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## ELKHART COUNTY INNKEEPERS TAX COMMISSION

### Minutes of Special Public Meeting

Tuesday, April 12, 2022, at Elkhart County Visitors Center, 3421 Cassopolis Street, Elkhart, IN

PRESENT: Mr. Scott Baker, Commission

ATTENDING: Mr. Dan Bearss, Board of Directors Vice President  
Mr. Larry App, Board of Directors Secretary/Treasurer  
Mr. Brian Hoffer, Board of Directors  
Mr. Jon Hunsberger, Executive Director  
Ms. Janis Logsdon, Assistant Director  
Mr. Terry Mark, ECCVB Staff Recorder  
Ms. Cindy Ostrom, ECCVB Staff  
Mr. Mike Huber, Abonmarche  
Mr. Mitch Nichols, Nichols Tourism Group  
Mr. Don Anderson, Destination Consultancy

ABSENT: Mr. Dan Shoup, Commission President and Board of Directors  
Ms. Gita Patel, Commission Vice President  
Mr. Rick Jenkins, Commission Secretary/Treasurer (via Zoom)  
Mr. Anant Patel, Commission  
Ms. Beth Ronzone, Commission  
Mr. Doug Risser, Commission

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting to order 9:02 a.m.

Mr. M. Huber, representing strategic planning consultants, began the slide deck presentation, reporting on the state of the Elkhart County destination. The presentation included reports based on research incorporating economic impact, visitor information, products and services, and visitor/resident survey.

Mr. M. Nichols reported on Elkhart County destination performance and trends. Trends in economic impact, occupancy rates, average daily rate, room demand, and hotel revenue were reviewed over the past

several years. He said that overall Elkhart County outperformed the nation during the COVID pandemic. He said that visitation to Elkhart County was relatively stable in the last half of the decade. He said the present is an opportune time for strategic planning, to consider how to develop destination and drive growth.

Mr. D. Anderson presented visitor profile information based on a survey conducted in early 2022.

Mr. M. Nichols said the question now is how is Elkhart County is positioned to compete in five to 10 years.

Mr. M. Huber said the Elkhart County CVB should consider potential opportunities in group youth sports, leveraging assets such as the aquatics center, rugby grounds, and outdoor recreation with the Pumpkinvine Nature Trail. Mr. D. Anderson said expanding demographic appeal would convert more day visitors to overnight visitors. Mr. D. Anderson presented a review of Elkhart County attractions and how each performed on metrics such as most visited and visitor perceptions. Mr. M. Nichols said there is an opportunity to develop RV-related experiences.

Mr. M. Huber discussed the Elkhart County CVB's role in placemaking and the shift in approach and involvement in development. He presented reports on local resident perception of tourism impact/relevance.

The strategic planning team's next step is public input sessions on April 13 with various local stakeholders to review performance and potential strategies on critical issues.

The meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Terry Mark  
Staff Recorder