

Members Present: Linda L Thorpe, James Behling, Fred Radtke, Erv Teichmiller

Members Excused: Charles Rayala

Others Present: Cindy Burzinski, Vilas County Advertising
Janet Christianson, Vilas County Advertising

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 June 3, 2008.

Motion by Radtke, seconded by Teichmiller to accept the agenda to be taken in any order at the discretion of the chairman; motion carried.

Motion by Teichmiller, second by Radtke to approve the minutes of May 6, 2008. During discussion, the following items were noted for correction:

Page 3, Paragraph 1 – September 17th should be September 16 for County Board meeting;

Page 2, Paragraph 2 – Item #2 of Standing Rules questioned "...all necessary printing as related..." should printing be publicity? Committee felt publicity was a better word and should be inserted in place of printing.

Page 1, Introductions – Behling questioned if Rushlow's comments should have been included in more detail. Thorpe noted she was working with Rushlow to clarify some of the ideas mentioned.

Motion by Behling; seconded by Thorpe to amend the minutes as discussed; motion carried. The original motion to approve the minutes was withdrawn and **motion by Teichmiller, second by Radtke to approve the minutes of May 6, 2008 as amended; motion carried.**

Introductions and Announcements – None needed.

Vilas County Musky Marathon – Nothing to report at this time.

Vilas County Chamber – Burzinski announced that Stephanie Tralongo, Vilas County Chamber President had accepted a position at the Minocqua/Arbor Vitae/Woodruff Chamber as events coordinator and would remain Chamber President. There was no information available on her replacement at the Lac du Flambeau Chamber. Teichmiller briefly noted the recent Minocqua/Arbor Vitae/Woodruff Chamber staff changes (Diane Hapka replaced Kari Canfield as Director; Tralongo replaced Heather Beach as events coordinator) returns the Chamber to full staffing.

Behling noted some of the thoughts he shared with the Chamber regarding hunting (some focus and/or advertising directed bringing hunters to the area) and the proposed package giveaway (county liability?). Burzinski briefly reviewed the Chamber's upcoming packet survey to assess the effectiveness of the packet distribution project and the package giveaway and indicated the County's Corporation Counsel had reviewed and approved the language. The survey has been launched and will run through May, 2009. Radtke noted that in a recent discussion at Headwaters, Inc., it was noted that Vilas County distributes more packets than Forest & Oneida County combined.

The next Vilas County Chamber meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 19th at 1pm at the Presque Isle Community Center. Teichmiller indicated an interest in attending the June meeting and will

check his calendar and let Thorpe know if he plans on attending. Future meeting dates/locations were also noted (July 17th – Boulder Junction; August 21st – Manitowish Waters; September 18th – Land O’Lakes; October – no meeting due to Resort Tour; and November 20th – Eagle River; no December meeting set). Behling indicated from his attendance at the last meeting the meetings presented a great opportunity to share information and ideas for all involved.

Celtic Advertising, Inc. – Burzinski distributed copies of the media kit which has been distributed by Celtic. As the Committee reviewed the contents, she briefly discussed how the media kits are used.

A copy of the ISTHMUS ad was distributed for Committee review.

After reviewing the information on the impressions and click thrus from recent Google and JSOnline Internet advertising, Burzinski indicated she and Celtic were reviewing and modifying the Google AdWords used. It is difficult to judge the effect of the rise in gasoline prices (fewer trips to the area or longer stays once they’ve arrived); however, the Advertising Department and Chambers are very involved in the development of accurate, effective keywords for Internet searches.

Advertising Agency Request for Proposal (RFP) – The Committee reviewed the draft Request For Proposal (RFP) for an advertising agency received at the May meeting and had some revisions:

- a. Page 4 – Item #5, should read C.D.T (for Central Daylight Time)
- b. Page 5 – Item #9, date to be inserted should be August 22nd
- c. Cover Letter and Page 1 – Last Paragraph – \$15,000 should be changed to \$18,000

Behling wondered if something should be included requesting information on the financial health or sustainability of the agency (perhaps two sequential annual reports). When asked how those documents judge financial health; Behling noted the reports could show company growth, capital improvement; expansion plans; and their profits vs. investment strategies. Burzinski indicated she would check with Corporation Counsel regarding the inclusion of this item in the RFP.

Burzinski also distributed a draft of a proposed evaluation format for Committee review. Teichmiller questioned the possible conflict of interest with other area chambers and how agencies would be able to be creative and unique with each. Behling noted it would be important to make sure the agency knows the area and wondered if there was a specific reason for the RFP at this time. Noting no specific reason, Burzinski indicated that with technological and ideological changes since the contract was awarded, the RFP process ensured that Vilas County had the best advertising agency “fit” for our situation and budget.

Burzinski indicated that the Department had a list of approximately 13 agencies to contact. As the RFP process requires ad placement in local newspapers, she noted she worked with Corporation Counsel to develop the wording of the ad to be placed in the local papers (Vilas County News Review, Lakeland Times and FYI Northwoods). She also noted she will be working with Corporation Counsel on the wording for the resolution for awarding the agency contract.

Motion by Behling, second by Teichmiller to approve the Request for Proposal (RFP) for distribution as amended (items a, b & c above written), along with any language determined necessary by Corporation Counsel review regarding financial/sustainability requirements, motion carried.

2007 Annual Report – Burzinski distributed copies of the 2007 Vilas County Advertising Department Annual Report for Committee review. Teichmiller questioned how the media mix and target areas (described in Appendix I) were determined, how their effectiveness was determined and what latitude is provided for the changing advertising needs. Burzinski indicated the advertising agency's media proposal was reviewed by the Advertising and Economic Development Committee and after considerable discussion the final mix was established. As to effectiveness, all inquiries are tracked and compiled as part of the monthly report reviewed by the Committee. While there are monies allocated to Special Projects/Promotions, and some changes may be needed (ie change in publication date, cancellation of ad opportunity, etc.) there is little flexibility in the approved media schedule.

Behling noted it was important to develop new markets while sustaining the current markets. Radtke mentioned that he had noted the growth of the senior group, especially from the Northern Illinois/Southeastern Wisconsin areas. Burzinski noted that the Conversion Study conducted by the Department in 2003, had been a very useful tool in developing media guidelines at that time and that perhaps it was time to consider another conversion study.

Teichmiller wondered about the time remaining on the JEM (Joint Effort Marketing) grants and Burzinski indicated that all grants had been completed in 2007. As the county chambers and entities cooperating in the JEM grants saw a need to keep the biking and fishing information available, they are all contributing to keeping those individual websites (www.northwoods biking.com and www.northwoods fishing.com) active. The sites provide local businesses the opportunity to promote related packages they may have available and the cooperating entities have the ability to update and edit their own portions of the site so the information remains current. The Harvest & Heritage information was a link on the www.vilas.org website. The Vilas County Chamber, in cooperation with local chambers, and with other area county chambers, has worked cooperatively to represent the Northwoods area and seek grants to benefit the entire area. Individual chambers also apply for and receive JEM grant funding for local tourism projects.

Out of County Travel – Burzinski requested permission to attend the North Central International Trade Business and Economic Council (ITBEC) Tourism Committee meeting scheduled for June 18th in Crandon. Thorpe will also be attending that meeting. **Motion by Teichmiller, second by Behling, to authorize Burzinski attending the North Central ITBEC meeting in Forest County on June 18th; motion carried.**

Advertising Department Report – Copies of the monthly report of May inquiries were distributed with Burzinski noting that both website visits and inquiries year-to-date are down from the same time last year. A copy of the breakdown of Midwest Living bulk requests was also distributed. While gas prices may have some affect, Burzinski indicated she will be working with Celtic to see what options may be available. Again, a conversion study may be needed to study the quantity vs. quality of the inquiries received. Teichmiller questioned if similar reports were available from the local chambers and Burzinski indicated she would check with them and report back to the Committee.

Regarding the publicity portion of the Committee's new responsibilities as proposed by Rushlow, Burzinski and Thorpe indicated they had been discussing several ideas. Noting there are departments that are doing a good job of issuing press releases, it was thought that other departments

may be interested in doing press releases and are unsure as how to proceed. One idea had been to “spotlight” a different department each month; however, that may not work for all departments. Burzinski indicated the most effective press releases are those that are newsworthy and timely. As a guide, the development of a timeline may be an effective starting point (such as March – Employee Achievement Awards; April – County Government Week; June – Invasive Species Month; etc.). It was recommended that the various departments be surveyed to see what publicity efforts they are already engaged in, what efforts they may be interested in and department programs/projects/grants available to the public. Thorpe thought it may be beneficial to engage the full County Board membership as members of the various county oversight committees to let the departments know of the Tourism & Publicity Committee’s efforts and the forthcoming survey to the department heads. She will work with Burzinski to develop a brief Committee Report on this subject.

Teichmiller questioned if the Advertising Department would be writing and doing the press releases for all departments. As the departments are more knowledgeable about their particular areas and programs, it was felt the Department Director could offer technical assistance to the various county departments as needed. Burzinski indicated she and Christianson would work with Thorpe to put together a brief survey for review at the next Committee meeting. The survey would be designed to be sent to the committee chairs and department heads to be completed and returned to the Tourism and Publicity Committee. The Committee would then review the surveys to determine the next step.

Advertising Budget/Approval of Bills – Burzinski distributed the bills and copies of the budget to date with a brief explanation regarding a change in the Chamber billing procedure for bulk packet/first class postage which will now show receipts to the Department’s postage line item and expenses and receipts being close to equal at year’s end. **Motion by Teichmiller, second by Radtke to approve the bills as presented -- Celtic, Inc. - \$6,036.29; PowerCom - \$40.20; Quill - \$55.42; Cindy L. Burzinski - \$169.18; Cindy L. Burzinski - \$5.59; Janet Christianson - \$41.92; US Postmaster - \$2,000.00; Vilas County Chamber - \$999.83; Clermont Printing - \$6.65; motion carried. Motion by Radtke, second by Teichmiller to accept the budget as presented; motion carried.**

Correspondence/Communications – None.

Next meeting – The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 1st, at 9am in Conference Room #2 of the Vilas County Courthouse.

Motion by Radtke, second by Teichmiller, 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