

JULY 13, 2005

**CVB ADVISORY BOARD SPECIAL MEETING SUMMARY**

THE REASON FOR THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ADVISORY BOARD WAS TO GIVE THEM A CHANCE TO PUT ANY ISSUES THAT THEY MAY HAVE AS A BOARD IN WRITING AND SEND ON TO THE TOURISM TASK FORCE TO INVESTIGATE.

THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS WERE PRESENT:

JOANNE BIELEND  
GERRI LAMPARELLI  
EMILY STODDARD  
SUSAN GORDY  
JERRY MURDOCK  
HOWARD RABER  
PATRICIA GOLDTHORPE  
JESS FARLOW

OTHERS PRESENT:

MERRI BERLAGE  
RON MAPES  
BETSY EATON

SEVERAL WERE ALSO PRESENT IN THE AUDIENCE.

MERRI BERLAGE, COUNTY BOARD CHAIR OPENED THE MEETING REVIEWING THE PURPOSE OF THE MEETING, WHICH WAS TO PUT ANY ISSUES THAT THE ADVISORY BOARD MAY HAVE IN WRITING. ANY ISSUES THAT THE BOARD MAY HAVE WILL BE FORWARDED ON TO THE TOURISM TASK FORCE.

THE TOURISM TASK FORCE WHICH IS NOT IN PLACE AT THE TIME OF THIS MEEITNG, WILL CONSIST OF ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS, COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS, AND MEMBERS AT LARGE WHICH ARE WILLING TO HELP TAKE A HARD, OPEN-MINDED LOOK AT THE QUESTIONS WHICH THEY WILL BE PRESENTED AND GIVE A WRITTEN REPORT TO BOTH THE ADVISORY BOARD AND THE COUNTY BOARD WITH THE FINDINGS OF THE ISSUES PRESENTED TO THEM.

ALL BOARD MEMBERS WERE ASKED WHAT ISSUES THEY FELT NEEDED TO BE ADDRESSED AT THIS TIME. THE FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF THE COMMENTS MADE AT THIS SPECIAL MEETING.

1. WANTS 501c6 BECAUSE THE INDUSTRY SHOULD BE IN CHARGE WITH THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE PROFESSIONAL LEVEL POSSIBLE.
2. CURRENT STRUCTURE LACKS ACCOUNTABILITY.
3. RETENTION AND ATTRACTION OF QUALIFIED STAFF.
4. PERCEPTIONS OF THE STATE AND INDUSTRY.
5. LIMITATIONS OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT AUTHORITY.
6. MISSION OF COUNTY IS DIFFERENT THAN THAT OF CVB.
7. RESPONSE TIME NOT TIMELY.
8. GALENA MAY START THEIR OWN CVB.
9. NEEDS TO BE HARD CORE DATA TO PRESENT TO COUNTY WITH FACTUAL INFORMATION, NOT HEARSAY.
10. WOULD LIKE TO SEE PROS AND CONS OF BOTH 501 AND CURRENT STRUCTURE.
11. NEED TO HAVE COMPETITIVE SALARIES.
12. WHERE ARE ALL OUR BOARD MEMBERS?
13. YOU KEEP SAYING WE COULD HIRE BETTER PEOPLE, WHAT IS WRONG WITH THE PEOPLE WE HAVE? THEY ARE DOING AN EXCELLENT JOB.
14. WE NEED PROFESSIONALS WHO UNDERSTAND THE INDUSTRY.
15. BE POSITIVE!
16. LET'S GET CREATIVE, AND EXCITED. STAY POSITIVE.
17. IF NO CHANGE WITHIN THE CVB, THERE WILL BE CHANGE WITHOUT THE CVB.
18. COMMUNICATION IS LACKING.
19. COUNTY COULD HAVE AS MUCH INFLUENCE WITH A CONTRACT – MAYBE MORE.
20. DON'T SEE THE CONNECTION BETWEEN FRUSTRATION AND STRUCTURE.

AFTER EACH MEMBER WAS GIVEN A CHANCE TO VOICE THEIR ISSUES, WE HAD MUCH DISCUSSION. THE FOLLOWING IS AGAIN A SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES THAT WE TOUCHED UPON.

WHAT CLASSIFIES A PERSON AS AN INDUSTRY PERSON OR PROFESSIONAL? MANY FELT THAT A PERSON MUST BE DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH A TOURIST BUSINESS, HOTELS, B&BS, RESTAURANTS, ETC. HOWEVER, OTHERS FELT THAT IF YOU GET TECHNICAL, ALL BUSINESSES COULD BE RELATED TO TOURISM, FROM A GAS STATION TO A BANK.

WHO AREN'T WE COMPETITIVE WITH CONCERNING SALARIES? THERE WAS MUCH DISCUSSION ABOUT INCENTIVES AND BONUS DOLLARS. BERLAGE STATED THAT WHILE WORKING ON THE CURRENT SALARY SURVEY, IT LOOKS LIKE WE ARE RIGHT IN THE BALLPARK, WITH AN EXCELLENT BENEFIT PACKAGE. MEMBERS OF THE ADVISORY BOARD STILL FELT THAT INCENTIVES ARE A MUST IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY.

IT WAS NOTED THAT THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN JO DAVIESS COUNTY IS FLAT AT THIS TIME. BUT, IN OUR DISCUSSION WE ALSO NOTED THAT THE HOTEL/MOTEL TAX HAS GONE FROM 3 TO 5%; WE HAVE INCREASED OUR BED SPACE IN THE PAST FEW YEAR. SO ARE WE REALLY FLAT OR JUST SPREADING IT OUT OVER MORE BUSINESSES?

AN ELECTED BOARD WOULD BE MUCH MORE ACCOUNTABLE TO THE INDUSTRY, SINCE THE INDUSTRY PAYS THE TAX. IT WAS NOTED THAT THE INDUSTRY DOES NOT PAY THE TAX, THE VISITOR PAYS THE TAX, AND THE INDUSTRY COLLECTS THE TAX AND TURNS IT OVER TO THE COUNTY TO PROMOT TOURISM, OR OVERNIGHT STAYS. IT WAS NOTED THAT CAMPAIGN DOLLARS AND POPULARITY CAN WIN ELECTIONS, THAT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THE MOST CAPABLE PERSON IS PUT INTO THE POSITION.

AFTER A GREAT DEAL OF DISCUSSION THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WERE PUT TOGETHER TO FORWARD TO THE TOURISM TASK FORCE FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION AND RESEARCH.

- WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF GOING TO A 501c6 STRUCTURE? (ALSO TO BE COVERED UNDER THIS QUESTION – HOW ARE 501c6 STRUCTURED? HOW IS STAFF TURNOVER UNDER A 501c6?)
- WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE CURRENT STRUCTURE IN JO DAVIESS COUNTY?
- SALARY COMPARISON BETWEEN 501c6 AND CURRENT COUNTY SALARIES?

- HOW ARE PRIVATE 501c6 FUNDED?

THESE QUESTIONS WERE AGREED UPON TO BE FORWARDED TO THE TOURISM TASK FORCE TO BEGIN WORK. IT WAS ALSO REQUESTED THAT THE TASK FORCE BE PUT IN PLACE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. BERLAGE STATED THAT SHE FELT IT WOULD BE GOOD TO INTERVIEW INDIVIDUAL THAT MAY BE INTERESTED. ANYONE WHO IS INTERESTED OR KNOW OF SOMEON THAT MAY BE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT MERRI.