



Allegan County Parks, Recreation, & Tourism

3255 122nd Avenue, Suite 102

Allegan, MI 49010

Phone: (269) 686-9088 • Fax: (269) 673-0454

Parks Web: www.allegancounty.org/Parks

Tourism Web: www.visitallegancounty.com

E-mail: parks@allegancounty.org



May 17, 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, May 17, 2011 at 10:00am 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
 Larry Johnson Terry Bonnell
 Jan Cushman Luetta Crane
 Norm Smith

ABSENT: Betsy Hill Al Weener

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

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS TO AGENDA

None.

APPROVAL OF APRIL MINUTES

A motion was made by Terry Bonnell, seconded by Jan Cushman to approve the April meeting minutes as presented and emailed. The motion carried.

TOURISM CONTACTS REPORT – RONDA

Reporting on the April contacts, Ronda stated there were 288 inquiries concerning 758 separate items which was up slightly from the March contacts. 137 tourist packets were mailed; 112 were from out of state or country and 56 were from other counties; only 4 were mailed to county residents. One Heritage Trail CD-set and 28 books were sold.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

The big expense that appears on this month's financial statement is the WMTA membership dues were paid. Kevin stated the balance of \$2601 is an error and should only read \$2224; the per diem of \$351 is not correct and should not be there.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

HERITAGE TRAIL WEB SITE DISCUSSION – COMMITTEE UPDATE

Kevin reports the subcommittee group for the Heritage Trail website (Stephanie, Dianna, Betsy, Kevin, and Ronda) met last Thursday to discuss what the overhauled site should look like. The group spent two and a half hours reviewing other heritage trail websites to determine which attributes they liked best; specifically they were looking at the overall look, ease of navigation throughout the site, and what information should or should not be included.

Kevin brought up on the overhead screen an example of one they liked best at www.us23heritageroute.org/ that included on the home page the route map along with photos that changed and rotated. It is also uncluttered and has a lot of links to other information such as points of interest along the route or local events. Not everything would apply to our site and Kevin does not want to duplicate information. For instance, information specific to townships, cities, or events would have a link back to either the local unit's website or our tourism website. Another feature they like is the pop-up 'bubble' (containing more detailed information) that appears whenever the cursor hovers over an item or map. Once the site is completed folks with smart phones will be able to bring up the site, maps, and even MP3 recordings on their phone. Kevin stated the goal should be to make everything accessible and easy for people to use and asked if the Council is comfortable with the concept; everyone is in agreement. Kevin will set up a meeting with Deb, who is the County's web designer in Information Services Department, and will let everyone know once it is arranged.

Next Kevin asked how else the Heritage Trail can be promoted; there are thousands of the guidebooks in our storage area and we need to get them out, even if it is for free. A couple suggestions from the group were to put them in the Welcome Centers where our visitors guide is distributed, or give copies to fourth grade classes which is the year when Michigan history is taught in the classroom. Since Jan worked closely with the libraries when the guidebooks and CDs were first released, she stated she would like to contact them and inform them of our plans before we start giving the guide for free.

NEW BUSINESS

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES WITH BARRY COUNTY

Kevin, Norm, Jan, and Betsy all attended a meeting with the Barry County Tourist Council where finding ways to work together was discussed. Kevin forwarded emails to everyone regarding "Arts and Eats", an annual culinary tour held in the fall; Barry County wants to know if we would like to co-promote the event that features local artisans and restaurants.

Next the formation of a non-profit Convention and Visitor's Bureau was discussed; Kevin asked the Council if they would like to continue without Barry County since the TC has already been working towards that goal. Kevin stated any progress made thus far would be lost if we want to include Barry County at this time, and we would have to start the whole process over. The TC wants to continue as they have been and once the CVB is formed, will see if they want to work with the Barry County group. Kevin is waiting to hear back from Dave Lorenz regarding the South Haven CVB footprint.

COUNTY AM RADIO BROADCASTING PROJECT

Kevin forwarded an email regarding the County AM radio broadcasting project from Scott Corbin from Emergency Management where he asked if this is something the TC could utilize for events. After reviewing the information Kevin does not see a lot of benefit; it is a portable unit mounted in a van with a range of two miles that would broadcast information during the event. Kevin stated they are looking for support because they are applying for a grant to purchase the unit.

NEXT MEETING – JUNE 21, 2011 @ 10AM IN THE SPARTAN CONFERENCE ROOM

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Larry Johnson reminded everyone of the upcoming Camp Kidwell events. 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.

Dianna Stampfler informed everyone this is American craft beer week.

Stephanie Peterson stated the first big event for US 131 Motorsports Park is this coming weekend; Thunder Nationals two day event on Friday and Saturday. She stated ticket sales have been phenomenal so far this year.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

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