



Tourism and Recreation Committee
MEETING NOTES
January 25, 2024

Attendees: Rich Castle, Sam Duvall, Pam O'Laughlin, George Samra, Vicki Barnes, Christopher Martin

1. Introductions
2. Initial Thoughts on Committee
 - a. Christopher Martin
 - i. Committee can be a conduit to facilitate working outside of our silos.
 - ii. Common vision for prosperity in Iosco County.
 - iii. Work with NEMCOG for targeted marketing.
 - b. George Samra
 - i. Need to continue to have people come to Oscoda and Iosco County.
 - c. Pam O'Laughlin
 - i. Supports the business sector.
 - d. Sam Duvall
 - i. We need recreation map for Iosco County from NEMCOG. People are asking for maps.
 1. We need to know what we have.
 - ii. Tawas Chamber increased visitor guide production from 10,000 to 15,000.
 1. George and Oscoda Chamber to provide their visitor production number.
 2. Visitor guide production and distribution is a good metric of interest for Iosco County.
 - e. Rich Castle
 - i. Need to develop mission and vision for the group.
 - ii. We need to maximize the various recreation assets that Iosco County has and that will support tourism.
 1. Lake Huron, AuSable River, USFS lands, Corsair, biking trails and etc....
 - iii. Recreation and Tourism are hand in hand.
 1. If you have recreation, people will come. If you have people, they want to do and see things. We have both!
 - f. Vicki Barnes
 - i. M-55 Recreational Scenic Byway Route
 - ii. Tourism and Recreation Summit is a great resource.
3. Convention and Business Bureau
 - a. George and Sam will reach out to the Tawas and Oscoda CVB's and inquire about interest in participating in committee.
 - b. Need CVB website's.

4. Iosco County Parks & Recreation – ORV/ATV trail funding vs. Snowmobile trail funding
 - a. Rich contacted Gary Blaser from the Iosco County Parks & Rec explaining the DI Tourism and Recreation Committee and how we plan to not step on toes, but partner and support.
 - i. Discussed concerns about State not releasing funds for ORV/ATV trails like they do for snowmobile trails.
 - ii. Iosco County Parks & Recreation and snowmobile clubs receive funds from State from trail permits to manage snowmobile trails (grooming). No such process exists to manage the same or other designated trails for ORV/ATV's from trail permits.
 - iii. How do we encourage the State to release those funds so Iosco County Parks & Rec can maintain or purchase new equipment as well as funding to manage trails?
 - b. Iosco County is already a year around motorized trail destination. How do enhance and help support this reaction use in Iosco County?
 - i. Letters of support
 - ii. Build community support and contact to State Legislators
 - c. Have Gary Blaser attend next meeting.
 - i. Need more information about ORV/ATV and Snowmobile funding process.
 - ii. Who are the groups involved in managing trails.
 - iii. Need info on \$25,000 grants from Iosco County Parks & Recreation
 - d. Websites to support Iosco County trails.
 - i. Trail conditions and what are open/closed
 - ii. Promote trail system in Iosco County
 - iii. Can \$25,000 grant support the design and building of trail website?
 - iv. Need to include both non-motorized (IET, Corsairs, etc.) and motorized trails (ATV and Snowmobile).
5. DI Website
 - a. NEMCOG information is great, but we need to add in websites for Tawas, Oscoda, Whittemore Chambers and the Tawas and Oscoda CBB.
 - b. Need to better promote the proximity that Iosco County is to Detroit and other large cities in Michigan to showcase we are closer than the west side of the State.
6. Next Meeting – February 22nd at 11 am.