

Members Present: Linda Thorpe, Emil Bakka, Ron De Bruyne, Leon Kukanich, Ralph Sitzberger

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

Others Present: Fritz Laeser, Edgewater Inn & Cottages
Dick Mendham, Sunrise Lodge
Suzanne Barnet, Pilch & Barnet
Tara Alfonso, Vilas County Corporation Counsel

Thorpe called the regular meeting to order at 9:00am in the Jury Room of the Vilas County Courthouse. The meeting was properly posted and notices sent to all media provided on December 2, 2011.

Motion by Kukanich, 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 Kukanich, to approve the minutes of November 1, 2011 as distributed; motion carried.

Introductions – None.

Great Headwaters Trails – As Currie was unable to attend the changed meeting date, he provided copies of two preliminary sign designs for review. As the Forestry and Highway Committees are aware of this particular trail development and the Zoning Committee and/or the towns will be involved in sign placement, the Committee agreed that after physical signage requirements are developed and approved by the appropriate committee(s) and Corporation Counsel, the Tourism Committee can review for use of the County logo. Burzinski was asked to place Currie on the January agenda.

VASSA Board Appointment – As discussed at a previous meeting, Burzinski had been asked to sit on the Vilas Area Silent Sports Association (VASSA) Board, with meetings generally held in the evening.
Motion by De Bruyne, seconded by Bakka to approve Burzinski's participation in VASSA; motion carried.

Pilch & Barnet – Regarding contests, Alfonso noted the Corporation Counsel's office had some concerns regarding the promotional contest formats recommended by Tourism's advertising agency. While the office has reviewed and commented on previous contests, the growing complexity of the contests, use of the Internet, crossing state lines, etc. is starting to reach beyond the expertise of their office. As there are attorneys specializing in contest law, she offered the Committee some options:

- Have the Department stay with one or two simple types of contests which use the same structure/format.
- Have the advertising agency develop a standard contest template/format which would be used as a base for all contests; with only slight changes to customize the contest which would be reviewed as each contest is developed.

- Have the advertising agency's attorney issue an opinion letter regarding the contest's rules, format, etc. Corporation Counsel would then rely on the opinion letter in reviewing the contest for the County.
- Hire outside counsel to review the contest rules/format for each contest.

Noting the options had advantages and disadvantages (ranging from running only one type of contest to increased budget costs), Alfonso appreciated the opportunity to discuss the matter with the Committee.

Barnet indicated that creative marketing necessitated using different tools and diversified methods to promote Vilas County. The contests run to date have been modeled off other established, successful contests (such as Boulder Junction, National Geographic Magazine and Wisconsin Trails) utilizing Wildfire interfaces with Facebook and fine-tuned to best represent Vilas County. While Pilch & Barnet has associate, municipal and county clients, contests are not duplicated. While templates for simple contests are doable, marketing necessitates expanding and pushing the creativity envelope to best represent the client. Legal costs are not included in the current contract between Pilch & Barnet and Vilas County; however, Barnet will research the matter and get back to the Committee.

Several Committee members questioned whether the Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) would have attorneys in this 'niche' market available. Thorpe indicated she could take a copy of one of the proposed contests and ask at an upcoming WCA meeting. Committee members thanked Alfonso and Barnet for their information and understood there was a need to have carefully constructed contest rules while at the same time being the most creative with the limited advertising dollars available.

Regarding the Search Engine Optimization (SEO) project, Bakka expressed continued concern regarding the presentation of the Minocqua area. While chambers and amenities have generally been listed alphabetically, the website narrative (unlike print narrative) can be revised as needed; however, chamber names are their names and not revisable. Barnet and Burzinski both noted that chambers that cover several communities and/or cross municipal boundaries always create a challenge to ensure equal cover. Barnet indicated the attempt is always made to provide as much information as possible to the visitor, who generally does not realize the town/county line. Other items discussed to include in narrative is the County's nearness to Bond Falls and the Paulding Light. Additional notes on the SEO included: Land O'Lakes, including the bowling alley on the list of businesses; and Phelps, include that the town is located on North Twin Lake. (Bakka left to attend another meeting)

5th Edition of TREK the Northwoods Trails – Barnet noted the tri-county publication was scheduled for delivery later this week. Another great example of multi-county coordination to produce a much requested publication and provide information to the visitor.

2012 Vilas County Travel Guide – The 2012 Visitor Guide is also scheduled for delivery in the next week to 10 days. Barnet indicated that a preliminary financial report may be available by the January meeting as there are outstanding payments remaining. While having a .pdf copy of the Guide on the website is again planned, her office is working toward making the Guide interactive – flipping the pages and linking to various sections, etc. with additional expansion (downloadable to iPads, phones, etc.) as technology advances.

Five County Branding Grant – Although the 2nd year grant application had been denied, Barnet indicated the Branding Committee had expressed the desire to proceed with the development of a

Northwoods app and distributed a descriptive narrative. The app would be more entertainment/informative than listing specific businesses or amenities. The application would be available at iTunes app store and Droid Marketplace and interface with Facebook. The Branding Committee's intent is to reapply for grant funds in spring 2012 and to show commitment to the project by having the app already developed. Anticipated cost of the app would be \$1,500 per county (or \$2,000 per county to include development of avatars). Burzinski requested the Tourism Committee commit \$1,000 (to include avatars) toward the Vilas County portion of the app development project and noted the Vilas County Chamber had indicated their support by voting to provide the remaining \$1,000. **Motion by Sitzberger, seconded by De Bruyne to reallocate \$1,000 of the 2012 Tourism budget from the SEO project to the 5-County Branding app development; motion carried.**

Musky Marathon – Christianson noted registrations were still being received (deadline December 15). The prize drawings and preliminary report would be ready for the January meeting. Two email correspondence were also passed around – one thanking the program for the prizes received and the second indicating regret the kept division was discontinued.

Vilas County Chamber – Burzinski noted the annual chamber dinner would be February 16th at Smokey's Restaurant and Supper Club in Manitowish Waters. As soon as the speaker is finalized, invitations will be sent out.

The next Chamber meeting is scheduled for January 12th at 1pm in Boulder Junction.

2012 Tourism & Publicity Budget – Burzinski noted the budget had passed full County Board and she thanked the Committee for their support. Per the decision regarding the funding for the 5-County Branding Grant app, Barnet indicated she would have a revised 2012 media schedule/budget for the next meeting.

Tourism Shows and Expos – Burzinski noted that North Central ITBEC had confirmed attending the Madison Fishing Show (February) in addition to the Green Bay RV Expo (January) and Canoecopia (March) in 2012. Burzinski requested authorization to order two or three long sleeve shirts for these shows. They should run about \$40 as she generally waits for the shirts to go on sale at the end of the month. If they are embroidered with the ITBEC logo, they would be sent to their seamstress; if they have the Vilas Tourism logo, they would be embroidered locally. Burzinski indicated there was money available in the 2011 budget. **Motion by De Bruyne, seconded by Kukanich to approve Burzinski ordering 2-3 long sleeve shirts and having them embroidered; motion carried.**

Review Standing Rules and Committee Duties – After review, **motion by Sitzberger, seconded by Kukanich to approve the Standing Rules as currently written and forward same to the Legislative & Judicial Committee; motion carried.**

Out of County Travel – Burzinski requested permission to attend the Governor's Northern Wisconsin Economic Development Summit in Minocqua on December 13 & 14. **Motion by De Bruyne, seconded by Sitzberger to approve Burzinski's registration and travel for the Governor's Northwoods Summit; motion carried.**

Department Reports – Burzinski distributed Pilch & Barnet's July report and the Department's October and November reports.

Budget/Approval of Bills – Burzinski distributed the monthly bills and budget report and indicated all items remain on target. When questioned as to the budget dollars remaining so close to the end of the year, Burzinski indicated there were still outstanding bills for the month of December and several copying projects which would also be completed as soon as the information was updated . **Motion by Kukanich, seconded by Sitzberger, to approve the bills as presented: Pilch & Barnet - \$14,950.00; WACVB/Northwoods Summit - \$75.00; Lakeland Printing Co. - \$55.00; Trig's Food & Drug - \$24.56; Cindy Burzinski - \$73.26; Lambeau Telecom - \$30.16; US Postmaster - \$1,000.00; motion carried.**

Motion by Sitzberger, seconded by Bakka to approve the budget as presented; motion carried.

Correspondence/Communication – Thorpe noted receiving a letter asking for the Tourism & Publicity Committee's involvement in the proposed ATV trail discussion in Phelps. As the County Highway and Forestry Committees are already involved as county property is involved, the Committee felt the County's interests were already well represented. Per the standing rules of the Committee, should such trails develop, the Committee shall advertise, and promote the advantages, attractions and resources of Vilas County.

Burzinski distributed copies of the revised Tourism page for the Schenk study which she received after Schenk's presentation to the Finance Committee. She noted that she had spoken to the Schenk representative after the presentation expressing disappointment that the information presented to the Finance Committee was not the same as discussed earlier with her. General discussion followed and the Committee felt that accurate study content was Schenk's responsibility.

Next meeting – The next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for January 3, 2012, at 9am in Conference Room #2.

There being no further items on the agenda, Chairperson Thorpe adjourned the meeting at 11:45am.

Respectfully submitted, Janet R. Christianson

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