

## **TOURISM MEETING - 4/5/2004**

**PRESENT:** Denny Ganz, Nancy Roth, Mike Czeck, JW Jarvi, Burl Ives, Don Wendt, John Kelsch, Sue Harris, Cheri Bialke, Cathrine McLynn, Russell Klegstad, Rusty Eichorn

**EXCUSED ABSENT:** Tami Peoples, Josh Harriet, Cindy Feyder, Wayne Wahlstrom, Veronica Long, Sue Harris, Jill Nelson, Keith Polister, Julie Medtke

Mike Czeck called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Denny Ganz made a motion to approve the minutes from March 2004; Nancy Roth seconded; motion approved.

ACTION: No further action.

### **TRAVEL PLANNER:**

Kerry informed the committee sales were going really well. Kerry encouraged the members to reserve their space if they had advertised in the past. Spaces were going fast!

ACTION: No further action is needed.

### **LODGING TAX:**

Bud explained the project that the committee needs to work on. Bud explained to the committee that the Chamber board of directors would like to come to a conclusion to either support the lodging tax or not. It was one of the things that they identified at the Board retreat in Jan. as a priority for 2004. Bud conveyed that the Board had instructed him to ask the committee to investigate the pros and con's of this controversial issue and talk to the Membership and see how they feel. Bud explained this is part of the reason that businesses join the Chamber of Commerce. Bud suggested that a survey be created to get input from the membership. Also, possible forums or focus groups should meet with members and other stakeholders who are members of the chamber. The information will be brought back to the board of directors to help them make this decision. The committee had a lengthy discussion regarding this project. The commissioners participated in the discussion as well. Burl expressed several times how we are very fortunate to have the CVB, the Chamber, Jobs 20/20, the membership, the Commissioners involved to work together on this issue. Burl expressed how he felt other identities were very dysfunctional and did not work together on anything. Several other issues were brought to the table such as: Progress of the Jobs 20/20 action team and the committee's intentions, what questions on the survey should be asked, procedure of educating the membership as well as the community, marketing procedures, visitor center concerns and issues, how money will be spent, who will disburse the money collected, avoid duplication of project with other identities, and many more.

The committee went over the procedure that was discussed in the previous meeting regarding the Chamber newsletter. In the months ahead ----- several articles will be published in the newsletter to educate the membership and the community. In the May newsletter it will consist of the following: Explanation of why this lodging tax issue came about, Cheri will write an article explaining the nuts and bolts of lodging tax. Dan Erkkila will write an article on the economic impact. Bryan Harris will write an article on the funding alternatives besides lodging tax, and Peg and Wayne will be writing about the pro's and con's of lodging tax. The committee continued discussion on the questions that need to be asked in the survey. Bud will line up a facilitator for next months meeting. Committee members also felt the survey should not be mailed until Jobs 20/20 has a proposed model of the spending procedure. Nancy Roth informed the committee the goal for this model would be approximately in July.

**ACTION:** Denny Gantz made a motion to focus on Chamber membership as planned; Burl Ives seconded; motion carried. Confirmation of articles in the following monthly newsletter will be discussed at Mays meeting. The committee will have questions to propose and decided upon in May's meeting.

**OTHER:**

- Bud expressed the importance of educating the committee members themselves on this issue. Bud explained how important it is to gain as much knowledge as possible through researching the issue. This could be by talking with townships that already have the tax in place, reading articles of other success or not so successful stories of other towns that have the lodging tax.

**ACTION:** The committee will continue to try and find out as much information as possible.

- The committee made a decision to continue with summer meetings due to the time frame of the project and the importance of it.

**ACTION:** Meetings will continue throughout the summer months.

- The committee discussed having the Commissioners stay informed as well. Commissioners should receive emails and all information involving this project.

**ACTION:** Burl made a motion to have ALL information as it progresses given to County Commissioners; Don Wendt seconded; motion carried.

- Committee members also felt other groups may use the information provided through the Chamber newsletter if asked.

**ACTION:** No further action is needed.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting will be held at the Chamber Depot Conference Room, May 3<sup>rd</sup> 2004 at 9:30 a.m.

**MEETING ADJOURNED:** A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Denny Gantz and seconded by Nancy Roth. The motion was passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned

Submitted by Kerry Welch