



*Scenic Sumter Heritage Byway*

**Byway Organization Meeting**

Minutes –November 15, 2016 - 11:00 AM

Bushnell City Hall

117 E. Joe P. Strickland, Jr. Avenue

Bushnell, FL

- I. **Call to Order and introduction of guests:** Meeting was called to order by Chair, Kelly Williams (Private Citizen) . Others in attendance include: Vice Chair, Martin Steele (Sumter County Resident); Karen Ford (Atkins); Claudia Calzaretta (FDOT/FSHP); Mike Palozzi (CBI); Dan McCormic (Explore Sumter and Past President); and Bill Walsh (FDOT). Judie Mueller (Webster Postmaster) came in late.
- II. **Review of September 20, 2016 Minutes** –There were some discrepancies in the September 2017 meeting and Kelly will get with Dawn to correct. Martin Steele made a motion to approve the minutes with the changes and Dan McCormic 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor.
- III. **Treasurer’s Report**-No Treasurer’s report available. However, Judie texted Kelly the ending balance as of October 2017 is \$3,042.70, which includes \$17.00 raffle proceeds, \$490.00 Cow Chip Bingo and \$250.00 Black Kow sponsorship. Judie did discover an addition error of \$27.00 which is where the discrepancy was. Dan McCormic made a motion to approve. Martin Steele 2<sup>nd</sup>. All in favor.
- IV. **CME Working Committees**–Committee reports are follows:
  - A. **Organizational Sustainability**-Working on board manuals. Kelly mentioned about cross marketing/promotion and advertising our businesses along the byway where putting their links on the website. Kelly talked to Suzanne Johnson with The Cottages in Webster and noticed she had our link on her website. Kelly we need to consider advertising businesses even if they are not a financial supporter. Kelly also spoke with the owner of the Richloam General Store, Mr. Burke, who is located in Hernando County. Also spoke with Jada Glover at the Farm City event at Brownwood early November and her idea on how to promote the byway and cross promotion with other businesses. It is felt that the Sumter County Chamber of the Commerce doesn’t help promote the byway. Discussed changing our logo for easier recognition. Discussed membership and how the few people doing all the work are getting burned out. Constant struggle to increase membership.
  - B. **Coast to Coast Connector Update**-nothing to report.
  - C. **Transportation Alternative Program (Exit 309 Project)** – Kelly mentioned that we are still 9<sup>th</sup> on the priority list with the FDOT. Kelly mentioned she likes promoting that project at events that we attend. Veterans are real excited when we talk about it.

## **V. Byway Partners/Business Sponsorship Program**

- A. Kiosk Location Update**-The Webster Farm Market signage is ready for print. Mike and Karen to run by there to confirm measurements. Van Fleet trailhead will be our next kiosk to develop material for, with Sumterville Community Center following.
- B. Annual Report**-Mike is working on compiling information for this. Tying in eco-tourism along with heritage and scenic. Visit Florida doesn't have good tracking information on impacts of byways. Most of these numbers have to come from organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce. Kelly thought we might be able to get numbers from Economic Opportunity Department. Mike indicated he needs to figure out if the state level has numbers on Eco-Tourism and spin them off to our Partners and determine if there is a way to quantify the impact and how to wrap those things together. Mike would like to speak to Jada Glover and pick her brain about how we should measure the impact of the economic development. Claudia indicated that it is the mission of the byway that we need to measure return on investment and there isn't a way to measure that presently. Hoping the economic assessment that the University of Florida is conducting on our byway will help determine the visitor experience.

## **VI. Economic Assessment of the SSHB**

- A. Interviews**-most have been completed with county leaders and partners.
- B. Community Surveys**-list of events provided for surveys to be conducted by staff of Dr. Hodges. Questions were developed to best gather information without being too lengthy.
- C. Focus Groups**-working on a list to provide Dr. Hodges to conduct late January 2018. Discussed some people that would be good for this group.
- D. Project Schedule**-Dr. Hodges will be here in February with a mid-term report and then have a final rough draft early May 2018 and then wrap things up late May 2018.

## **VII. Upcoming Events**

- A. Dade Battlefield Reenactment-January 6-7, 2018**
- B. VHA Hoe Down-January 27, 2018**
- C. Future Events**
  - i. Sumter Strong Highway Cleanup
  - ii. Sumter Treasure Hunt-62 Mile Yard Sale
  - iii. Poker Run

## **VIII. Florida Scenic Highways Program Report-Mike Palozzi and Claudia Calzaretta**

- A. District V Workshop**-March 8, 2018 in Deland.
- B. State FSHB Workshop**-tentatively scheduled for early summer 2018.
- C. Byway Forum**-the Byway Form this past fall had a poor attendance. This is the one that Jeff Castor officiated. Next one is scheduled for September 11, 2018.
- D. Visit Florida Webinar**-Claudia indicated that Indian River of Lakes spends over \$800.00 a year for shipping their brochures to the rest stops in Florida. Claudia spoke

with Judy about the USPS charges. It doesn't see feasible for the byways to incur these costs.

- E. River to Sea Loop Alliance Summit-October 6, 2017-Claudia attended. This loop has been 25 years in the making. Claudia made contact with a couple leaders that are interested in integrating promotion with the Scenic Byways.

**IX. Public Comment/Round Table-** Holiday Potluck-A-H Meats I-P Salads and Q-Z Desserts and Drinks. Kelly brought up the Social Media opportunities with High School students that need community service hours. Spoke about putting the cross promotional ideas on the agenda at the January meeting. Dan McCormic discussed the involvement of the Byway to find a new location of a grave marker stone from Rutland Cemetery that was removed from a construction site and given to Randall Thorton for safekeeping. Dan would take possession of it and the Byway will find a location for it. All in favor to proceed. Mike Palozzi spoke about the Florida Humanities Society having a grant cycle coming up where we may be able to take advantage of in an Oral History capacity or even in the Grave Marker that was just spoken of. He also indicated that Visit Florida is offering free memberships to counties that were impacted by Hurricane Irma. Our byway did apply for this free membership through March 2018. Email verification is needed to continue. Dawn or Kelly to take care of. Kelly brought up about Jeff Caster offering free memberships to Florida byways months ago with a stipulation of criteria of reporting back to the state on what the Byway did to take advantage of this membership. Apparently, nothing has developed further. We will pursue the free membership offered to the Irma candidates. Visit Florida has a Target Market Assistance Program grant application that is free for applicants that are located in small agricultural markets and have income less than \$5000.00. Mike thinks we should take advantage of this to market our small agricultural businesses in the county. We would also be able to take advantage of all the benefits that this project has to offer. We basically have nothing to lose by applying for this grant. All in favor. Kelly brought up about the printing of the Ride Sumter cards. Mike has the estimate for printing. All in favor to get the cards printed using our existing funds.

**IXX. Adjournment-Next Meeting December 12, 2017 at IFAS/UF Extension Office at the Sumter County Fairgrounds.**

Respectfully submitted by: Dawn A. Cary, Secretary/Treasurer