



Vilas County Tourism &  
Publicity Committee Meeting  
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March 11, 2014

Members Present: Linda Thorpe, Emil Bakka, Leon Kukanich

Members Excused: Ron DeBruyne, Mark Rogacki

Others Present: Cindy Burzinski, Vilas County Tourism  
Janet Christianson, Vilas County Tourism  
Sheila Schmidt, Phelps Chamber

Thorpe called the regular meeting to order at 9:00am in Conference Room #1, Vilas County Courthouse, Eagle River. The meeting was properly posted and notices sent to all media provided on March 4, 2014.

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

**Motion by Bakka, to approve the minutes of February 4, 2014 as distributed as corrected, seconded by Kukanich; motion carried.**

**Introductions** – Self-introductions. The Committee welcomed Sheila Schmidt, recently appointed director of the Phelps Chamber of Commerce.

**Consolidation of Education, Tourism, Economic Development & Library Committees**– There was no updated information from the Legislative & Judicial Committee. Thorpe noted some related items presented at the Governor’s Conference on Tourism regarding cooperation between differing entities (i.e. agri-tourism) and that tourism is the fastest growing industry in the United States.

**Musky Marathon** – Christianson noted receiving one response regarding the awards presentation at the March County Board meeting. She is working on the presentation and received some ideas regarding format.

**Motion by Bakka, seconded by Kukanich to accept the 2013 Musky Marathon Final Report as submitted; motion carried.** Copies will be prepared for distribution to the Board.

The letter requesting Musky Marathon certificates was discussed. The Committee concurred that as the muskies were not registered in the Marathon, a Marathon certificate could not be provided. Christianson will prepare a letter for Thorpe’s signature.

**Vilas County Chamber** – Burzinski noted the March meeting would be the nomination of officers.

The Chamber has been providing feedback during the development of the printed silent sport map. Schmidt noted their community is working closely with Great Headwaters Trails on a DNR grant application for development of a trail between Phelps and Conover.

The next Chamber meeting would be 1pm, March 13 in Sayner.

**2014 Vilas County Travel Guide** – Waiting for final report.



**Pilch & Barnet, Inc. Contract Conversion from one (1) year to three (3) year** – The Committee reviewed the resolution regarding the conversion of Pilch & Barnet’s current one (1) year contract to a three (3) year contract. **Motion by Bakka, seconded by Kukanich to approve and advance the Resolution to the March County Board meeting; motion carried.**

**Northwoods of Wisconsin Five County Branding Grant** – Burzinski reported that with the conclusion of the grant funding, the participating counties have agreed to continue funding, including maintaining the website and the ‘Northwoods personality app’, as well as develop a process to add counties in the future. Burzinski indicated she is preparing a thank you/summary letter as part of the evaluation wrap-up.

**Vilas County Trail Map/App Grant Project** – As Burzinski noted earlier, the process in developing the printed silent sport map has been a learning experience. The coordination between gathering the data (the trail groups), data input and map creation (Vilas County Mapping), presentation and design (Pilch & Barnet) review (the chambers), revision, and draft has been more involved. While slightly later than initially planned, the print map and app are still slated for publication and release by May.

**Equipment Purchase** – To more efficiently conduct business, Burzinski recently used an iPad from IT. Duening (IT) indicated the unit was available for purchase - \$565.04 with the 4G Verizon package and Burzinski requested permission to purchase the iPad. **Motion by Bakka, seconded by Kukanich, to authorize Burzinski to purchase the unit or similar unit motion carried.**

**Economic Development Corporation Report** – Bakka noted a recent telephone conversation with Mr. Juday regarding tenants for the Highway 70 Manufacturing Incubator. Bakka indicated Mr. Juday is taking a very active interest in obtaining tenants for the Incubator.

**Department Report** – The February monthly report was distributed. Burzinski noted that inquiries were slightly up and website visits slightly down as compared to 2013.

**Correspondence/Communication** – Burzinski and Thorpe reported on their attendance at the 2014 Wisconsin Governor’s Council on Tourism, March 2-5 and such breakout sessions as innovations in technology. Thematic throughout the conference was ‘partnering for promotion’, such as agri-tourism, and in which Vilas County is very involved – with local chambers, with other counties and with inter/intra governmental agencies. Presentations by Roger Brooks (specialist in tourism development and marketing) and Eric Whitacre (musician, conductor and composer) provided enthusiasm and inspiration.

**Next meeting** – The next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for April 8<sup>th</sup> in conference room #2 at the Vilas County Courthouse, Eagle River.

There being no further items on the agenda, Thorpe adjourned the meeting at 10:17am

Respectfully submitted, Janet R. Christianson

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