

COMMITTEE REPORT

COMMITTEE: **Development & Planning**
CHAIRPERSON: **Ron Mapes**
DATE/TIME: **July 20, 2006. 7:00 p.m.**

PRESENT:

Baranski
 Berlage

Hasken
 Kluesner

Mapes
 Stoffregen

Other Board members: Marvin Schultz

Others: Pat Leitzen-Fye, Betsy Eaton, Emily Stoddard, Jess Farlow

MINUTES

Chairperson Ron Mapes called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

1. Minutes

Beth Baranski made a motion to approve the committee minutes of June 26 and July 11, 2006. Matt Kluesner seconded and the motion passed.

2. Old Business

- a) CVB Building Committee. Beth Baranski reported that the committee met and is aware that the County Board is waiting for a price per acre of the site they are interested in. They have a schematic floor plan they have developed and plan to view other visitor centers to determine what they like and that will help define the number of acres they will need. The committee consists of Beth Baranski, Betsy Eaton, Judy Gratton, Yerda Potter, and Emily Stoddard. The committee is also considering incorporating space for the economic development department as well as a meeting room.
- b) Greenway Planning grant. Terry Stoffregen reported that he has not yet received from Dave Dornbusch the list of names to write to for recommendations.
- c) Hotel/motel tax ordinance. Nothing has been received yet from the State's Attorney's Office. The committee would like the State's Attorney clarify the various ordinances regarding the CVB to combine them into one document as well as setting the due date for the tax payment to be the same as when the state payment is due. Baranski asked if it would be possible to incorporate a requirement for clearer reporting from lodging facilities. The committee discussed various aspects of reporting and how it could be accomplished. The consensus of the committee is that it is important to shorten the collection time allowed for the payment of the hotel/motel tax.
- d) Revolving loan fund criteria review. Pat Leitzen-Fye reviewed the recommended changes to the revolving loan fund criteria with the committee. Certain of the items added are for internal information and control and will not be included on the document that is sent to the applicant along with the application. Some other new passages have been added to the document. Leitzen-Fye stated that the Community Development Corporation (CDC) has had an opportunity to

contribute their ideas to this document. The committee would like the State's Attorney to review it before making a recommendation to the County Board.

3. New Business

- a) Discussion of CVB Advisory Board function. Emily Stoddard, chairperson of the CVB Advisory Board, advised the committee that at the recent CVB Advisory Board meeting they had a presentation about the history of the relationship with the ad agency, TDSM. They opened the meeting for public comment and conversation. Some comments were shared in writing. Robin Malpass of TDSM shared a statement made to her about an event held at Eagle Ridge and this person's unhappiness with the experience. Stoddard felt that Malpass was on the defensive at the meeting because of personal attacks by an advisory board member and Stoddard asked that if the person did this in their role as an advisory board member then that person should be removed from the board. Stoffregen reported that he felt Malpass made some interesting comments, including the need for better statistics using standard measuring practices established by the IACVB, such as unique visitors. Stoddard would like to move forward with marketing opportunities that come up so that they are working proactively in case the numbers do come in as low as people are saying. She asked about the CVB Task Force and would like it to answer the question once and for all if a 501(c) is the best organization to work within. The task force could determine the pros and cons of the organization and how a transition would be made. The committee commented that the Task Force hasn't met and one person needs to be replaced. Betsy Eaton and the committee discussed the process of approving the marketing plan in the last couple of years. Eaton stated that in 2004 there was difficulty getting a quorum for CVB meetings and the marketing plan for 2005 went forward with the input of staff. The statistics for 2005 were the best the CVB has ever had. In 2005, the 2006 marketing plan was developed with significant input from the CVB Advisory Board and the results are not what they had hoped for, but more in line with the results from 2003 and early 2004. Eaton stated that there is still some unexpended budget from the marketing line item to place some additional ads. Eaton also reported that TDSM was initially on the July agenda in order to start working on the 2007 marketing plan, but decisions made at the June meeting to start looking for a new agency shifted the focus of their presentation. The contract with TDSM ends on November 30, 2006. TDSM had pointed out to the CVB Advisory Board that they were going in a different direction with this year's marketing plan. Baranski asked if everyone is really sure that the marketing is the problem and if there aren't other variables that are having impact. Jess Farlow also commented that while TDSM followed the suggestions of the Advisory Board, they didn't change the advertising significantly enough. He suggests a challenge for marketing agencies, including the current agency, as a part of the interview process. The committee discussed the timeline of marketing and the need for a plan in order to make the advertising purchases as well as the flexibility to make changes to the plan. The committee discussed the membership on the Advisory Board to be composed of proportionate contributors or a broad diversity of representation. The committee discussed a concern about the buying power for the advertising and gaps in advertising. The consensus of Stoddard and

Farlow is that the board is not looking for a total revamping of the themeline or creative images but is looking for a boost in the direction and target of the marketing. Stoddard was questioned about her thoughts about the CVB Advisory Board and she feels that it is as good as it can be under this structure; the process bogs administrative decisions but positive things are happening and she has faith in the Advisory Board and the staff. The consensus of the committee is that the CVB should move forward with the RFP for marketing services and present at the August 28 Development & Planning Committee meeting. Eaton stated that the best time to transition to a new marketing agency is at the beginning of the fiscal year.

- b) Discussion of Rentech project's possible impact on Hwy 20 and project status report. County Administrator Dan Reimer reported that he has met with various department heads to talk about the impact of the project through the permitting process. Highway 20 and the entrance road may eventually be impacted once the construction phase begins. Some discussions should be started with IDOT. Merri Berlage suggested that, like the turn lanes at the River Ridge school, the County take the lead and it will get accomplished sooner. Mapes suggested that the Public Works Committee begin working with IDOT and this committee will assist in any way it can.

4. Staff Reports

- a) Building & Zoning. Mapes stated that the Zoning Officer had no report for this meeting. Berlage reported that the GIS Coordinator is working on the mapping of the ridge tops as requested.
- b) Economic Development. Leitzen-Fye reported that she has been trying to think of every possible impact and every possible challenge so that the Rentech project is the best project possible for Jo Daviess County. The scope of the project is huge and consists of many pieces. She thanked the committee for approving the OEDP last month and she would like to have it printed and distributed among the County Board, villages and other involved persons. She hopes to submit an annual report to the committee next month.
- c) CVB. Eaton reported that she will be attending a Visit Illinois meeting next week and will be receiving the official 2005 economic impact numbers. Eaton stated that there is a possibility of doing an additional campaign as they have in the past three years. There is some money available that was scheduled as an interfund transfer to their Capital Development Fund. In the past years, the amount of \$20,000 was transferred each year and \$100,000 was scheduled for FY2006. Of the amount budgeted, \$6500 has already been moved into other line items for other purposes. If \$20,000 was transferred to Capital Development, then \$73,500 would be available for an additional campaign with TDSM. Eaton will present the request to the Finance Committee at their meeting next week. The committee discussed if the campaign should go through TDSM. Eaton stressed that the current campaign is not a bad campaign; they just aren't seeing the results that they expected. Results are being compared to the best year ever; compared to previous years the results are right on pace.

5. Other Business – none

6. Citizens' Comments – none

7. Board Member Concerns

Berlage stated that she felt there was good communication at this meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. following a motion by Kluesner and seconded by Stoffregen.