

MINUTES
ELKHART COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Friday, September 13, 2013
8:00/9:00 a.m.
Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Bureau
219 Caravan Drive
Elkhart, IN 46514

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

ABSENT: Mr. D. Boecher, Commission
Mr. L. King, Board of Directors

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

II. **Minutes: Motion to approve minutes of the May 2013 meeting was made by Mr. Siegmann and seconded by Mr. Shoup. A vote was taken and motion passed with all in favor.**

III. **Financial Report:** Mr. Davis presented the Financial Report for the period ending August 31, 2013. He reported a cash balance of \$950,000 and net worth of \$1,035,000. The year-to-date room tax revenue totaled \$50,000 which is significantly higher than the same time last year. There are no delinquencies. Travel Guide income totaled \$195,000. Total revenues amounted to \$1,145,000. Expenses of \$1,032,000 are in line with our budget. It is anticipated room-tax revenue for November and December will likely carry over to 2014.

Mr. Bearss moved to accept the financial report as presented. Mr. Patel seconded. A vote was taken and motion passed with all in favor.

IV. **Bureau Update:** August Board was distributed and Ms. Lawson provided the following updates.

Re-accreditation – The ECCVB did receive its DMAI re-accreditation. The process is a good exercise for the organization challenging it to think about moving forward. 300 CVBs are currently accredited.

Quilt Gardens 2014 – This event has received the American Bus Association Top 100 Event in North America designation for a sixth consecutive year. The only other Indiana event to receive a sixth consecutive year honor is the Indianapolis 500.

Demand Analysis for Sports in North Pointe - Mr. Huber reported that the analysis team was just here to tour the area. They focused on supply as it relates to sports, particularly privately owned. Eastlake Athletic Club currently has six facilities throughout the area and it does have an interest in expanding.

The group also met with representatives of the local soccer association discussing their need of indoor space. The NIBCO soccer fields are highly used but they need winter use space and accommodations for larger tournaments.

More rugby grounds may also have unique opportunities. Our area is building a reputation within the rugby community because we have a facility specifically built to accommodate rugby and host competitions.

Access to I-80/90 and an existing hospitality base is a definite advantage for this area. And the team looked at outdoor field site possibilities in the area and challenges will be addressed in analysis. The analysis will also identify other projects in the state such as Indianapolis doing a huge development leveraging a relationship with the National Soccer Association.

North Pointe –Mr. Huber is meeting with city officials relative to SR 19 corridor improvements. The challenge is the city has the dollars allocated but does not have the manpower to manage the project. The city has confidence in the ECCVB's ability to manage this; our challenge is our capacity to do it.

CR 6 – There is a \$3 million TIF Commitment for a strip mall at CR 6. The full plan includes a theatre and more. Developer has an agreement with the city. There is a time limit, but they could ask for an extension. The challenge for development in these projects is land assembly. Our concern for appropriate use of these funds is the need for a larger economic impact than a strip mall.

SoMa –The momentum on South Main Street and in the State and Division Street neighborhood is very encouraging. There is probably more interest shown in the State/Division Street area in the past year than in the last 70 years.

A video was recently developed to show public officials and the community the support of SoMa in the area. It was done by two students at Ball State. The video was shown to the Board and Commission.

Fall Flower Carpet - The Fall Flower Carpet begins October 1 and continues to October 12. This year features two Flower Carpets: one in Elkhart along Waterfall Drive between High and Franklin Streets; the second in downtown Nappanee next to the Nappanee Center. Nappanee will add lights and music for evening viewing.

RV Marketplace - The recent RV show hosted by manufacturers for dealers was huge and had a significant impact county-wide with hotels at capacity, caterers working multiple events, and the entertainment industry such as DJs and the like working events. The RV Hall of Fame was surrounded by a sea RVs and the media was reporting on happenings.

Future Budget – Our organization is planning to go in for a larger budget for the year of 2015. The 2015 budget would be presented July of 2014. It is crucial to exhibit responsibility for this increase with a worthwhile project. The Tourism Development Council (co-chaired by Ms. Leichty and Mr. Oakley) is in place and could do research to look at important pillars for projects to present. ECCVB could reserve \$300,000 to \$500,000 to leverage dollars with the Community Foundation.

Mr. Siegmann made a motion to ask the TDC to proceed with research and submit recommendations for worthwhile projects. Mr. Shoup seconded. A vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

V. **Other business:**

The Chamber's Outdoor Recreation Committee is looking at signage possibilities for bicycling and kayaking opportunities.

Mr. Patel said that he is looking at a winter opening for the new Fairfield Inn.

VI. There was no other business. Next meeting was set for November 8, 2013.

VII. Ms. Ronzone adjourned the meeting at 9:25 a.m.