

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

Others Present: Stephanie McClellan, Vilas County Chamber
Lyn Pilch, Pilch & Barnet
Cindy Burzinski, Vilas County Tourism
Janet Christianson, Vilas County Tourism

Thorpe called the regular meeting to order at 9:03am in Conference Room #1 of the Vilas County Courthouse. The meeting was properly posted and notices sent to all media provided on October 1, 2008.

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 September 10, 2008 as distributed; motion carried.

Introductions/Announcements – Lyn Pilch was introduced to the Committee.

2009 Vilas County Visitor Guide – Due to decreased ad sales (as noted at the September meeting), Al Hanley from Assured Associates had contacted Burzinski regarding options available: decrease the book a total of sixteen (16) pages or decrease the number of books printed. As the Committee had been informed of possibly decreasing the book eight (8) pages, during discussion it was felt that losing an additional 8 pages would greatly affect the effectiveness and quality of the Guide; therefore, **motion by Rayala, seconded by Behling that the number of 2009 Vilas County Visitor Guides published be decreased to 40,000 as recommended by Assured Publications; motion carried.** Burzinski indicated she would call Assured to let them know the Committee decision.

Pilch & Barnet – While the County's media schedule is usually prepared prior to the individual chamber plans, due to the change in agencies, Pilch noted their plan for gathering information from the individual chambers regarding their 2009 advertising plans and incorporating those plans into the County's plan. She also received ideas and guidelines from the Committee (such as the type of media mix – print, internet & display) along with the target and geographical markets. It was also important, she noted, that the Committee and the agency have the same ideas as to the look/brand image of the County. The Committee indicated that a new concept may be possible; however, budgetary constraints in 2009 may limit what can be done.

Responding to Pilch's questions regarding the website, Burzinski indicated that the website was done entirely inhouse and appreciated any ideas to improve the site. Noting the need for additional photos/video in the county's photo library, Burzinski indicated that CD's of the county's photos would be forwarded to Pilch & Barnet for use in developing future ads. The local chambers will also be contacted to see what may be available for use.

Pilch indicated that Artists Interactive, a JEM (Joint Effort Marketing) grant Vilas County had participated in during 2008, had recently been awarded 2nd year funding. While the County did receive inquiries from this promotion during 2008, they look forward to increased inquiries during the 2nd year with website upgrades and additional Internet exposure. Pilch also noted recent

discussions regarding a new grant proposal highlighting local agricultural products and local culinary establishments. Burzinski noted a new 2009 event being developed in just that direction.

Noting a public radio announcer's link to the Northwoods (property in Vilas County), Teichmiller thought that may be a venue to inform people about Vilas County.

Pilch thanked the Committee for their ideas and felt that she had a good idea about the direction the Committee and agency wanted to take the County. She indicated she would be keeping in close touch with Burzinski and using the preliminary budget figures provided (approximately \$108,000) have a preliminary media schedule available for Committee review at their November meeting. The media schedule would then be finalized as soon as the County's 2009 budget is approved by the County Board.

Musky Marathon – Registrations continue with some great fish being registered. Slightly lower numbers than last year but looking forward to a late season surge.

Vilas County Chamber - McClellan indicated the chambers were looking forward to the Resort Tour in Presque Isle on October 15th. Four (4) businesses were scheduled on the tour and with presenter Sarah Klavas of the WI Department of Tourism, promised to be well attended.

The Chamber continues work on updating the county map with ad sales scheduled to begin in mid-October. It was noted that while the county maps are usually produced in years opposite the local maps (to avoid conflicts in ad sales), this year the maps fell during the same time. To help promote ad sales, one idea proposed was to have the county map on one side and the various community detailed maps on the other side, along with possible day trip ideas. McClellan indicated she would take the information back to the Chamber for discussion.

Celtic, Inc. – Burzinski noted that the ads are proceeding as scheduled. She also indicated that she had received communications from several people she had worked with at Celtic noting that they were glad to have worked with Vilas County and hope to be able to work with the County again in the future and were glad to be parting on such good terms.

2009 Proposed Departmental Publicity Calendar – Based on the number of departments and the information noted in the surveys, Burzinski hoped each department would be able to sign up for a minimum of two (2) articles during the year. She noted that many of the departments responding to the survey had indicated frequently asked questions that could serve as a starting point for article development and indicated that she would be willing to help any department requesting her help in developing articles. Those departments that already have extensive experience with press releases could continue or also ask for any assistance as needed. The Committee supported the calendar approach and suggested article ideas for those departments that may be harder to write about. Burzinski indicated the letter to department heads and the proposed Departmental Publicity Calendar should be ready for Committee review at the next meeting.

Equipment Purchase – Noting the department's digital camera needed to be replaced, Burzinski presented three (3) quotes for a model she felt filled the department's needs. In reviewing the information and noting the local vendor, **motion by Rayala, seconded by Teichmiller to approve purchasing the Canon Powershot SX110 IS, including additional 2GB memory card and carrying case from Shutterbug in Eagle River for \$367.00; motion carried.**

Out of County Travel – Burzinski requested approval to attend a promotional marketing meeting in Antigo on October 21. **Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to approve Burzinski attending the meeting in Antigo; motion carried.**

Burzinski also noted the Governor's Northern Wisconsin Economic Summit was scheduled for November 17th & 18th in Lac du Flambeau. **Motion by Teichmiller, seconded by Rayala to approve Burzinski's registration and travel to attend the Governor's Northern Wisconsin Economic Summit in November in Lac du Flambeau; motion carried.** Rayala and Teichmiller indicated they may be attending as representatives of other committees and/or businesses. Both Behling and Bakka indicated they were interested in attending as well. **Motion by Teichmiller, seconded by Rayala, to approve Behling and Bakka to attend the Summit to represent the Tourism & Publicity Committee; motion carried.**

Department Reports – Burzinski distributed the September monthly report noting that while travel guide requests had increased for September, overall inquiries year to date were still lower than 2007.

Budget/Approval of Bills – Burzinski noted that the 2008 budget remains on track. Noting the large balance remaining in County Promotion, Behling asked if unexpended 2008 funds could be carried over to 2009 especially in light of the new agency and the possibility of new ad creation. Noting a carry over request would need to be part of the 2009 request reviewed by the Finance Committee, Burzinski indicated the Celtic bills were only through August and that the funds would be fully expended by the end of the year. **Motion by Rayala, seconded by Teichmiller to approve the bills as presented – Cindy Burzinski – \$170.82; WACVB - \$69.00; Clermont - \$14.99; Vilas County Chamber – \$40.00; Guest Services - \$96.75; Vilas County Chamber - \$288.60; PowerCOM - \$53.37; Celtic - \$12,440.39; The Shutterbug - \$367.00; motion carried.**

2009 Proposed Budget – For the Committee's information, Burzinski distributed copies of the proposed 2009 budget as forwarded to Finance for the budget hearings scheduled for October 20th & 21st.

Correspondence – Christianson updated the Committee regarding out of country inquiry requests. While the procedure seems sound, Behling recommended she consult with the County's IT department regarding responding to inquiries using foreign servers as the servers may provide unwanted distribution of the County's email address and increased 'spam' mail.

Next meeting – As the County Board meeting was moved from November 11 to November 12th, the next regular Tourism & Publicity Committee meeting is scheduled for November 11th at 1pm in Conference Room #2

Motion by Rayala, seconded by Bakka to adjourn at 11:08am; motion carried.

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

Respectfully submitted, Janet Christianson