

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

Others Present: Lyn Pilch, Pilch & Barnet  
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 9:00am 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 Rayala, seconded by Bakka to accept the agenda to be taken in any order at the discretion of the chair; motion carried.**

**Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to approve the minutes of January 6, 2008 as distributed.** Thorpe updated the Committee on her conversation with Corporation Counsel regarding Committee/ Departmental evaluation processes. A sheet with possible committee evaluation questions/issues will be distributed for discussion at the March meeting. **Motion carried.**

**Introductions/Announcements** – No introductions required.

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

**Musky Marathon** – Christianson distributed drafts of the final report for review. She noted that letters had been sent to all plaque winners and the prizes distributed to the drawing prize winners. Invitations along with final reports should be mailed out the end of February or the first week of March for the March 24<sup>th</sup> awards presentation at the full County Board meeting. **Motion by Bakka, seconded by Rayala to approve the 2008 Vilas County Musky Marathon Final Report as presented; motion carried.** The Committee thanked Christianson for the work done on the Marathon.

The Committee was also shown samples of the promotional items (tape measure, picture frames and pens) ordered for distribution during the 2009 Musky Marathon.

**Vilas County Chamber** - Burzinski distributed invitations to the Vilas County Chamber Dinner scheduled for February 24<sup>th</sup> in Arbor Vitae at Marty's Place North. The Chamber is excited to have Michelle Madl, a Technical School instructor and Training and Development Consultant, as the featured speaker on Staying "Uplifted" in "Downtrodden" Times. As several Committee members indicated an interest in attending, **motion by Behling, seconded by Rayala to approve any Committee member attending the Vilas County Chamber Dinner on February 24<sup>th</sup>; motion carried.** Committee members indicated they would have their reservations to Burzinski by the February 17<sup>th</sup> deadline.

The next Vilas County Chamber meeting was scheduled for February 12<sup>th</sup> at 1pm.

During discussion of Chamber activities, Behling wondered if the Chamber had considered presenting events such as Summer Solstice parties, etc. He noted they were very popular in other areas and might be something to consider during the 'early season'. Teichmiller wondered if the County Chamber might coordinate with local chambers on early season events.

**Pilch & Barnet** – Pilch noted that they are working on the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the Artists Interactive Grant for the tri-county area (Oneida, Price and Vilas Counties) and noted several changes from the 1<sup>st</sup> year of the grant (shortened the period from May 1 thru June 30<sup>th</sup>, scheduled on the weekends, coordinate with already scheduled events and developed defined regions with coordinators). These changes should provide more structure to both the artists and the visitor and by coordinating with already existing events, it was felt that both events could be advertised to the fullest. When questioned about the involvement of such facilities as the North Lakeland Discovery Center, Conserve School or Nicolet College, Pilch indicated that at this time, the facilities are as involved as they want to be. Behling wondered if this activity might be expanded to a Renaissance-type event to combine, art, food and activities.

The next grant cycle deadline is April 1<sup>st</sup> and Pilch noted that they are researching applicable grant possibilities.

Pilch distributed copies of the Marketing Report (from contract award date thru January) noting the Midwest Living insert and the Direct Mail Card have been completed (distributed final copy); the Weather Channel crawl has been uploaded and the office is working with Burzinski to keep the information updated. The Face Book page should be completed by the end of February in time for 'spring break' consideration. Pilch also noted that they are working with the local chambers as well as with the State of Wisconsin to determine what video is available for the winter TV segments. Teichmiller encouraged Pilch to contact Discover Wisconsin for available area footage.

Burzinski indicated she is working on the items (accommodation, restaurant, and/or activity coupons) for the getaway package and will stay in touch with Pilch & Barnet.

Pilch also indicated that the Regional Marketing Committee was proceeding and were considering registering Original Northwoods Experience (O.N.E.) as a trademark. Per Pilch, the estimated cost would be \$200-\$300 per county with Pilch & Barnet acting as registering agent. **Motion by Teichmiller, seconded by Rayala to approve Vilas County contributing to the costs to register the trademark, Original Northwoods Experience (O.N.E.) not to exceed \$300; motion carried.**

**2009 Departmental Publicity Calendar** – Burzinski noted the process appears to be going well. In addition to newspaper articles, some articles have also generated coverage by the television stations.

**Out of County Travel** – Burzinski noted the ITBEC Marketing Committee may schedule additional meetings regarding the sport show promotion; however dates and locations were not known at this time. Considering that several meetings of this multi-county group may be called between Tourism & Publicity Committee meetings, and knowing Burzinski will keep the Committee updated on these meetings, **motion by Teichmiller, seconded by Bakka, to authorize Burzinski to attend as necessary any ITBEC Marketing Committee meetings regarding the sport show promotions; motion carried.**

**Department Reports** – Burzinski noted the Green Bay Show was very well attended and it was a unique experience talking with the visitors. The cooperation between the entities manning the booth was also good as the various areas offered different recreational opportunities. There were no materials left and the promotional craisins provided a great conversation starter. The logoed clothing also created a rapport with booth visitors and Burzinski will bring in the shirt to show Committee members.

The next show is the fishing show in Madison on February 27 – March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Burzinski and Pilch noted a situation related to ad approval. As an ad deadline may occur before a Tourism Committee meeting, a procedure should be available for ad approval. To cover these situations, **motion by Rayala and seconded by Behling, to authorize Burzinski to contact Thorpe, as Tourism Committee Chair, to review ads, make recommendations and/or provide approval; motion carried.**

Copies of the monthly report were distributed. Burzinski noted that the report appears slightly different as some reporting detail is no longer available. The report should evolve as the campaign progresses.

Noting that advertising should be positive and proactive and not reactive, Behling wondered if there any methods to gather feedback on the accommodations filled during any particular time period. It was noted that room tax would be a reliable method; however, it is usually not available until the following quarter and not all areas have room tax. Pilch indicated that a strong customer service message was needed during these economic times, and noted that packaging with other area businesses (accommodations with restaurants, accommodations with recreation providers, restaurants with recreation providers, etc.) reminded all to support local businesses. Having local businesses more involved, knowing about local activities and/or shops is a positive way to support the area.

**Budget/Approval of Bills** – Distributing copies of the 2008 budget, Burzinski noted that one line item, Postage, had exceeded planned expenditures; however, total expenditures were still within the Department budget. **Motion by Behling, seconded by Teichmiller to approve the 2008 Budget Report as presented and recommend a line item transfer from Telephone to Postage to cover the additional expense; motion carried.**

**Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to approve the bills as presented –**  
**2008 Budget items – Vilas County Chamber - \$517.16; Florida Micro LLC - \$81.39; Celtic - \$19.80;**  
**2009 Budget items – Cindy L. Burzinski - \$356.36; Janet Christianson - \$20.35; Vilas County Chamber - \$42.00; Wisconsin's Governor's Conference on Tourism - \$175.00; Venture North Creations - \$7.50; Clermont - \$102.47; PowerCom - \$2.49; Ocean Spray Cran., Inc. - \$229.46; Wildwood Promotions - \$70.53; motion carried.**

**Correspondence** – Burzinski updated the Committee on her involvement with the Sheriff's Department program, Project Lifesaver, for individuals with cognitive disorders that are at risk for wandering. She briefly reviewed the highlights of the program and indicated she will be working with them on the development of a brochure and the press release and/or press conference.

She also noted a request from Greg Smith of Discover Wisconsin to be placed on the March agenda.

**Next meeting** – Next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2009 at 9am in Conference Room #2.

**Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to adjourn at 10:48am; motion carried.**

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

Respectfully submitted, Janet Christianson