



October 29, 2019

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Route 66 Road Ahead Promotion Working Group Announces Changes

Bill Kelly stepped down as Chairman of this Working Group, effective October 1, as he retires from his position as Executive Director of the Illinois Route 66 Scenic Byway Program. Kelly served as Chair of the Road Ahead's Promotion Working Group since its inception in 2016, and will continue to serve with the Promotion Working Group. Kelly will also remain in his position as the Road Ahead's Treasurer. We wish Kelly the best of luck in his retirement and thank him for his ongoing commitment to Route 66.

The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership welcomes two new members to its Promotion Working Group. Jennifer Mullins will become the new Chair. Mullins is the Director of the Travel Promotion Division, which serves as the marketing and branding arm for the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Department. She oversees a team of more than 60 throughout the state, as well as a \$14 million budget for a variety of public relations, sales, and marketing programs designed to enhance Oklahoma's image as a travel destination. Mullins brings to the Road Ahead more than 19 years of experience in advertising, marketing, and branding, and holds a degree in Journalism with emphasis on advertising from the University of Oklahoma.

Brennan Matthews will also join the Promotion Working Group. Matthews holds a graduate degree in Development Studies and his professional journey includes 15+ years of senior management, six of which were focused in the not-for-profit sector, 19 years of freelance magazine and newspaper writing, and 8 years of Editor-in-Chief experience with *Destination Magazine*, East Africa's leading monthly travel and lifestyle magazine. Matthews is currently Editor with *ROUTE Magazine*, a leading American publication that focuses on US road travel, Route 66, and vintage Americana.

Matthews noted, "As well-known as we think Route 66 is, there is still a lot that can be done to promote the road both domestically and internationally, and I look forward to helping with these efforts."

Together with Kelly and Road Ahead Chair Bill Thomas, Mullins and Matthews have a goal of reaching out to key people – especially those in state offices of tourism - in the other Route 66 states to join the working group.

Established in 2015, with the support of the National Park Service and the World Monuments' Fund, The Route 66 Road Ahead Partnership's mission is to revitalize and sustain Route 66 as a national and international icon through partnerships focused on promotion, preservation, research and education, and economic development.

###

Contact:

Bill Thomas, Chairman

Rt. 66 Road Ahead Partnership

rt66theroadahead@gmail.com

217-648-5077