



eccvb.org

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ELKHART COUNTY CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of Public Meeting

Friday, January 8, 2021, at Elkhart County Visitors Center, 3421 Cassopolis Street, Elkhart, IN

PRESENT: Mr. Levi King, Board of Directors President
Mr. Larry App, Board of Directors Secretary/Treasurer (via Zoom)
Mr. Dan Bearss, Board of Directors (via Zoom)
Mr. Arvis Dawson, Board of Directors (via Zoom)
Mr. Brian Hoffer, Board of Directors (via Zoom)
Mr. Dan Shoup, Commission President and Board of Directors

ATTENDING: Ms. Gita Patel, Commission Vice President (via Zoom)
Mr. Rick Jenkins, Commission Secretary/Treasurer
Mr. Scott Baker, Commission (via Zoom)
Mr. Anant Patel, Commission
Mr. Doug Risser, Commission
Mr. Jon Hunsberger, ECCVB Executive Director
Mr. Terry Mark, ECCVB Staff Recorder
Ms. Amanda Eckelbarger, ECCVB Staff
Ms. C. Ostrom, ECCVB Staff

ABSENT: Ms. Eleanor Billey, Board of Directors Vice President

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:02 a.m.

APPROVE NOVEMBER MINUTES

Mr. A. Dawson moved to approve the November 2020 minutes. Mr. L. App seconded. There was a vote and it was approved with all in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. L. App referred everyone to the printed December 2020 budget report. He said the COVID-adjusted budget was on plus side by \$460,000, primarily because of the Payroll Protection Program and Economic Injury Disaster Loan, plus an unexpected grant from the state of Indiana. He said COVID-adjusted expenses came in at \$100,000 less than budgeted. Actual revenue totaled \$2.2 million and expenses were \$1.6 million. He said the balance sheet looks pretty good with \$1.4 million in cash. The ECCVB will be building up cash reserves in 2021 and operating on a conservative figure on room tax revenue of \$1.6 million.

In response to a question from Mr. A. Patel, Ms. C. Ostrom said the December room tax revenue figure is a factor of the amount that can be rolled over in 2020. Mr. J. Hunsberger said that the ECCVB is exploring applying for the newest round of PPP. Ms. C. Ostrom said she has been in contact with KeyBank for updated information, including the final application process and analyzing its implications.

Mr. A. Dawson moved to accept the financial report. Mr. D. Bearss seconded. There was a vote and it was approved with all in favor.

BUREAU UPDATE

Mr. J. Hunsberger gave an update on the Economic Development Administration grant application. The ECCVB was working with the Economic Development Corp. and Chris Stager and had stretched our arms out wide to work with all elected officials to help all of our businesses. He said the application was denied because three of the requirements were not met. Mr. J. Hunsberger said this decision is confusing, but we believe it is partially because the available funds were already spent. There might be a follow-up meeting to get further explanation.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said the Indiana Destination Development Corp. has released a grant opportunity. ECCVB staff have been working for two months to pull together a grant proposal for this program, which aims to bolster tourism in Indiana and build off idea of regionalism. Our proposal looks at Quilt Gardens as well as an effort to expand arts throughout county. The proposed arts trail that would build off Quilt Gardens, with permanent public art pieces at QG and downtowns. He said we have received support from area elected officials, the South Bend Elkhart Regional Partnership, Northern Indiana Tourism Development Commission, as well as the Community Foundation of Elkhart County with potential financial support. Even if we are not awarded this grant, the effort has set the ball in motion for a program that celebrates the Quilt Gardens' 15th anniversary. Mr. D. Bearss praised ECCVB staff for expanding core competencies for the grant application, which will bear fruit down the line.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said Vibrant Communities is almost at its five-year mark, with the Action Agenda winding down. He said the ECCVB and Community Foundation are looking at what that holds — an Action Agenda 2.0. It will involve reaching out to the community to understand what the priorities now, looking ahead 4-5 more years. ECCVB has been in communication with Planning NEXT to help with the communication, strategy, planning. The Vibrant Neighborhoods initiative is our effort to dig deeper into

the community to encourage fun and engagement. Vibrant People encourages people to share on social media about what they are doing.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said the staff has worked hard on the 2021 Digital Area Guide to think about the best path forward for our partners and destination. This effort is sensitive to our small businesses, but still accomplishes our need to communicate about them and the Elkhart County destination. ECCVB staff have updated the area guide digitally, pushing it out to users via the website. We are still distributing the 2020 guide. We have had positive feedback from our partners. In 2022, we will have a physical and digital guide as we still consider it a core piece of our revenue stream.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said that the Indiana Tourism Association is continuing its push to engage, inform and educate state legislators on the importance of tourism to the Indiana economy and local economies. We have worked with ITA on their campaign tools. We are sharing an edited version of the ITA press release that explains the campaign.

There was general discussion about the IDDC.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. D. Shoup announced that Ms. Ellie Billey has submitted a letter of resignation from the board of directors.

There was general discussion about COVID vaccine distribution and availability.

Mr. L. King said he has been in conversation on a successor on the board for Ms. Eleanor Billey. Mr. L. King proposed Ms. Brittany Short and asked for feedback. Mr. J. Hunsberger said she is invested in the community as the co-owner of Pumpkinvine Cyclery in Middlebury with her husband, and chairing the Friends of the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. She has been active in advocacy and working to complete the trail.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be March 12, 2021, at 8 a.m.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 8:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Mark
Staff Recorder