

MINUTES
ELKHART COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Friday, March 14, 2014
8:00/9:00 a.m.
Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Bureau
219 Caravan Drive
Elkhart, IN

PRESENT: Ms. B. Ronzone, Commission
Mr. S. Baker, Commission
Mr. D. Boecher, Commission
Mr. A. Patel, Commission
Ms. G. Patel, Commission
Mr. D. Shoup, Commission
Ms. E. Billey, Board of Directors
Mr. J. Davis, Board of Directors
Mr. B. Hoffer, Board of Directors
Mr. L. King, Board of Directors
Mr. J. Siegmann, Board of Directors
Ms. D. Lawson, Executive Director
Ms. J. Hughes, Staff Recorder

ABSENT: Mr. R. Jenkins, Commission
Mr. D. Bearss, Board of Directors

I. Ms. Ronzone called the meeting to order at 8:05 a.m.

II. **Motion to approve minutes of the January 2014 meeting was made by Mr. Shoup and seconded by Mr. Boecher. A vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.**

III. Mr. Davis presented the Financial Report for the period ending February 28, 2014. He reported cash of \$1.2 million and net capital of \$1.3 million. Room tax revenue totaled \$541,000. Year-to-date expenses totaled \$271,000 and our net operating income is in the black at \$466,000.

It was noted that we were low in cash early in the year because of extended delay in receiving remaining room-tax funds from last year that were due to us in January, so we did not receive room-tax funds from mid-October to mid-February. This made it necessary to loan cash from one account to another to stay current with salaries and bills. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Billey moved to accept the Financial Report as presented. Mr. Shoup seconded. A vote was taken and motion passed with all in favor.

IV. Bureau Update presented by Ms. Lawson. The February Board Report distributed.

Travel Guides: Both the 2014 Indiana Travel Guide and 2014 Amish Country Travel Guide were distributed to members. Lawson made note of our strong presence in this year's Indiana Travel Guide. Referring to the Amish Country Travel Guide she noted that all sales and formatting are done in house.

Downtown Elkhart Marketing: The focus is on a local media roll out in June, July and August. All downtown Elkhart participants are excited.

Goshen Theatre Project: Goshen's mayor has requested \$25,000 from ECCVB for the purpose of leveraging a \$50,000 commitment from the City of Goshen and \$50,000 in grant funds for the theatre project. The total cost of the project is estimated at \$9.4 million. The fire-escape on the building must be addressed immediately. Goshen's Redevelopment Commission has agreed to provide the theatre \$250,000 for a not-for-profit to set up operations. The mayor has asked Ms. Lawson to work with Mr. Johnson for funding and organizational structure. This is the next big project for the city and Goshen is very tied emotionally to this theater. The \$25,000 funding request would come out of bifurcated funds and require a motion from both the Board and Commission.

Mr. King called for a motion from the Board of Directors.

Ms. Billey made a motion on behalf of the Board of Directors to approve \$25,000 from bifurcated funds for the Goshen Theatre project. Mr. Hoffer seconded. A vote of the Board of Directors was taken and motion passed.

Ms. Ronzone called for a vote from the Commission.

Mr. Patel moved to approve \$25,000 from bifurcated funds for the Goshen Theatre project. Mr. Shoup seconded. A vote of the Commission was taken and motion passed.

Treasurer's Office: In addition to the lengthy delay in receiving room-tax funds owed from 2013, there has been a change in receipt of information from the Treasurer's office. They are no longer providing information relative to unpaid or late room tax collections and delinquencies are not being reported to us. The CVB is in charge of pursuing delinquent collections, so without this information we cannot stay current. Add to that, there is a new staff at the office and consequently there have been consistent errors regarding collections.

Mr. Davis and Mr. Hoffer suggested we draft a letter to Mr. Buche so he can provide direction for next steps. **Board and Commission members unanimously agreed that Mr. Hoffer, Mr. Davis and Ms. Lawson address these important concerns with appropriate parties.**

Jazz Festival – The Jazz Festival is scheduled for June 20-22. Headliners are Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Aaron Neville and Fourplay. The ECCVB is the Anchor Sponsor for the 2014 event. We will not have box seats although we will have reserved main floor center seats for performances. Members will need let us know which performances they are interested in attending.

Sports Complex Study: Mr. Huber reported on the completed study. Its purpose is to identify current and potential users of area sports facilities; market strengths; turf users for both soccer and rugby; mid-tier indoor court users. We wanted to address: local management; non-compete with what’s here; build teams locally; an Olympic link; support local hotels and campgrounds; and access to I-80/90.

The study confirmed location is an advantage, although the size of potential areas out by the toll road present challenges. It looked at scenarios that included a championship level field and indoor field – possible combo with turf. Outdoor would have a possible \$2.5 million economic impact with an additional \$1 million possible with indoor.

Huber noted that Elkhart County is one of the top 4 or 5 top locations in the country for rugby. The Michiana Rugby Team made a deal with the Moose Lodge to maintain a field and hosts major tournaments there. USA Rugby is looking at possibility of creating a residential camp (year-round) for living and training here.

The Haiti women’s soccer team will be here to train and participate in soccer matches this summer. Caribbean nations pay to send kids to American high schools. The Haiti team indicated interest in being here for future programs.

North Gateway – There is a proposal out for way finding signs linking the gateway to downtown and sidewalks and street lights.

V. There was no other business.

VI. Motion to adjourn made by D. Shoup and seconded by D. Boecher.

VII. Meeting adjourned at 9:20 a.m.

Submitted by:
Jackie Hughes
Staff Recorder