

MINUTES
ELKHART COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
PUBLIC MEETING OF THE
COMMISSION AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Friday, March 13, 2015
8:00/9:00 a.m.
Elkhart County Convention & Visitors Bureau
219 Caravan Drive
Elkhart, IN

PRESENT:

Ms. B. Ronzone, Commission
Mr. D. Boecher, Commission
Ms. G. Patel, Commission
Ms. E. Billey, Board of Directors
Mr. D. Bearss, Board of Directors
Mr. B. Hoffer, Board of Directors
Mr. L. King, Board of Directors
Ms. D. Lawson, Executive Director
Ms. J. Hughes, Staff Recorder

ABSENT:

Mr. S. Baker, Commission
Mr. R. Jenkins, Commission
Mr. A. Patel, Commission
Mr. D. Shoup, Commission
Ms. K. Clarke, Board of Directors
Mr. J. Siegmann, Board of Directors

I. Ms. Ronzone called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m. with a quorum of the Board of Directors present.

II. Motion to approve minutes of the January 2015 meeting was made by Mr. Bearss and seconded by Mr. King. A vote was taken and motion passed unanimously.

III. In the absence of Ms. Clarke, Ms. Lawson presented the Financial Report for the period ending February 28, 2015. It was noted that Ms. Clarke had reviewed and approved the financials prior to the meeting. Referring to the Balance Sheet she reported total assets of \$1,237,032.

Moving on to the Income Statement, Ms. Lawson reported year-to-date room tax revenues of \$729,727. She reminded members that the room tax revenue reflects the hold-over money received from 2014 collections and expectations are for the county to withhold collections for October, November and December, 2015. Regarding the Travel Guide, the CVB has established a good model that's

successful in keeping costs affordable. Travel Guide expenses totaled \$85,164 and income totaled \$192,929. Total revenue amounted to \$927,000; total expenses were \$355,000; and net cash was \$564,000.

Mr. King moved to approve the Financial Report as presented. Ms. Billey seconded. A vote was taken to approve the Financial Report and passed.

Discussion ensued relative to notification of delinquencies. Mr. Hoffer updated members that Mr. Buche has written a letter to the treasurer relative to this issue, but has not yet received a response. It was suggested there be an agreement with the ECCVB to receive information relative to collections. The attorney made it clear that this is legal. Other CVBs have addressed this with an audit of hotels, but we do not wish to do that. Our concern is that we are asking for and in need of accurate information. We do not want an adversarial relationship with the treasurer. Mr. Hoffer will follow up again on this matter.

IV. Bureau Update presented by Ms. Lawson. The February Board Report distributed.

Horizon 3.0 – The first meeting with the Cities and Towns Initiative was held and was mostly Elkhart County centered with projects defined city centered, not regional. Schools' leadership is very involved and forward thinking with good ideas like an Elkhart County College and collaborations with arts, sports and downtowns. With the new voucher programs schools will have to come up with a new business model. The sports project was also part of the discussions and the concept of teams coming to this are to compete. Although these things do take time, they are moving ahead with more people becoming engaged; plus the redevelopment commission has been very supportive. The Cities and Towns Initiative consultants are working with four counties. The winning outcome is starting a relationship with the region.

New Website- The ECCVB's new, updated website will be launched next week. The CVB's technology manager, Ms. Barnhart, has been working very hard on this project. The new site will be compatible with all browsers and devices.

Way-Finding Signs – New way-finding signs to downtown Elkhart will be installed soon. There have been previous discussions with this body relative to the ECCVB investing in informational kiosks in both downtown Elkhart and Goshen then eventually other communities. Elkhart is ready, so after the election we can sit down with the mayor to discuss plans.

Quality of Place - The ECCVB has been working on quality of place strategies with communities. We may be at a time where we have new people to care about place, and we're beginning conversation for our 2016 plan.

V. Other Business:

Mr. Bearss updated members on the Toll Road situation and the lease awarded a new operator for \$5.7 billion. There will be a sense of urgency with this. NITDC has been advocating for new travel plazas. The travel plazas pose an opportunity to tell our story to 12 million people annually, and NITDC is going to be a big part of further conversation.

Ms. Billey updated members on upcoming shows at The Lerner and future prospects.

VI. Motion to adjourn made by Mr. King and seconded by Mr. Bearss.

VII. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

Submitted by:
Jackie Hughes
Staff Recorder