



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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December 18, 2009

Saugatuck Brewing Company

2948 Blue Star Highway, Douglas, MI

11:00am

Minutes of a Scheduled Meeting of the Allegan County Tourist Council

A scheduled meeting of the Allegan County Tourist Council was called to order by Chairman Norm Smith on Tuesday, December 18, 2009 at 11:10am at the Saugatuck Brewing Company, Douglas, Michigan.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT:	R.J. Peterson	Luetta Crane
	Dianna Stampfler	Jan Cushman
	Larry Johnson	Norm Smith
	Stephanie Peterson	Betsy Hill

ABSENT:	Al Weener	Terry Bonnell
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Also Present:	Kevin Ricco, Director
	Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MINUTES

A motion was made by RJ Peterson, seconded by Larry Johnson to approve the November 10, 2009 meeting minutes as printed and emailed. The motion carried by everyone present.

TOURISM CONTACTS REPORT – RONDA

Ronda stated the 63 contacts for November were down compared to October's total of 88, but were up over last year's total of 36. She also pointed out an error under unknown contacts; the total should be 16, not 97. Only 14 information packets were mailed and one Heritage Trail book and one CD were sold. There is nothing further to report at this time.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Kevin stated there is not much on the financial statements to report; still to come through before the end of the year is the payments for the WMTA advertising and for the writer, Bruce Cutean, who wrote the editorial content for the visitor's guide. By next month, the Tourist Council's budget will be close to zero. A motion

was made by Dianna Stampfler, seconded by Jan Cushman to approve the financial statements as presented. The motion carried by everyone present.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2010 VISITORS GUIDE UPDATE

Kevin stated the 2010 visitor's guide went to the printer yesterday and he expects delivery by early January. The guide has 34 pages and 58 advertisers; Kevin reported there are more advertisers this year than there have been in the previous two years and many of them are new. Those who declined to advertise again were primarily due to the poor economy. Norm stated we will eventually have to pursue ways to generate revenue through the guide for the Tourist Council. Dianna stated Salt of the Earth, Fennville, would like to collaborate with other local businesses for next year's guide advertisement. Larry commented he believes this is the best guide yet and the Tourist Council agreed.

2010 BUDGET UPDATE/DISCUSSION

Kevin reported the Tourist Council's budget was up for discussion again at the last Board of Commissioners meeting. Initially, he thought they would reinstate the full budget until one of the Commissioners read Dianna's email that stated advertising for 2010 was already paid for and the cuts in the budget would affect the 2011 ads; advertising is always paid one year in advance. They concluded the Tourist Council should receive a budget of \$3000, which was the amount Kevin had already left in the budget for 2010. The budget is now a done deal, although Kevin can submit an RFP if something were to come up. Concerns were raised by the Tourist Council whether the BOC views tourism as a priority or if they just want to cut the group loose. The TC finds it ironic that, even though tourism is the number two draw for the County, the BOC has been trying to promote economic development. Dianna stated the Michigan House of Representatives out of Lansing passed three bills in a landslide victory to continue funding the "Pure Michigan" ad campaign. She asked if writing a letter to the BOC to inform them of the State's continued support of tourism, and the Tourist Council's disappointment for the County's lack of support towards tourism, would do any good; Kevin stated the TC should do whatever they feel is necessary.

NEW BUSINESS

MARKETING/FINANCING STRATEGY FOR 2010

Kevin stated the Tourist Council needs to find ways to generate revenue and asked for suggestions. Norm proposed selling a poster using a photo contest winner or other Allegan County picture; Kevin stated a calendar has been considered in the past using a different photo for each month. Holding a county-wide event has also been previously thought about, although it would have to be worth everyone's time and effort to make it feasible. Norm suggested having the Marketing Committee meet to discuss ideas for promotions and events; Dianna and Stephanie agreed to meet with Norm after the first of the year and before the next TC meeting. Kevin asked them to let him know when the date is set so he can also attend if possible; anyone else who would like to attend the Marketing Committee meeting, contact Norm or Dianna.

NEXT MEETING – JANUARY 19, 2010 @ 10AM IN THE SPARTAN CONFERENCE ROOM

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Dianna Stampfler reported she has been keeping in contact with Michigan State Representative, Bob Genetski, and would like to invite him to a meeting sometime in the coming year. Dianna then requested a couple items be put on the January meeting agenda; the selection of all the photo contest prizes for 2010, and also a discussion about changing the fall photo contest deadline to December 1 instead of November 1. Lastly, Salt of the Earth is willing to host one of the offsite meetings; Kevin stated he has no problem changing one of the locations as it has been done in the past.

RJ Peterson stated he was at a meeting where among others, some of the County Board of Commissioners, representatives from the DNR, DEQ and the Georgia Pacific Paper Company, and all the lawyers from EPA, were in attendance. RJ made a proposal in regards to the clean-up of the river below the Allegan dam; a firm has been hired out of Ann Arbor to go after the Great Lakes initiative, which amounts to a lot of money.

Kevin Ricco reports phase one of the New Richmond Bridge Park project is now done.

Larry Johnson informed the Tourist Council he will be absent for the January 19, 2010 and February 2, 2010 meetings.

Betsy Hill informed the Tourist Council she will be absent for the February 2, 2010 meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 12:25pm

By: _____
Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk