

Members Present: Linda Thorpe, Emil Bakka, James Behling, Ron DeBruyne,

Members Absent: Leon Kukanich

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

Others Present: Stephanie McClellan, Visitor Guide Sales Rep  
Fritz Laeser, Edgewater Inn & Cottages  
Mike Robillard, Vilas Area Silent Sports Association (VASSA)  
Jeff Currie, Greater Wisconsin Headwaters Trail System  
Ann Currie, Greater Wisconsin Headwaters Trail System  
John Helgeson, WRJO Radio

Thorpe called the regular meeting to order at 9:00am in Conference Room #2 of the Vilas County Courthouse. The meeting was properly posted and notices sent to all media provided on June 29, 2010.

**Motion by Behling, 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 Behling to approve the minutes of June 1, 2010 as distributed; motion carried.**

**Introductions/Announcements** – All present introduced themselves.

**Vilas Area Silent Sports Association (VASSA)** – Robillard provided a brief history of the organization (handout) and their volunteer efforts to aid local organizations with trail development projects. VASSA provides coordination between trail organizations, communities, engineers and the WI DNR to provide an overall view of the trail systems in Vilas County, reviewing possibility of linking them together, and funding source availability. Working together based on an overall view of the trail, VASSA helps find potential problem points and works to solve them.

Noting that VASSA currently relies on volunteers and grant funding, several Committee members noted one of the largest drawbacks to trail development/maintenance is a consistent funding source (such as licensing fees). Robillard agreed and indicated VASSA is researching alternatives; however the focus remains on helping trail development now. Recent efforts with the Town of Conover, local snowmobile clubs and Vilas County Forestry are helping in the development of a Conover/Phelps trail along the old railroad corridor and snowmobile trail. At the recent GRABAR bicycling event in Eagle River, VASSA had a visible presence to encourage participants to return to the area and explore other trail systems in the County. They also gathered user data for future use. Burzinski wondered if the data could be made available to the Chambers and their members for use in future trail development endeavors. Robillard noted that would be possible and Burzinski indicated she would request VASSA be placed on the August agenda for the County Chamber meeting so he could meet the Chamber representatives and present the bicycling data.

The Currie's were present to represent the Greater Wisconsin Headwaters Trail System (GWHTS), four (4) united trails linking Land O'Lakes, Conover, Phelps and Eagle River. He reviewed the groups' history (handout) and their volunteer efforts to create a system of unified trails in the area. Toward their

efforts to develop safe, practical trails, the group works with property owners, local governmental units and local organizations. In looking to the future of trail development/maintenance, GWHTS is also looking at other trail systems for funding models. The group is also looking at ways to accumulate and provide data regarding the affect of silent sport activities on local tourism and the area's economy which could be shared with the local communities and the County.

Some ideas to develop trail revenue, such as bike races, development of a county trail pass, along with data generation methods (contacting UW-Extension for assistance in survey) were mentioned and Robillard thank the Committee for their ideas. Burzinski requested the Tourism & Publicity Department and Committee be kept in the information loop to take advantage of any early advertising which can be done. The Committee thanked Robillard and the Curries for attending the meeting and sharing their groups' efforts to promote Vilas County.

**Musky Marathon** – Christianson noted that to date there were 20 registrations with some nice fish registered. She also noted the Marathon had received an unexpected donation from the Coleman Company of rain suits and PDF's which would be used as drawing prizes at the end of the Marathon.

An error in the printed DNR regulations regarding the legal length on a Vilas County waterbody was noted during the registration process and correspondence with the DNR with the correct information was received and placed in the Marathon file.

**2011 Vilas County Travel Guide** – Burzinski distributed copies of the 2010 Visitor Guide and asked the Committee for ideas on additions, revisions and or deletions for 2011. Some suggestions made involve possibly condensing the events (or making them more uniform in length), updating the County map and possibly including a number/letter trail identifier. Behling indicated that he would not want to see the events section reduced in any way as it was the meat of the publication. McClellan agreed indicating that when she was with the Chamber, the Vilas Visitor Guide was used as comprehensive source of event information and that people liked to have something in hand to look at. DeBruyne indicated that the Community section provided great information about the individual areas of the County and it also should not be reduced in any way.

McClellan briefly reviewed the ad sales form and art requirements form (handouts) for the 2011 Vilas County Visitor Guide. As soon as she received the membership lists from the individual chambers, she would begin ad sales and continue through September 10. She was very excited about the new advertising opportunities available for the 2011 Visitor Guide and looked forward to working with the chambers, their members, and the Tourism & Publicity Committee and Department to produce another quality Visitor Guide.

**Vilas County Chamber** – Burzinski distributed a copy of the approved cover for the Vilas/Oneida County Map and noted that Theresa Smith would be meeting with the publisher in the next week with a first draft expected by the Chamber's August meeting.

Planning continues for the Fall Resort Tour scheduled for Phelps on October 14<sup>th</sup>. The tentative speaker will present on eco-friendly business practices.

The next meeting will be August 12th at 1pm in Lac du Flambeau.

**Pilch & Barnet** – The Artists Interactive promotion concluded the end of June; however, the website remains active with many events listed through the remainder of 2010. Pilch & Barnet will be compiling the data from the promotion over the next couple of weeks and preparing the final report for the grant participants. Burzinski noted that discussions are being held with the Campanile Center to possibly administer the project in the future.

Pilch & Barnet's May report was distributed and reviewed by the Committee. The Department monthly reports for May and June were also distributed and reviewed. During discussion it was noted that as the web analysis report had changed from Web Trends to Google Analytics, which provided for different analysis criteria, 2009 and 2010 were not comparing like criteria; therefore, the Committee recommended that the comparison be suspended until May, 2011 when a full year of Google Analytics data would be available for comparison.

**Tourism Letter** – The Committee felt the prepared letter was very good. Burzinski noted she was still waiting for clarification of the missing percentage and that if it did not arrive before the letter needed to be sent, the paragraph could be reworded. Per information from the Clerk's office, there should be a final list of candidates available by mid-July. **Motion by Behling, seconded by Bakka to approve the letter as written, noting the missing percentage would be inserted; or if not available, the paragraph reworded and approved by the Chair before signing; motion carried.**

It was also recommended that copies of the Tourism & Publicity minutes and agenda be sent to Dick Leinenkugel, as head of the Vilas County Economic Development Corporation. Burzinski will check with him to see how he would like to receive the information.

**Logo and Style Guidelines for Vilas County** – As a result of discussions at both the Finance Committee and Public Property Committee, Burzinski indicated that she had been asked to provide information on the standardization of the Vilas County logo which had been designed some years ago for the then Advertising Department. She distributed two current version of the logo; one plain and one with the department name included inside the logo. Both Behling and DeBruyne indicated that any department operating out of and representing Vilas County, with possible exceptions of the Sheriff's Department and UW-Extension, should display the Vilas County logo. As both logo versions had applications – letterhead, business cards, etc. – the Committee requested Burzinski develop guidelines for both formats and bring back to the August Committee meeting. Upon approval, the guidelines would then be forwarded to Public Property for consideration.

**Out of County Travel** – None.

**Department Reports** – Distributed earlier in the meeting during discussion of Pilch & Barnet monthly report.

**Budget/Approval of Bills** – Copies of the budget were distributed and Burzinski indicated that the budget remains on track. She updated the Committee on the \$24,200 audit adjustment – the Finance Committee will be forwarding a resolution to full County Board to reinstate the funds in the Department's 2010 budget. She also noted she was working with the County Clerk on the status of the grant's final payment of \$15,300 which was received in early 2010. **Motion by Bakka, seconded by DeBruyne to approve the budget as presented; motion carried.**

**Motion by Bakka, seconded by DeBruyne to approve payment of the bills as presented - Cindy L. Burzinski - \$266.50; Janet Christianson - \$12.10; Lambeau Telecom Co - \$26.93; Pilch & Barnet, Inc. - \$9,815.00; Vilas County News Review - \$116.00; motion carried.**

**Correspondence** – Burzinski distributed flyers regarding Small Town Forums with workshops in July on improving and promoting community assets as related to tourism.

Christianson showed brochures developed by 4<sup>th</sup> grade students about Vilas County as part of their study of Wisconsin Counties.

**Next meeting** – Next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2010 at 9am in Conference Room #2.

**Motion by Bakka, seconded by Behling to adjourn at 10:54am; motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted, Janet Christianson