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## ELKHART COUNTY INNKEEPERS TAX COMMISSION

### Minutes of Public Meeting

Friday, November 8, 2024, at Elkhart County Visitors Center, 3421 Cassopolis Street, Elkhart, IN

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

ATTENDING: Mr. Levi King, Board of Directors President  
Mr. Arvis Dawson, Board of Directors (Zoom)  
Mr. Brian Hoffer, Board of Directors  
Mr. Jon Hunsberger, Executive Director  
Mr. Terry Mark, ECCVB Staff

ABSENT: Mr. Dan Boecher, Commission  
Mr. Anant Patel, Commission

### CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 8:03 a.m.

### APPROVE MINUTES

*Mr. D. Risser moved to approve the September 13, 2024, minutes. Ms. B. Ronzone seconded. It was approved with all in favor.*

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Mr. L. App submitted a written financial report, which Mr. J. Hunsberger read to all in attendance:

“October brings us 10 months into the year. We are on target and budget for fulfilling our 2024 contract.

Our balance sheet looks strong, and cash balances look very good. Our profit & loss statement also looks good and we have collected our approved 2024 contract amount for Room Tax Revenue during October. This means that for November and December we will have no revenues added to our statement for this line item, which will allow our approved expenses to catch up to revenues. By the end of December we will have a nice view of the entire year. To summarize, we are exactly on target for fulfilling our contract and, as always, we are thankful to the staff for designing and carrying out this mission and remaining within budget. We have all received the Proposed 2025 Business Plan and Budget to review. I've reviewed it with Cindy, and I support the Proposed 2025 Business Plan and Budget as presented.”

There was general discussion of the 2024 budget. Mr. J. Hunsberger said the 2025 budget increases revenue line item from the innkeepers tax to help mitigate the amount of the annual rollover.

*Mr. R. Jenkins moved to accept the financial report. Ms. G. Patel seconded. It was approved with all in favor.*

## 2025 BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET

Mr. J. Hunsberger presented the 2025 Business Plan and Budget. He said ECCVB staff planning on this went smoothly. He said, going into the third year of our strategic plan, the staff was asked to think big picture. He said there were a number of projects that weren't able to be put into the budget, which helps build the business case for a visitor assessment increase.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said some highlights in business plan include a switch in vendors from Zartico to Tourism Economics, as data and research are critical to what we are doing. He said Tourism Economics' platform, named Symphony, provides rock-solid data analysis and is used by a number of DMOs such as Hamilton County. He said employing Mr. Joe Veneto's experience analysis resulted in going slightly over budget in 2024, but the analytical work has set the ECCVB up for 2025. He said a couple partners have expressed interest in continuing the work with Mr. Joe Veneto. He said it's possible to split the cost over two years.

Mr. J. Hunsberger described a new campaign in 2025 targeting segments, using content developed by Madden Media, to deliver content. He said this new project will be tested as a pilot for an \$80,000 investment. He said the project timeline is April through August, and will explore expanding into shoulder season.

Mr. J. Hunsberger described a new development project called Mistletoe Market, which arose from an idea from the Elkhart County 4-H Fairgrounds to create an event similar to a Christkindlmarket.

Mr. J. Hunsberger said that in January that Mr. Don Anderson and Mr. Mitch Nichols will be presenting their scope of work and plan for the proposed innkeepers tax increase. There was general discussion on the proposed increase.

The ECCVB Board approved the 2025 Business Plan and Budget, and presented it to the Commission for approval.

*Mr. D. Risser moved to approve the 2025 Business Plan and Budget. Ms. G. Patel seconded. It was approved with all in favor.*

Mr. L. King, representing the Board, and Mr. D. Shoup, representing the Commission, signed a Memorandum of Agreement.

#### BUREAU UPDATE

Mr. J. Hunsberger asked all to plan for a Board and Commission celebration dinner in May.

#### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 8 a.m. Friday, January 10, 2025.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Mark  
Elkhart County CVB staff

