



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

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April 19, 2011

Gun Lake Casino, Sand Hill Café

Bradley, MI

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, April 19, 2011 at 10:09am at the Gun Lake Casino in Bradley, Michigan.

Roll Call showed the following members:

PRESENT: Stephanie Peterson Dianna Stampfler
 Al Weener Terry Bonnell
 Betsy Hill Jan Cushman
 Luetta Crane Norm Smith
 Larry Johnson

ABSENT: None.

Also Present: Kevin Ricco, County Development Director
 Ronda Foreman, Parks and Tourism Clerk
 John Shagonaby, Gun Lake Casino CEO

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF MARCH MINUTES

A motion was made by Al Weener, seconded by Norm Smith to approve the March 15, 2011 meeting minutes as presented and emailed. The motion passed.

TOURISM CONTACTS REPORT – RONDA

The March 2011 contact report and inquiry pie chart were included in today's agenda packet. Ronda reports she had 798 itemized inquiries and 276 individual inquiries for the month, which was up over last years totals. Of the 276 individual inquiries she received, 56 were from Michigan but outside the County and 80 were from out-of-state. She mailed 137 tourist inquiry packets and reported 8 Heritage Trail books and 4 CD sets were sold. Lastly, leads have been coming in to the Tourist Council inbox from the Travel Michigan site almost every day; a total of 79 were received in March.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Kevin stated there is not much to report. The beginning budget for 2011 was \$3000 and discussions have already begun for next year's budget. He believes the Tourist Council is starting to get more support from within however he does not foresee an increase for next year.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Kevin introduced John Shagonaby, Gun Lake Casino CEO, who welcomed the Tourist Council. In regards to the casino, John stated it is a smaller venue than they originally wanted but they have a master plan for future growth; so far things are going well for the casino.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HERITAGE TRAIL WEB SITE DISCUSSION

Betsy has been working to update the lists for all the categories on the tourism website and has only 'Experience' to finish up. When compiling the list for the Heritage Trail website, she stayed within a mile of the trail. Kevin plans to submit the project to the web designer to have the Heritage Trail site completely revamped; the current site has gone unchanged for eight years. The goal is to make the site more user friendly and include the necessary requirements to have it put on the Travel Michigan site.

Kevin asked if there is a sub-group of the Tourist Council that can meet to brainstorm for ideas for the site prior to discussions with the web designer. Stephanie, Jan, and Dianna would all like to participate along with Kevin and Ronda; anyone who is not attending the meeting can email their ideas. Kevin will check to see if the Spartan Conference Room is available for 9am on Thursday, May 12, 2011. He will bring all of the ideas back to the Tourist Council at their next meeting on May 17, 2011.

NEW BUSINESS

ALLEGAN AREA ARTS COUNCIL EVENT

In reference to the Allegan Area Arts Council's recent request for assistance with their event, Kevin asked for any thoughts from the Tourist Council. He has already informed them that any assistance would not come in the form of funding but the TC would be willing to help market the event. The concept is to hold a contest to get local artists to do paintings within Allegan County that include all four seasons and would carry on for an entire year. The Council thinks this is a great project and reiterated they are willing to help promote the contest any way they can. Dianna stated she will see if she can get the information on one of the FOX network talk shows.

OCTOBER 18TH – MEETING DATE CHANGE

Kevin stated he has a WMTA Board of Directors meeting the same day as the Tourist Council meeting on October 18, 2011, which is an offsite meeting at The Lynx Golf Course. He asked if the Council would like to either reschedule or cancel their October meeting.

After some discussion, revisions to the 2011 meeting schedule were proposed as follows:

- Change in venue: July 19, 2011 at 10:00am at an offsite location, Tower Marine in Saugatuck
- Change in venue: September 20, 2011 at 10:00am at an offsite location, The Lynx Golf Course in Otsego
- Meeting canceled: October 18, 2011

A motion was made by Dianna Stampfler, seconded by Al Weener to accept the proposed revisions to the 2011 Tourist Council meeting schedule to include the venue changes for the July 19, 2011 and September 20, 2011 meetings and the cancellation of the October 18, 2011 meeting. The motion carried.

Al will contact RJ Peterson to set-up the July 19 meeting, Stephanie will contact The Lynx Golf Course to set-up the September 20 meeting, and Ronda was asked to make all the necessary changes and notifications to the schedule.

TRIATHLON AT LITTLEJOHN LAKE PARK

Kevin stated the website just opened for the TriAllegan triathlon at www.triallegan.com. The race is scheduled to begin at 6:30pm on Tuesday, July 26, 2011 at Littlejohn Lake Park in Allegan and is open for participation to both individual racers and teams. They are hoping for 100 participants for the first annual event but would really like to have 200. Anyone interested in participating or volunteering can sign-up on the website.

WINTER PHOTO CONTEST JUDGING

Ronda brought up on the laptop for the Council to view the seven adult entries for the 2011 winter photo contest; none were received in the youth division. After tallying the votes, Allegan resident Pat Jenkins' wonderful photo taken near Dumont Lake and entitled "The Beauty of Winter" was determined to be the winner. Her prize this season was a gift certificate for four tickets, valued up to \$100, for the Thunder Nationals 2011 event at US 131 Motorsports Park in Martin (donated by US 131 Motorsports Park) and a \$10 gift card for Dean's Ice Cream; total prize package valued up to \$110. Her winning photo will also be featured in the 2012 Inside Allegan County visitor's guide. Congratulations Pat!

Al stated RJ Peterson can provide the prizes for the spring photo contest which ends on June 1, 2011; Ronda was asked to contact RJ. Lue stated Crane's Pie Pantry and Orchards can provide the prizes for the summer contest which ends on September 1st and will be judged at the September 20, 2011 meeting.

NEXT MEETING – MAY 17, 2011 @ 10AM IN THE SPARTAN CONFERENCE ROOM

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Larry Johnson informed the Council of upcoming events on Memorial weekend for Camp Kidwell. There will be a yard sale beginning at 9am on May 28 – 30 at Chestnut Farms on M40/S, and a Memorial Day breakfast from 9am until noon on May 28 – 30 at Camp Kidwell in Bloomingdale.

Al Weener reports the sturgeon rearing facility for New Richmond Bridge Park is now completed and asked everyone to come out and tour trailer.

Dianna Stampfler informed everyone it is National Tourism Week on May 7 – 15. She also reported Salt of the Earth in Fennville was featured on the Food Network's 'Outrageous Food' show last Friday night.

Jan Cushman sadly reports Chris Fontaine's mom, Joyce, recently passed away.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

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