Ron James, and perhaps Mercedes Brugh present at a proposed meeting with DNR Director, Rob Carter.

Select county representatives to write articles for next Reflections

Ron James reported only having received an article from Gibson County for the Reflections email newsletter. It was decided to continue to seek articles from Adams and Huntington County and possibly include an article from Jay County in the next newsletter.

GENERAL DISCUSSION AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Louise Jewell announced a clean-up at Cicott Park on June 2nd. Louise also announced Independence would be celebrating its 175th anniversary over Father's Day weekend.

Shane Cooper announced the Vincennes Rendezvous will take place over Memorial Day weekend.

De-Trash the Wabash will take place on May 19th in Tippecanoe County.

Keith Ruble suggested the commission develop a vision piece for the Wabash River Heritage Corridor that could be used to argue for legislative funding. It was agreed that this is a good idea and could possibly be something that is pursued further at a commission retreat.

Meeting adjourned

The next meeting will be held July 11, 2007, in Vermillion County at Riverfront Park, Little Italy Festival Stage, 50 Water Street, Clinton, Indiana (just north of the SR 163 bridge, close to the DNR access ramp).