



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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February 15, 2011
Spartan Conference Room
Human Services Building
10:00am

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 Chairperson Stephanie Peterson, on Tuesday, February 15, 2011 at 10:09am in the Spartan Conference Room on the lower level of the Human Services Building, 3255 122nd Ave, Suite 102, Allegan, Michigan.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT: Stephanie Peterson Dianna Stampfler
 Al Weener Terry Bonnell
 Betsy Hill

ABSENT: Jan Cushman Luetta Crane
 Norm Smith Larry Johnson

Also Present: Kevin Ricco, Director
 Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk
 Celeste Statler, Total Market Strategies Marketing Specialist

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF JANUARY MINUTES

A motion was made by Al Weener, seconded by Dianna Stampfler to approve the January meeting minutes as presented and emailed. The motion passed.

TOURISM CONTACTS REPORT – RONDA

Reporting on the January contacts, Ronda stated there were 204 inquiries concerning 472 separate items, which were more than December but less than January of 2010. 38 tourist packets were mailed; 24 were from out of state or country and 11 were from other counties. Six Heritage Trail CD-sets were sold; Ronda received three calls from folks who heard one of the Board of Commissioners on a local radio station talking about the Heritage Trail.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Kevin stated there is nothing new to report on the financial statements this month.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

2011 VISITORS GUIDE – UPDATE

Ronda reports the 2011 visitor's guide has been distributed to all local units of government, libraries, and most of the advertisers (only exception are seasonal advertisers), among others. If anyone knows of someone who would like to receive copies of the guide or need more delivered, please have them contact the Parks Office.

NEW BUSINESS

2012 GUIDE DISCUSSION – CELESTE FROM TMS

Celeste Statler, Marketing Specialist from Total Market Strategies, is in attendance to answer the Council's questions and discuss a line of attack for the 2012 guide. Included in today's agenda packet is information requested during last month's meeting that includes: a breakdown of the expenses and revenue received for the current 2011 guide; list of advertisers for the 2007 through 2011 guides; and Norm's questions that were received on February 10, 2011. Kevin asked for a breakdown of the total costs for past years and also comparisons of ad rates to other guides that are comparable to ours; Celeste will email the information.

After some discussion, it was determined the size and quality of paper, along with the gloss cover, will remain unchanged for 2012, and the 50,000 copies per year is sufficient.

Changes are still being considered for the centerfold maps; currently the guide has both a recreation and advertiser map that fold-out on glossy paper. Celeste will get cost comparisons for a change in size and type of paper, and if the advertiser map were to be eliminated.

In this economy she does not suggest the TC stipulate a guaranteed return versus the 20% profit sharing for sold ads; if a fixed amount were required TMS would have to look at the overall costs and most likely have to increase the ad rates to meet the amount, which would ultimately hurt ad sales. In regards to ads that are sold by Tourist Council members, Celeste stated as long as TMS only has to do the ad copy and design and nothing else, 25% would go back to the TC. She asked to be kept informed if someone is going after a particular advertiser so efforts aren't being duplicated.

For guide content Celeste suggests keeping the four seasons but add more sidebars that contain interesting facts and information, possibly even going further by turning one-liners into complete stories. Other ideas include listing cemeteries, area businesses/services, or suggesting things folks can do in a day.

Next she spoke about mlive, which everyone concedes is cluttered and hard to navigate. If the TC could post advertiser's links on their website, mlive could be eliminated and \$1700 would be deducted from the total cost (would have no effect on the price of an ad). Celeste is against placing inserts in the guide; in her opinion it declassifies the publication. She has also found that offering discounted ad rates for early birds has little or no effect on whether someone places an ad.

In conclusion, Celeste ensured the group that Total Market Strategies and the Tourist Council are partners in the production of the guide and want it to be profitable for both parties; TMS requires her to show at least a 10% profit margin. Kevin and Stephanie thanked her for attending today's meeting.

HERITAGE TRAIL/TC WEB SITE DISCUSSION

The Heritage Trail and Tourist Council website discussions will be postponed until next month.

NEXT MEETING – MARCH 15, 2011 @ 10AM AT THE COMFORT INN, PLAINWELL

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Al Weener reports there was a full house for the informational meeting on February 7 for the sturgeon rearing facility at New Richmond Park.

Dianna Stampfler reminded everyone of the Pure Michigan Governor's Conference at the Radisson Plaza Hotel in Kalamazoo on March 20 - 22.

Kevin Ricco has a couple things to mention. Yesterday a group met to discuss a grass roots effort to deploy a countywide high speed internet service, which would be a huge benefit for the county. If anyone is interested in becoming involved, please have them contact Kevin.

He also reports through the Brownfield Development Authority, EPA Assessment Grants have been secured and two projects are already up and running with the program. If anyone knows of a Brownfield site in the community that can benefit from the grant, please have them contact Kevin.

Stephanie Peterson reports the 2011 B-93 Birthday Bash is scheduled for June 18 and 19 at US131 Motorsports Park; visit their website at www.us131msp.com to purchase reserved seat tickets.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

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