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ELKHART COUNTY CVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Minutes of Public Meeting

Friday, November 13, 2020, at Elkhart County Visitors Center, 3421 Cassopolis Street, Elkhart, IN

PRESENT: Mr. Levi King, Board of Directors President
Ms. Eleanor Billey, Board of Directors Vice 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. Kurt Janowsky, Commission (via Zoom)
Mr. Anant Patel, Commission (via Zoom)
Ms. Beth Ronzone, Commission
Ms. Diana Lawson, Chief Executive Officer
Mr. Jon Hunsberger, Executive Director
Mr. Terry Mark, ECCVB Staff Recorder

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:01 a.m.

APPROVE SEPTEMBER MINUTES

Ms. E. Billey moved to approve the minutes of the September 11, 2020, meeting. Mr. L. App seconded. There was a vote and it was approved with all in favor.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. L. App referred to the printed report distributed before the meeting. He said there is comfort in the fact that the ECCVB staff is watching every dollar in and every dollar out. Innkeepers tax collections are ahead of projections by \$214,000 and will end the year at around \$1.4 million. He said Ms. C. Ostrom is working with a delinquent account. The miscellaneous income line includes funds from the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) and Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) programs. Mr. L. App said there are no problems expected with forgiveness of the PPP loan. He said the EIDL loan is broken into two parts: a \$10,000 advance and \$149,000 as the main part of the loan. He said repayment of that will start in June 2021.

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

NOMINATION OF 2021 OFFICERS

Mr. B. Hoffer presented the nominating slate of officers for 2021: Mr. Levi King for president, Ms. Eleanor Billey for vice president, and Mr. Larry App for secretary/treasurer. There were no other nominators from the floor. Mr. B. Hoffer moved to accept the slate and elect the 2021 officers. Mr. L. App seconded. There was a vote and it was approved with all in favor.

BUREAU UPDATE

Mr. J. Hunsberger provided project updates, highlighted by the Champion Placemaker workshops, which represented a tremendous opportunity to work with our partners. He said ECCVB staff had a celebration at end of October that was very much appreciated by participants. ECCVB staff is planning to continue with these workshops in 2021.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said the Economic Development Administration grant application has been submitted. If awarded, the grant would fund Project AMP to continue education on e-commerce focusing on downtowns and small businesses to pivot and extend their businesses. The Love Local campaign will be part of it, running from mid part of the year and including a holiday component.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said Vibrant Communities is ramping back up after a bit of a pause. The Vibrant Neighborhoods project is a way to help people re-connect.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said he and Ms. J. Logsdon made a presentation on the Exit 92 and Gateway Mile projects to the Elkhart Redevelopment Commission, which will continue their partnership with the ECCVB in . Happy to report that will continue partnership in 2021. The redevelopment commission took note of our success in a challenging time this year.

2021 BUSINESS PLAN & BUDGET

Mr. J. Hunsberger presented the 2021 Business Plan & Budget for 2021, which will be centered on the priorities of innovation, inspiration, and collaboration. He said 2020 demonstrated to ECCVB staff that we can do anything. With a good plan, we were able to pivot and allow our strengths to come through. 2021 is going to be a demonstration of clear priorities.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said there are four pillars that we will focus on. The first is We Believe in Communities. This will keep us strong and keep us pulling in the same direction with our partners on the Heritage Trail. It's important to show those partners appreciation and thank them for what they do and working with each other. ECCVB will also be elevating the stories of our communities. He said we are hoping to involve more those communities that have been less active.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said the second pillar is We Believe in People. It's our people that keep us on track, prodding us to keep getting better. Champion Placemakers will be the focus. Initial workshops were a pilot, encouraging how to tell our stories better and in a more consistent manner. Vibrant Communities going into its fifth year. The January celebration at which Well Crafted was revealed seems forever ago, but there is a renewed sense in leadership. The first Action Agenda is either completed or in process and now we're wanting to turn the temperature back up. The question now is what is new? What is our vision for Elkhart County? Vibrant Communities will be coming back to the community to ask where have we been successful, what are the gaps, what can we do to improve.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said the third pillar is We Believe in Fun. It's important that we do things that make people smile. Heritage Trail has different voices, is a lot of fun, and it's exciting. We're going to push that and continue to elevate that experience and the Well Crafted brand which, because of COVID, we have not been able to focus on that as much.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said the fourth pillar is We Believe in Us. He said our role in Elkhart County not only encompasses tourism but also quality of place; we're finding that our role is evolving. We're evaluating – does ECCVB represent who we are and what we do. We want to have that conversation about who we are, what we call ourselves. What our name is – that is the conversation that we would like to have. ECCVB staff will continue to be involved in community at multiple levels.

Ms. E. Billey said she really enjoyed reading the 2021 Business Plan and thought it was great. Mr. J. Hunsberger recognized Mr. T. Mark for being the wordsmith. We hope it comes across to the reader. We want people who read this to be inspired by it.

Discussion ensued on the budget line concerning area guide revenue. Mr. J. Hunsberger said the ECCVB is trying to be sensitive to where we're at with our stakeholders having been tested. He said the 2020 travel guide will continue to be distributed, with hotels front and center. 2021 will be year to perhaps pilot something in a new way, highlighting Champion Placemakers. Ms. D. Lawson said that with many businesses just hanging on, the ECCVB didn't want the area guide to be an obligation. Rather we will be doing something different that focuses on storytelling and not asking for additional revenue.

Mr. B. Hoffer moved to adopt the 2021 Business Plan and Budget. Mr. D. Shoup seconded. There was a vote and it was approved with all in favor.

MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Mr. A. Dawson moved to authorize Mr. L. King to execute a memorandum of agreement with Elkhart County Innkeepers Tax Commission President Mr. D. Shoup for the 2021 program of work as summarized in the 2021 Business Plan and Budget. Mr. D. Bearss seconded. There was a vote and it was approved for all involved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. D. Shoup said that this will be Mr. K. Janowsky's last meeting on the commission as he is not going to seek reappointment. He thanked Mr. K. Janowsky's for his involvement and contributions to the commission, especially with new Elkhart County Visitor Center. Mr. J. Hunsberger said there have been some internal conversations on a successor, and he proposed Mr. Doug Risser of Goshen as a good replacement.

There was conversation thanking Ms. D. Lawson for her many years of leadership of the ECCVB and her impending retirement at the end of 2020. Ms. D. Lawson said that she has been to more than 250 of these meetings over 34 years, and it is very rewarding to see this organization grow with the leadership from the commission and board. She thanked Mr. B. Hoffer who served on the first board. She also credited the ECCVB staff and thanked everyone for their contributions. "It has been amazing. I love you all," she said.

NEXT MEETING

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

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Mark
Staff Recorder