

**KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)
TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
January 5, 2009
EDC Office, Willmar**

Present: Betty Bollig, Alan Carlson, Laura Clark, Bob Dice, Bob Dickerson, Beth Fischer, Jolene Garberich, Richard Larson, Dave Pederson, Dean Shuck, Ed Walhof and Connie Wanner

Excused: Trudie Guptill

Unexcused: Deb Geister and Andria Olson

Secretarial: Nancy Birkeland, Legal & Administrative Assistants, Inc. (LAA)

Chairperson Betty Bollig called the meeting to order at approximately 11:36 a.m.

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Richard Larson, SECONDED BY Bob Dickerson, to approve the minutes of the December 1, 2008 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Trails Subcommittee. Beth Fischer reported she obtained quotes to print 5,000 new full color trail maps based on the Mankato map design from Lakeside Press at \$1,394.84 and Print Masters \$1,942 (\$1,144 for two color); approximately 50 maps remain. The design and layout would be done in-house by the Willmar Lakes Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. Fischer met with Paul Mikkelson of the Willmar Design Center (WDC) regarding downtown trails and the grant the WDC was awarded to connect the downtown trails to the trail head. Mikkelson will provide Fischer with additional information and how the WDC and this committee can work together. An issue is how to safely travel over or under the First Street bridge. Committee members mentioned a pedestrian path/bridge over Fifth Street NE that bikers now use. Discussion was held on funding for the map and possible partners, including the WDC or the Little Crow Trail Association.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Dickerson, SECONDED BY Ed Walhof, to have Lakeside Printing print 5,000 trail maps at an approximate cost of \$750 to the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Tourism Committee in partnership with the Willmar Lakes Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) with the CVB doing the layout and graphic design and to explore other funding options with other entities and advertising. MOTION CARRIED.

Richard Larson recommended obtaining updates to the trails from Bonnema Surveys. Larson reported the Department of Natural Resources was able to purchase the property in dispute near New London and the trail northeast of New London is again open.

Advertising tracking. Fischer reported there were 56 requests for information received in December with 31 coming from the Explore Minnesota website. Total requests in 2008 were 1863 compared to 1835 in 2007.

Budget. Alan Carlson is working on a spreadsheet for tracking the 2009 budget. Carlson reported the 2008 budget was overspent and the committee needs to be more cautious in 2009.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Sport shows. Fischer reported the Minnesota Office of Tourism (MOT) will have a booth at the following sport shows: Minneapolis/St. Paul RV, Vacation & Camping Show February 5-8; Red River Valley Sportsmen's Boat, Camping & Vacation Show in Fargo March 5-8; and the Northwest Sportshow March 12-15. The MOT is looking for volunteers to staff its booth at these shows. Communities cannot ship brochures to these shows and they cannot bring their own brochures. The MOT will only display state materials. Bollig reported the Omaha sport show is being staffed by Bob and Chris Schimerowski. Volunteers are needed for the Sioux Falls show and the Northwest Sportshow.

2009 Visitors Guide. Fischer distributed copies of the 2009 Willmar Lakes Area visitors guide. Additional copies are available at the CVB office. Fischer asked that any omissions or corrections be forwarded to the CVB office. Nearly 30,000 copies were distributed in 2008 and 30,000 copies were printed for 2009. Tourism Committee members on the visitors guide committee are Richard Larson, Connie Wanner, Bob Dickerson, Alan Carlson and Beth Fischer. The visitors guide committee begins meeting again this Thursday morning, January 15, for the 2010 guide.

NEW BUSINESS

Vice President. Bollig requested the committee select a vice president, who is willing to move up to president in 2010.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Dickerson, SECONDED BY Ed Walhof, to cast a unanimous ballot for Richard Larson as vice president of the Kandiyohi County and City of Willmar Economic Development Commission's Tourism Committee. MOTION CARRIED.

EDC 2009 Priorities. Bollig reviewed with the committee the 2009 priorities determined by the EDCOB and EDC Joint Powers Board (see copy attached to original minutes). In light of these priorities, Bollig requested the committee reconsider helping with a fly-in to the Willmar airport and possibly have the tourism booth at the annual Ag Conference co-hosted by the EDC and Minnesota Department of Agriculture. These priorities will be reviewed next month and discussion held on how this committee can promote tourism under those priorities.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Glacial Ridge Trail. Dean Shuck reported the Glacial Ridge Trail Association is still pursuing a grant for birding sites along the trail.

Ford Model T Tour/New London to New Brighton Antique Car Run. Ed Walhof distributed the points of interest visited by the Antique Car Run in the past (see copy attached to original minutes). This year, the Antique Car Run mini tours will include traveling to the Sunburg area on Wednesday and visiting the log church with Ed Huseby and Earl Knutson speaking at the church; Thursday will be a 35-mile tour in the country stopping at the 1862 Indian conflict sites, Solomon Lake church and Endresen cabin; Friday will be at the county fair and have lunch. Walhof distributed information on the 2nd Annual Glacial Ridge Model T Tour (see copy attached to original minutes). The Model T Tour will

begin Friday this year in order to get television coverage. Saturday, the tour will be from Alexandria to Willmar ending with a dinner where Ron Erpelding will speak on area birding. The tour will stop at six state parks where attendees can use the Checklist of Minnesota Birds. The committee reviewed the funding request submitted by the Model T Tour.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Dickerson, SECONDED BY Richard Larson, to approve the funding application of the Glacial Ridge Model T Tour in the amount of \$750. MOTION CARRIED.

Kandiyohi County Campgrounds. Laura Clark reported camping registrations started January 1 and have been fairly strong. They have had comments about the new rules put in place by Kandiyohi County.

Little Crow Resort Association. Bob Dice reported the Association will meet the end of January, but has not met in some time.

Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center (PWELC). Dave Pederson reported February 8 is a winter fun day 1-5 p.m.; the Willmar Nordic ski club hosted an event last week with 100 skiers; the Central Lakes Conference meet will also be held at PWELC; the Youth Energy Summit is a year-long project with 15 communities from throughout the region participating. PWELC obtained a grant to expand the number of teams participating. Rentals for facility use have increased significantly.

[Bob Dickerson was excused from the meeting.]

West Central Snow Drifters/Atwater. Jolene Garberich reported the club held snowmobile training for youth; held three four-wheeling trips and one evening motorcycle ride. Garberich recommended including the Little Crow Trail Association if this committee wishes to receive information regarding area snowmobiling. Atwater is holding its chamber banquet the end of January. Atwater Karting has been extremely successful. **Garberich** will obtain information from Atwater Karting for the next meeting.

Willmar Arts Council. Connie Wanner reported the Arts Council is working on a website and an artist registry (see copy attached to original minutes). This committee requested the new website be linked to www.willmar.com. The Arts Council will hold its annual meeting 7:00 p.m., January 13 at Northern Grounds. **Wanner** will check on the arts funds voted on in the recent state election. Wanner reported local events are included on the Minnesota events calendar.

[Jolene Garberich was excused from the meeting.]

Willmar Design Center/MainStreet Willmar. Larson reported the Willmar Design Center held its Christmas party in early December.

Willmar Lakes Area CVB. Fischer reported on the following upcoming events: hockey tournaments in January; the Ag Conference January 15 and 16; Porter House convention, figure skating competition; WinterFest in Spicer; and the 2009 Minnesota League of Women Voters convention. Fischer reported the CVB placed a listing in the spring/summer *Minnesota Explorer*. The CVB bid on the Lions and 4-H conventions both to be held in 2011. Fischer attended an expo in Minneapolis to promote the area and the CVB is trying to promote the MOT's My Favorite Minnesota through the Little Crow Photography Club. Fischer announced Laura Clark was elected the CVB's vice chair in 2009 and will be chair in 2010. Fischer will attend the statewide tourism conference in Brooklyn Park.

Other. Shuck reported Nest Lake is requesting a new harvester for the curly leaf pond weeds. Moving the committee meetings around the county will be done following winter.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:52 p.m.

NEXT MEETING—The next committee meeting is **11:30 a.m., February 2, 2009** at the EDC office, Willmar.