

Tourism, Promotion and Economic Development Committee

May 20, 2014

Chair Karen Dahl called the Tourism, Promotion and Economic Development Committee to order at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, March 20, 2014 in the County Boardroom of the Courthouse Annex. Members present were Karen Dahl, JoAnn Nickelatti, and Glenda Sullivan. Others in attendance were: Al Lorenz-WIMRPC, Sue Noble-Vernon Economic Development Association, Michele Engh, and Jody Audetat.

Proper public notice was confirmed. The committee reviewed the minutes from March 20, 2014. **Motion by Nickelatti, second by Sullivan to approve the minutes. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Dahl moved to item number four (4) on the agenda-Introduction of Visitors. Dahl had visitors around the table introduce themselves and then introduced herself.

Dahl moved to item number five (5) on the agenda-Public Comment and Remonstrances. Engh spoke about the Cheyenne Valley in the Town of Forest. Engh stated she has received a notice of funding source and wondered if this was something that Vernon County would be interested in. The State Historic Preservation Office has the opportunity to write a grant application to the National Parks Office for \$25,000.00-\$100,000.00 worth of funding to do a survey of sites of Black and Hispanic historic settlements. Vernon County has a historic settlement in Cheyenne Valley. The grant would offer the possibility to have the historical sites surveyed. Once surveyed, monuments may need to be erected or tourism pointed to that area. The area has the first desegregated schools and churches in the US. There was some discussion on Cheyenne Valley. Dahl asked what it would entail. Engh stated it would provide the money to pay for the administration of the grant; someone would be hired to locate, survey these sites, and catalog. Engh stated we just need to say yes to accept the funds if they come through. Dahl moved ahead to **item number 8c. Motion by Sullivan, second by Nickelatti to approve pursuing the State Historic Preservation Office grant. All in favor. Motion carried.**

Dahl moved back to item number six (6) on the agenda-Finance Statement. Dahl gave the finance report. There are two outstanding items left to pay from regular budget. There was some discussion on the Vernon County Tourism Council Budget, no action was taken.

Dahl moved to item number seven (7) on the agenda-Ho-Chunk Funding and Use of Said Funds. Dahl discussed with the committee the approval process of spending Ho-Chunk funds. Dahl pointed out that the budget meetings will possibly be in August.

Dahl moved to item number eight (8) on the agenda-Reports of Various Tourism Entities: 8a. Vernon County Tourism-Marie Cimino, not present. 8b. Hidden Valleys-Bernie Arena and Joe

Fisher, not present. 8c. County Historical Society-Gary Krause, not present. 8d. Wisconsin Department of Tourism-Patrick Reinsma, not present. 8e. Alan Lorenz, Mississippi River Parkway Commission. Lorenz stated they are looking for a new representative to replace Anne Muirhead. That person is appointed by the governor. Agri-Tourism still needs a contact person. The group went through and also discussed the Great River Road Wisconsin book. Lorenz stated that the Rustic Road Committee is looking for additional roads. He asked committee for suggestions and said it should be a town road or a low volume county trunk highway.

Dahl moved to item number nine (9) on the agenda-Driftless Destinations-Adam Sonntag and Tim Hyma, not present. Dahl stated they were coming to discuss development of motorcycle routes. They received a \$37,000.00 grant to develop routes and would like mapping suggestions and ideas to attract motorcycles to the area. Dahl asked the committee for suggestions for scenic rides for them.

Dahl moved to item number ten (10) on the agenda-New Business: 10a. *The Round Barns of Vernon County*-David Macasaet, not present. Dahl stated there was a showing of *The Round Barns of Vernon County* recently and she would like to put items like this on the website and other tourism websites to market to visitors. 10b. Deanna Horack, Videographer, not present. Dahl stated she would like Horack to possibly do some videos of events. 10c. Community Inventories. Dahl would like to contact all local real estate brokers to get an inventory of vacant storefronts and industrial areas for construction in order to have links to those properties to attract people who may want to relocate here and start businesses. Sullivan stated that she would like a way to draw visitors into certain towns that don't get as much tourism now to bring money in. Dahl stated that it was suggested to her to talk to tour operators to have possible tour of towns or theme tours.

Dahl moved to item number eleven (11) on the agenda- Old Business. There was none.

Dahl moved to item number twelve (12) on the agenda- Set date for next meeting. Dahl stated that she would like to meet monthly. The next meeting will be on Monday, June 23, 2014 at 2:30 p.m.

Motion by Nickelatti, second by Sullivan to adjourn the meeting at 12:41 a.m. All in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Jody Audetat, County Clerk's Office.