

KANDIYOHI COUNTY AND CITY OF WILLMAR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (EDC)
JOINT OPERATIONS BOARD OF DIRECTORS (OB)
TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
May 7, 2007
Levin Natural History Museum, Spicer

Present: Alan Carlson, Bob Dickerson, Connie Filley, Beth Fischer, Deb Geister, Tim Johnson, Dean Shuck, Ed Walhof and Connie Wanner

Excused: Lisa Bailey, Betty Bollig, Jolene Garberich, Trudie Guptill, Marilyn Johnson, Richard Larson, Mona Nelson and Dave Pederson

Guests: Barb Levin, Larry Levin and Doug Mossberg

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

Chairperson Alan Carlson called the meeting to order at approximately 11:35 a.m. Carlson gave a background of the Tourism Committee and its promotion of county tourism. Carlson introduced Barb Levin, who gave a history of the collection for the Levin Natural History Museum. The museum is open upon request. Carlson encouraged the Levins to have the museum open for tourists.

[Deb Geister, Bob Dickerson and Connie Filley joined the meeting.]

MINUTES—

IT WAS MOVED BY Deb Geister, SECONDED BY Bob Dickerson, to approve the minutes of the April 2, 2007 meeting as mailed or e-mailed. MOTION CARRIED.

REPORTS

Little Crow Water Ski Team. Deb Geister reported the team is working with the New London business district on promotion. The ski team averages 4,000 to 6,000 people attending each show with up to 300 reserved seats per show. Geister reported the ski team took out a full-page ad in the southwest Minnesota area tourism guide. Beth Fischer reported all of the materials for the tourism information rack at Neer Park have been delivered to the ski team. **Geister** will locate the rack and find out who received the materials. **Fischer** will e-mail Geister with the name of the individual who received the delivery. Geister reported there has been no interest by area businesses and artisans for having booths at the park during the ski shows.

Trails Subcommittee. Connie Filley reported the trails subcommittee met last Monday. She will be meeting with Bonnema Surveys, Inc. to go over the changes needed to finalize the e-map. Filley reported the trail web site will be shown at the Tourism Committee's June meeting. The site is available for use now, but final accessibility issues have not been addressed. A variety of sites will be asked to link to the site.

Visitors Guide. Fischer reported the Visitors Guide Committee met last week and a mailing of the 2007 guide will be done to all Willmar Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce (WLACC) members. A bingo card will be inserted in the 2008 guide for individuals to request additional information. Fischer distributed a chart showing the visitor guide distribution by state for 2007 (see copy attached to original minutes). Lakeside Press is again obtaining advertisers for this guide.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Advertising Tracking. Fischer distributed the advertising tracking chart, which the committee reviewed (see copy attached to original minutes).

Advertising Submitted. Nancy Birkeland reported the ads for *AAA Living* and the Iowa newspaper were submitted (see copies attached to original minutes).

Sport Show Bills. Carlson reported receipt of requests for reimbursement by resorters for attending sport shows totaling \$1,520 (see copies attached to original minutes) of which \$971.27 is lodging, \$241.11 is meals and \$322.92 is mileage; the amount budgeted for sport show expenses is \$500 of which Birkeland reported \$126.70 was used by Kathy Schwantes for attending the Northwest Sport Show. Tim Johnson reported the Little Crow Resort Association decided to pay whatever expenses not paid by the Tourism Committee. Johnson reported a large number of sport show visitors request campground information and he would like to see participation by county campgrounds in staffing the booths. A lengthy discussion was held concerning resorters having paid all of their own expenses in the past and the need to define the exact relationship between this committee and the Resort Association for attending future shows.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Dickerson, SECONDED BY Connie Wanner, to pay the mileage submitted to date for attending out of state sport shows in the amount of \$322.92 and reimburse the amount to the Little Crow Resort Association. Tim Johnson abstained. MOTION CARRIED.

IT WAS MOVED BY Connie Filley, SECONDED BY Dean Shuck, to pay one-half of the lodging bills submitted to date for attending out of state sport shows in the amount of \$971.27 and reimburse the amount to the Little Crow Resort Association and that the Tourism Committee develop a policy for payment of expenses to attend future shows. Tim Johnson abstained. MOTION CARRIED.

Dean Shuck reported the county may be willing to participate in the sport shows in the future.

Minnesota Conference on Sustainable Tourism. Birkeland reported Dave Pederson attended the second day of the conference and will report on the conference next month.

NEW BUSINESS

Kaffe Fest. Carlson reported the chair of Willmar Fest responded to his e-mail and stated the Willmar Fest board is going to discuss possibly changing the name of the festival. They will be emphasizing the coffee aspect more this year. Connie Wanner reported she obtained a copy of Don Miller's article in the *West Central Tribune* on coffee and furnished it to the Willmar Fest chair.

Glacial Ridge Scenic Byway Car Run. Ed Walhof reported he spoke with a representative of the Ford Model T group, which is celebrating its centennial in 2008. A car run in the area will be discussed by the car group, which Walhof anticipates will be held in the fall. Shuck reported he has been contacted by car clubs in this regard. Walhof will contact the car club again. Fischer reported this committee has budgeted \$1,000 for this car run in its 2008 budget.

Explore Minnesota Store. Carlson stated there was a request to have our visitors guide in the Explore Minnesota store. Fischer reported the Willmar Lakes Area Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) already has the guide in the store.

Tourism Rack. Fischer reported County Park 5 has requested a tourism rack.

IT WAS MOVED BY Bob Dickerson, SECONDED BY Connie Filley to purchase a tourism rack to be placed at Kandiyohi County Park 5. MOTION CARRIED.

Bike Ride. Carlson distributed comments from his meeting with the individuals who held the Tour du Lac bike ride that is no longer in existence (see copy attached to original minutes). The individuals stated \$2,000 to \$3,000 is needed to adequately finance a ride. Carlson stated they are willing to share their contact list of 300-400 people. Carlson stated his overall impression is that a ride will require a substantial number of volunteers and this committee will need to assess whether the results would be effective and, if so, what system can be developed to make an annual ride work over a period of time. Dickerson recommended someone attend one or two bike rides to glean information and suggested assistance could possibly be obtained from Affiliated Community Medical Center and Rice Memorial Hospital. Filley stated Spicer's marketing budget for events is close to \$5,000 and entities may be willing to do a 50/50 division of expenses. Carlson stated the committee will need to find someone who is willing to help develop an organization to maintain an annual ride with this committee offering support services. Filley stated area resorters get many calls from people looking for activities to do while here. **Dickerson** volunteered to be on a subcommittee of three. **Fischer** and **Carlson** will help.

MONTHLY REPORTS

Glacial Ridge Trail. Shuck reported the Glacial Ridge Trail Association is speaking with some bus companies for day trips and their web site is now complete (www.glacialridgebyway.org).

Little Crow Resort Association. Johnson reported the resorters have not met.

New London to New Brighton Antique Car Run. Walhof reported the Levin Natural History Museum is the first stop for the day tours; their planning continues.

Spicer. Filley reported the ballpark is being worked on and nearing the end of its fund raising. The playground committee is looking for volunteers to build the playground June 6-10 for three shifts each day, 100 volunteers each shift during the week and 125 for the weekend (childcare is available for volunteers); area churches are providing almost every meal and snacks each day. The community has raised approximately \$90,000 in cash plus in-kind donations from area businesses. The opening celebration is June 10 at 5:00 p.m. Spicer is also planning for July 4 with a parade, dance, sporting events and craft show by Briggs & Motley.

Willmar Arts Council. Wanner distributed flyers for the 3rd Annual Studio Hop, June 23 and 24.

WLACC/CVB. Fischer reported on four conventions held in the last month, including a bus tour of area businesses. She is also bidding on new conventions.

ADJOURNMENT—There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 1:12 p.m.