



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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December 10, 2010

Salt of the Earth

114 East Main Street, Fennville

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 Vice Chair Stephanie Peterson on Friday, December 10, 2010 at 11:27 a.m. at the offsite location of Salt of the Earth, 114 East Main Street, Fennville, Michigan.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT:	Stephanie Peterson	Dianna Stampfler
	Betsy Hill	Larry Johnson
	Al Weener	Norm Smith

ABSENT:	Jan Cushman	Terry Bonnell
	Luetta Crane	R.J. Peterson

Also Present:	Kevin Ricco, Director
	Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER MEETING MINUTES

A motion was made by Dianna Stampfler, seconded by Larry Johnson to approve the November 9, 2010 minutes as presented and emailed. The motion carried by everyone present.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

On the expenditure report Dianna asked about the balance of \$1124 in the advertising line item; Kevin stated that will go to the writer for the guide articles. He also reports advertising sales for the guide are going well with at least four new advertisers. Larry questioned the low Heritage Trail book and CD sales and what can we do to improve them. Kevin stated after the first of the year the Heritage Trail website, which is currently too vague, will be revamped with the goal of promoting the trail. After some discussion from the group regarding possible marketing strategies, they decided to continue the conversation at the next meeting.

TOURISM CONTACTS REPORT – RONDA

Ronda stated contacts were down for the month of November which is not unusual for this time of year. There were 57 contacts with 124 total inquiries for November which is slightly less than last year's totals of 63 contacts and 144 total inquiries. A total of 13 tourist packets were mailed and for the Heritage Trail, 16 books and 4 CD sets were sold.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

CVB DISCUSSION CONTINUED – MEETING WITH COMFORT INN

Recently Stephanie, Larry, and Kevin all met with the owner of Comfort Inn in Plainwell to discuss the possibility of a county-wide CVB. Before he agrees he wants to see some major changes. Specifically, he wants other businesses like restaurants to also get assessed. Joe was also involved with Kalamazoo Chamber when they started and he does not like how they are set-up. Kevin stated an amendment was just passed that, once it is signed by the governor, will raise the ceiling for room assessments to a maximum of 5% but it made no change to who is assessed. The amendment will also add a \$10,000 fine to those who do not have the annual audit done; previously nothing was ever done. Without Comfort Inn all the other qualifying hotels in the county must agree to the referendum or we will not be able to continue with the plan to form a CVB. The next step is for them to meet with representatives from Budget Host on December 20.

2011 VISITORS GUIDE – UPDATE

Kevin reports the 2011 visitors guide went to the printer today and it should be done in the next couple of weeks.

NEW BUSINESS

GUN LAKE TRIBE CASINO – KIOSK PROJECT

Kevin attended a meeting where specifics were discussed for the kiosk at the Gun Lake Casino, which is due to open in February; they only want information on the larger festivals in the county. Dianna asked if they will allow us to put information about the Heritage Trail; Kevin stated once the HT website is revamped they might permit us to post the link.

REQUEST FROM BARRY COUNTY CHAMBER

During the kiosk meeting at the Gun Lake Casino, Kevin spoke with Valerie Burns from the Barry County Chamber, who is wondering if they can do some collaborative efforts with us for advertising both counties. Kevin told her he would bring the suggestion back to the Tourist Council and would let her know if you are interested. The Council all agreed they would like to meet with Barry County Chamber at the casino to discuss the prospect; Kevin will contact Valerie and try to set something up.

FALL PHOTO CONTEST

After viewing all the photo entries for the 2010 Fall Photo Contest, the Tourist Council took a vote and selected Will Wallgren's photo of Oxbow Lagoon in Saugatuck as the adult winner, and Alyssa Selby's photo of a fallen red maple leaf in the Allegan Forest as the youth winner. Mr. Wallgren will receive a \$50 gift certificate to McDuff Bar & Grille in Wayland and Alyssa has won lift tickets and a gift certificate for equipment rental for two at Bittersweet Skiing in Otsego.

2011 MEETING SCHEDULE

In the agenda packets is the 2011 proposed Tourist Council meeting schedule for the third Tuesday of each month at 10:00am in the Spartan Conference Room. Kevin stated this body can do whatever they want in regards to the offsite meeting locations. After some discussion, it was decided the 2011 offsite meetings would be as follows:

- March 15 at the Comfort Inn in Plainwell
- April 19 at the Gun Lake Casino with Barry County Chamber of Commerce
- October 18 at the Lynx Golf Course in Otsego
- November 1 at 8:30am; joint meeting with the Parks Commission in the Spartan Conference Room
- December 16 at 11:00am at The Belvedere in Saugatuck

A motion was made by Dianna Stampfler, seconded by Stephanie Peterson to approve the 2011 Tourist Council meeting schedule as determined above. The motion carried.

NEXT MEETING – JANUARY 18, 2011 @10:00AM IN THE SPARTAN CONFERENCE ROOM

ROUND TABLE

Larry Johnson reported the Camp Kidwell Festival of Trees last weekend was a success; Allegan County United Way is closing in on their goal for this year; Imagination Library silent auction will be March 10 at the Lynx Golf Course.

Stephanie Peterson reported on some events that will be held at US131 Motorsports Park in the 2011 season, including a distracted driving campaign on June 4.

Kevin Ricco stated the Board of Commissioners approved the proposed selective timber harvest; Tom Stadt was chosen as the consultant forester to help with the project. Tom will spend the next few weeks evaluating and marking the trees to be harvested. Kevin made him aware of the areas to stay away from and will go back to check once the trees have been marked. He stated there is no way the harvest can be done this winter; it will have to be a project for the winter of 2012. At this time there is no estimate of the possible proceeds however Kevin hopes the price will get better by next winter.

Al Weener reported Sturgeon for Tomorrow received a couple grants. Also, the DNR will be putting in a rearing facility at New Richmond Bridge Park starting this spring, which will include the funding to put in a well.

Dianna Stampller stated there is a Pure Michigan conference at the Radisson Hotel in Kalamazoo March 20-22, 2011. Also the governor elect has said Pure Michigan is a priority for him and he is looking for additional money to fund the program before next year.

Ronda Foreman reminded everyone to turn in their 4th quarter vouchers.

Norm Smith stated he is opening a gallery at Baker Gallery in Allegan sometime in January.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Minutes Submitted By: _____
 Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk