

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

Others Present: Greg Smith, Discover Wisconsin  
Kelly Haverkamp, Vilas County UW-Extension  
Lyn Pilch, Pilch & Barnet  
Stephanie McClellan, Vilas County Chamber  
Cindy Burzinski, Vilas County Tourism  
Janet Christianson, Vilas County Tourism  
Fritz Laeser, Edgewater Inn & Cottages

Media Present: Eric Johnson, Lakeland Times

Thorpe called the regular meeting to order at 9:01am in Conference Room #2 of the Vilas County Courthouse. The meeting was properly posted and notices sent to all media provided on January 27, 2009.

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

**Motion by Rayala, seconded by Teichmiller to approve the minutes of February 3, 2009 as distributed; Motion carried.**

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

**2009 Vilas County Visitor Guide** – Deferred to April meeting.

**Musky Marathon** – Christianson noted development of the presentation is proceeding and invitations had been mailed for the March 24<sup>th</sup> awards presentation at the full County Board meeting.

**Vilas County Chamber** – McClellan indicated the Chamber Dinner had been well attended and thanked those members of the Committee that had been able to attend. The County Map update had been completed and copies were distributed. As the individual chambers will be busy gearing up for the spring/summer tourism season, the next project for the Chamber will be the Resort Tour held in the fall.

The next Chamber meeting is scheduled for March 12<sup>th</sup> in Sayner.

**Discover Wisconsin Presentation** – Noting the current economic conditions, and in an effort to work cooperatively with the State of Wisconsin, Vilas County and the various communities of Vilas County, Smith distributed copies of a media proposal to include Vilas County in both a regional and national advertising campaign. As Discover Wisconsin had worked closely with several Vilas County communities over the past years, there was considerable film available to devise a video segment for both national and regional marketing. He distributed a media proposal to the Committee in which was outlined the target national and core markets along with timeframe in each market, the program format and proposed airdates. He further detailed the components of the ‘Travel Channel Package’ including DVD copies of the 3 minute video segment, a customized webpage to be included on the Discover Wisconsin website which would include video clips, events calendar, and an area to request more information.

Responding to a question regarding measuring program effectiveness, Smith noted that in the past his office has received statistics from the Travel Channel regarding subscribers/viewers and that website statistics from both Discovery Wisconsin and the community (ies) featured in past shows have shown a marked increase around 'air time' of the program.

The Committee expressed interest in Discover Wisconsin's proposal; however, as the 2009 budget had been set, there were no funds available for such a project (which was estimated at almost one-third of the Tourism Department budget). The Committee indicated they would keep this proposal in mind and possibly look to develop/coordinate this project with another entity (possibly the chambers) to share the cost. The Committee thanked Smith for attending and bringing this project to their attention.

**2009 Departmental Publicity Calendar** – Burzinski indicated the process continues positively and appreciated the continued support of the department heads in preparing information for distribution. She noted that the Invasive Species Coordinator (Ritter) had informed her of several 'on street' contacts he had had with individuals as a result of the article.

**Equipment Purchase** – Burzinski indicated information was still being gathered regarding a display rack which would be brought to the Committee at the April meeting.

As there were currently two different versions of the Adobe Illustrator program in the Department, Burzinski had contacted the Information Technology Department regarding updating both machines to the same Adobe Illustrator software. She had received a quote of \$336.20 for the updates and requested permission to order the software update for both department machines. Noting there are funds in the budget, **motion by Bakka, seconded by Teichmiller to approve the purchase of the updated Adobe Illustrator software, motion carried.**

**Out of County Travel** – Burzinski distributed copies of the hotel confirmation letters for the Governor's Conference on Tourism to be held in La Crosse on March 15-17.

Noting an upcoming Original Northwoods Experience meeting, **motion by Bakka, seconded by Teichmiller to approve Thorpe attending the O.N.E. meeting scheduled for March 30<sup>th</sup> at 10am in Minocqua; motion carried.**

**Pilch & Barnet** – Copies of Pilch & Barnet's monthly report for February were distributed. A copy of the March/April issue of Midwest Living showing the card insert which had been developed was also passed around. Pilch indicated the Chicago Tribune e-newsletter should be distributed by the end of the week and Pilch & Barnet is working with Milwaukee Journal Sentinel regarding their format change.

She distributed a 'style guide' to be used to ensure that all visual presentations of Vilas County were uniform and conveyed a consistent message and style.

Pilch noted the Artists' Interactive deadline for artist's applications was extended to March 13<sup>th</sup>. Pilch & Barnet will be working to get the website updated for 2009.

Pilch announced the deadline for the next round of Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grants is April 1<sup>st</sup>. It appears the focus would be on grants with 'original theme' emphasis. Originally, planning on coordinating a project with Oneida County, Pilch and Barnet needed to revise that plan due to representational changes, there was not enough time to finalize the project so may be reconsidered at a

future time. In place of this, and to tie into the release of the movie shot in part in Manitowish Waters, Pilch proposed writing the grant to emphasize the gangster connection in the Northwoods. While the grant would focus on the August through October shoulder season, she hoped to be able to start some parts of the project earlier to coincide with the July release date of the movie. The Committee had some ideas for community projects such as a gangster geocache theme; period dress theme, coordination with local law enforcement for “raid night”; mystery plays or even period or gangster inspired meals/dishes. Due to the time constraints of the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline and as the Committee was not scheduled to meet before that date, **motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka, to have Pilch & Barnet prepare and submit a Joint Effort Marketing (JEM) grant application along the lines discussed at this meeting by the April 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.** During discussion it was noted the Committee would review the application at their April meeting and determine at that time whether to continue or withdraw the application. If the Committee determines to continue, a resolution would be prepared to submit to the full County Board at its April meeting. **Motion carried.**

Both Pilch and Burzinski updated the Committee on the progress of the Regional Marketing Committee (RMC) and the Original Northwoods Experience (O.N.E.) project. Pilch indicated the trademark process is continuing. Burzinski noted the steering committee (representatives from the Vilas County Chambers, Oneida County Tourism Council and herself), along with Haverkamp’s assistance from the UW-Extension, had been working to develop a groundwork agreement for the Project along with a pyramidal organizational chart. To continue this process, the RMC members proposed developing a resolution endorsing this regional marketing agreement to be presented to the governing boards of the member groups at their spring meetings.

The resolution would contain the reason for the agreement (To develop the economy of the Northwoods by establishing and promoting a brand that differentiates the Northwoods areas of Oneida and Vilas Counties from other regions in the state); contain specifics about the partnership (a five year agreement with opt-out provisions); along with a provision for Vilas County to act as the fiscal office (accept and administer all funds). Any agreement as a result of the resolution would be reviewed by Corporation Counsel. Feeling this was a step in the right direction in these economic times, **motion by Bakka, seconded by Teichmiller to approve the drafting of a resolution regarding the O.N.E. partnership between Oneida and Vilas Counties, to include the points mentioned above, for review by the Tourism & Publicity Committee at their April meeting; motion carried.** Noting that she would like to attend March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Regional Marketing Committee, Thorpe requested the Committee return to the Out of County Travel item.

Returning to Pilch’s report, she noted that after reviewing the approved media schedule, the agency had decided not to run Madison Magazine coop insert for the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter (April-June). It was felt that as the only placement in the Madison market, it would have little impact and that the funds could be better utilized elsewhere. Teichmiller expressed concern that without this placement, Vilas County would have no presence in the Madison market which he felt was necessary. McClellan noted that she was aware of several chambers that were in the Madison market because it was affordable to them. Burzinski noted that past practice has been to compliment not compete in markets with the chambers. While a replacement ad location had not been determined by the agency, Pilch indicated the funds may be better utilized for an additional ad (frequency) in another market, as match funds in a grant application or for an as yet undetermined ad placement. Pilch will keep the Committee informed regarding reallocating these budgeted funds.

Pilch and Burzinski indicated that due weather conditions, it had not been possible to shoot film for the winter television spot. Pilch indicated they would be working with Discover Wisconsin and using film they had shot over the years in 3-4 of the communities; however, this would consume all of the funds allocated for the winter ad project. Both Burzinski and Pilch felt the remaining film projects would proceed more smoothly

**Department Reports** – Burzinski distributed copies of the February monthly report. Although inquiries are down, she noted the Department is still in transition with the new ads and the rise in Internet visits is encouraging

Burzinski reported on her attendance at the Madison Fishing Show February 27 – March 1<sup>st</sup>. As this was more targeted audience, she felt it was a good opportunity to promote the area as most people recognized the Vilas County name. She distributed over 300 Visitor Guides. Behling felt it was critical to involve the Wisconsin DNR and tribal fisheries in improving the stocking and reproductive rates of fish to maintain the fishery. McClellan indicated the topic had and is discussed at Chamber meetings. Burzinski indicated that the Governor's Lac du Flambeau Area Promotion Committee, which included representatives from Tourism, the DNR and the tribe had also discussed the topic.

**Budget/Approval of Bills** – Burzinski noted the 2009 budget figures were not yet available from the Clerk's office; however an update should be available by the April meeting. **Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to approve the bills as presented –Cindy L. Burzinski - \$605.52; Janet Christianson - \$72.05; Clarion Suites - \$200.00; Alliant Energy Center of Dane County - \$76.00; Florida Micro - \$44.40; CDW Government, Inc. - \$336.20; PowerCom - \$35.54; Wisconsin Counties Association - \$20.00; Pilch & Barnet - \$15,450.00; Venture North Creations - \$60.00; motion carried**

**Possible Committee Evaluations** – As the Committee felt the handout needed more discussion, Thorpe indicated it would be placed on the April agenda.

**Correspondence** – None

**Next meeting** – Next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2009 at 9am in Conference Room #2.

**Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to adjourn at 11:38am; motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted, Janet Christianson