

Members Present: Linda L Thorpe, Emil Bakka, James Behling, Charles Rayala, Erv Teichmiller

Department Personnel Present: Cindy Burzinski, Vilas County Tourism
Janet Christianson, Vilas County Tourism

Others Present: Lyn Pilch, Pilch & Barnet, Inc.
Al Hanley, Assured Associates

Media Present: None

Thorpe called the regular meeting to order at 9:02am in Conference Room #2 of the Vilas County Courthouse. The meeting was properly posted and notices sent to all media provided on July 28, 2009.

Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to accept the agenda to be taken in any order at the discretion of the chair; motion carried.

Motion by Bakka, seconded by Rayala to approve the minutes of July 7, 2009 as distributed; motion carried.

Introductions/Announcements – None

2010 Vilas County Visitor Guide – A revised cover was presented as some design changes resulted when including the information requested by the Committee. After review of the covers, **motion by Teichmiller, seconded by Rayala to approve the cover with the information in white lettering at the bottom; motion carried.** Hanley noted that ad sales were proceeding and indicated that while there was some downsizing of ads from the previous year, to date there had been no cancellations. He still remains positive regarding the sales numbers and will remain in touch with Burzinski.

Musky Marathon – Registrations remain steady with the number of registered muskies greater than the same time in 2008. When talking with registrants, they are being encouraged to provide their stories for possible inclusion in the Visitor Guide and/or the web.

Vilas County Chamber – The next meeting of the Chamber is scheduled for August 13th in Manitowish Waters. Burzinski noted that the time and location may be changed as members would like to attend a Wetlands Gems presentation at the Discovery Center scheduled for the same day. She will let Committee members interested in attending the Chamber meeting know the meeting details as they are finalized.

Pilch & Barnet – Pilch indicated the agency is beginning to think about the 2010 budget and media schedule and asked if the Vilas County budget would contain funds allocated to the Original Northwoods Experience (O.N.E.) campaign. During a brief discussion regarding O.N.E., both Burzinski and Thorpe noted the group was still gathering information and as there was nothing solid to present to the County at this time, did not anticipate any funding being allocated for 2010. As O.N.E. discussions resume, both Burzinski and Thorpe will keep the Committee updated.

Pilch indicated she would be attending the August Chamber meeting to discuss media ideas for 2010. As the television ads had been created, Pilch felt that the media in 2010 could provide more placements in other Chicago and Milwaukee venues (public television, etc.). She also discussed the possibility of

expanding into “social” (FaceBook, Twitter, etc.) media. As the Committee did not anticipate any increase in budget for 2010, Pilch indicated she would take the comments from this meeting and the Chamber meeting on the 13th and prepare a 2010 media schedule for presentation at the September meeting.

The proposed winter television ad was shown and the Committee felt that it covered winter activities and the areas very well. **Motion by Bakka, seconded by Teichmiller, to approve the winter television ad as presented; motion carried.**

The banner ads for the Chicago Tribune e-newsletter and for JS online were reviewed. While there was some concern expressed regarding the Department of Tourism logo, it is required as part of the JEM grant. Pilch noted that since the creation of the ads, there may be a change in the logo and will check on that before the ads are finalized. **Motion by Teichmiller, seconded by Rayala to approve the ads as presented, with the understanding that Pilch will make any necessary changes to the state’s Tourism logo as needed; motion carried.**

Pilch also noted as an FYI that she had attended a meeting of the Oneida County Tourism Council and they had approved a 3rd year of Artists Interactive.

Noting the importance of having the website and ad campaign look cohesive, Pilch was asked by the Committee to provide an estimate of the cost to create a website template for the Department to use on the tourism site. The template must work with the Department’s existing software (Dreamweaver and Paint Shop Pro). In reviewing the budget, the Committee agreed that funding for the templates would come from Special Projects. Pilch indicated she could have the information to Burzinski before the next meeting.

The Vilas County Giveaway-Getaway promotion concluded the end of July. Pilch & Barnet will conduct the drawing and forward the winner information to the Department and to Black Bear Lodge.

Resolution for Pilch & Barnet, Inc. Contract Addendum – Burzinski presented the Addendum Request and the Resolution which had been reviewed and approved by Corporation Counsel. After noting that this process continues the current contract and conditions with Pilch & Barnet for another year, through 2010, **motion by Rayala, seconded by Behling to approve the Resolution as presented and forward the Resolution to full County Board for action; motion carried.**

Original Gangster’s Paradise Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) Grant – Burzinski noted that the office had distributed, via a bulk mailing, over 1900 Original Gangster’s Paradise (OGP) newsletters to previous Vilas County inquiries. At this time she also distributed the monthly report which showed the Gangster’s/secret page on the website placed in the top five webpages visited in July. Behling offered some ideas to increase website visits (offering something for each online inquiry, or a ‘where’s Waldo’ type search using local faces) and Pilch indicated she would look into how something like that could be organized and implemented.

Fisheries Concerns – Behling reviewed the information received at the June meeting, along with information he gathered informally during discussions with other anglers. He also noted an apparent disparity between the operating capacities of the DNR and tribal hatcheries. With the information provided by local guides and the DNR, it appeared to him (Behling) that there was a concern with an apparent decline in the walleye fishery and that such decline had an impact on area tourism. While

tourism is a major concern of this Committee, he wasn't sure what, if anything, the Committee could do about the fishery situation.

Teichmiller felt that it was important for the Committee to provide a venue for the guides and DNR to work together to find a solution. Thorpe questioned whether this was strictly a local concern or if other counties were experiencing similar walleye fishery concerns. Pilch indicated the agency provides fishing reports for a Barron County community and they also expressed a similar concern.

During discussion it was noted the Governor's Economic Summit (scheduled for November) was seeking topics for possible discussion, and while it wasn't guaranteed to be selected, it was suggested the Committee forward the walleye fisheries concern topic for consideration. **Motion by Behling, seconded by Rayala, that Burzinski contact Sarah Pischer regarding including walleye fishery concerns as a suggested discussion topic for the Governor's Economic Summit; motion carried.** Thorpe further noted that she will contact some other northern counties regarding walleye fishery concerns in their area(s). It was also determined to extend an invitation to Ken Anderson as a member of the Vilas County delegation to the Conservation Congress to attend the September Committee meeting to provided information on walleye fishery concerns for Vilas County.

Out of County Travel – None not previously approved.

Department Reports – (distributed during the Original Gangster's Paradise JEM Grant discussion) Visits to the website have increased to just over the number for the same time in 2008; while inquiries are lower than the same time. When asked about the difference between inquiries from year to year, it was noted the advertising campaigns and media were different (ie Valassis and ITBEC were not run in 2009). When the same media was used year to year, the comparison information was useful; however, Teichmiller wondered if, now that there is a different media mix from previous years, there may be some other comparisons more useful to the Committee. Burzinski indicated that the Department would look at what is available and provide some alternatives for the Committee's review at the next meeting.

Budget/Approval of Bills – Burzinski indicated that the Department controlled items remain on target and the Department is closely watching the Xerox line item. **Motion by Rayala, seconded by Behling to approve the monthly budget and bills as presented – Cindy L. Burzinski - \$394.76; Vilas County Chamber - \$219.65; Lambeau Telecom Co. - \$24.26; Clermont Printing & Office Supplies - \$539.11; motion carried**

Correspondence – Thorpe read a letter from DNR Secretary Matt Franke in response to the Committee's letter regarding changes in the muzzleloader season.

Next meeting – Next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for September 1, 2009 at 9am in Conference Room #2.

Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to adjourn at 11:12am; motion carried.

Minutes reflect the notations of the recorder and are subject to change by the Committee.

Respectfully submitted, Janet Christianson