

**Pulaski County Board of Tourism  
Regular Board Meeting  
July 20, 2006**

**Members in Attendance:** John Greenlee, Pres., Twyla Cordry, Vice Pres., Todd Bailey, Rep., Dorothy Secrest, Rep., Ronnie Layman, Rep., Marsha Mercer, Hotel Alternate Rep.,

**Members Absent:** Bob Sutcliffe Sec., Dave Kessler, Treas., Steve Ehrhardt, Rep., Rebecca Beck, Rep.

**Also in Attendance:** Andy Thiem, Director, Beth Wiles Business Manager, Patty Newlon, Visitor Center Manager, Chuck Boone, KJPW, Kimberly Skaggs-Henson, County Treasurer candidate.

Meeting held at the Pulaski County Visitor Center with President John Greenlee calling the meeting to order at 5:33pm.

**Review of Minutes:** No discussion, no corrections, motion made, seconded and passed. Motion to accept the June board meeting minutes.

**Treasurer's Report:** Report given by Andy Thiem in absence of Treasurer: Trial balance building fund \$79,484.26, checking account \$33,035.04. Nothing extra ordinary in P&L, we are up in revenue again. We have a savings in employee expenses, and marketing expenses is a timing issue. You will notice that we have a prepaid account with \$1,395.00 and more to be added. We don't know how to change it yet but it is 2007 deposits that are being paid. It is being deducted from the expense account but it is not an expense for 2006. We will track that and try and do it after expenses and gross income so we show it on the EBIT line. So for now the prepaid will show 2007 prepaid on the expense line.

No discussion, motion made, second, and passed. Motion to accept Treasurer's report.

**Committee Report:**

**Strategic Planning:** Committee met and are continuing planning. Strategic Planning meeting will not be held following the Board Meeting this month.

## **Director's Report: Andy Thiem:**

- 1. Marketing Update:** Operation Homecoming was a success, but the numbers seemed to be down. Andy spoke with a lady from the Branson Veterans Task Force. They do three events in Branson a year, we are working with them and depending on cost we may exhibit during Veterans Week. We have an ad in the Group Travel Leader that is out. Top 5 inquiries YTD, #1 MO., #2 IL., #3 TX., #4 FL., #5 KS. #1 lead generator is the MO. Spring insert and #2 MVP. We have signed up for the Wichita show in Kansas, and we are also looking for the right opportunity in Oklahoma.
- 2. Meetings:** The Governors conference on tourism is in St. Charles this year September 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>. Brumley Sing is August 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> we are a sponsor with them because of the hotels. Hotel bookings are very strong for that week and we will most likely be sold out. Sam Allen has extended an offer to us to set up a booth in the Civic Center during that time. We will need to consider if we should put up a manned or unmanned booth or put out our brochures with Lebanon's booth. Twyla Cordry has offered a couple of her staff members to cover the booth if needed. Met with the County Commissions with our quarterly report and was very well received. They asked if we could offer them support and guidance on looking for grants on historic preservation and restoration regarding the Devils Elbow Bridge. Thanks to Todd Bailey Andy was able to make a presentation to the Richland Chamber of Commerce. MHLA association meeting was today. Discussed the H2B bill which is the exemption for temporary foreign workers. They are talking about a federal tax refund on long distance telephone charges back to 2003. Have a meeting with St. Louis attractions association August 13<sup>th</sup> to tap into the bus groups. Have sent a letter to MODOT regarding Amtrak and got their response back. Gave them demographics and what happens here and what we thought we could do as a Tourism Bureau to assist.
- 3. FLW Update:** Steve Ehrhardt sent a letter to GSA about Per-Diem. Sent it to Ike Skelton and he in turn got a hold of GSA. They responded to Ike and Ike responded to Steve. Still not very satisfactory in the information received from GSA. We have drafted a letter to GSA and also sent it to Ike telling them that we want access to what data is being used and how the hotels are chosen. Have seen Col. Megnia a

couple of times, he was attending the RCGA meeting and the Chamber of Commerce luncheon. Was able to meet and chat for a bit, gave him a letter and a little information on what we do, and also gave him a welcome packet. Have asked that when he gets settled to set up a face to face meeting to discuss his initiatives, and what we can continue to do on this end to drive revenue to FLW. Met with MWR, to continue to talk about group tours and how we can facilitate those as we had a negative experience with the last tour and the step on guides. A lot of it is due to ineffectiveness of the communication once it leaves our office and gets to MWR. The 94<sup>th</sup> engineers will be here around August 1<sup>st</sup>, the official ceremony is August 8<sup>th</sup>.

4. **Visitor Center Info:** We are open 7 days a week Memorial Day thru Labor Day; we have kept count of the visitors on the holiday weekend to kind of get a feel for what is happening. For the 4<sup>th</sup> of July we had 5 visitors. Our goal is to reach as many people as we can but not sure how cost effective it is to stay open. We may want to take into consideration as to wanting to stay open on the holidays. Stats for the month of June, 787 visitors that is 30% over last year. Total for the year 27,051, that is up 22% over last year. Phone inquiries 422 that is double from last year we are at 15,048 for the year and that is double from last year.
5. **Website Info:** Top referrals #1 FLW, #2 Visit MO. Top down loads #1 PCTB directory, #2 Rt.66 brochure, #3 Waynesville brochure, #4 Richland brochure, #5 Crocker brochure. Top 5 pages visited #1 Lodging chart, #2 Calendar of events, #3 Maps, #4 Restaurants, #5 Rivers

No discussion, motion made seconded and passed, motion to approve the Directors Report.

**Motel Tax:** For May we are in at \$33,256.39 that is 10% over last year. YTD we are trending 38% up in revenue. Occupancy report thru May we still have one or two properties that are still trying to figure out how to get that information to us in a timely manner. Taking that into account we are running 64.6% occupancy and \$62.38 ADR. We are also tracking what should be the Per-Diem group based on GSA's guidelines that we have received in the past. For the month of May that per-diem ADR is \$68.88. We are about \$3.00 ahead for what GSA says we should be.

**Old Business:** Show-Me State Games sponsorship update: Have talked to Ken Ash, he is sending information on what all we can offer potential sponsors. Met with the national chain restaurants and Ryan's and Cracker Barrel would consider it. But they can't say anything because it has to go to their corporate offices. Ruby Tuesday's is interested and normally they would go to corporate office as well but their franchisee does some things on the side for the local sponsorships and some of the other restaurants they own. But

none of them could commit without something specific that say's here's the sponsorship here's what you get, here's how much money it is and then they can send it on to their corporate office. The hotels have also expressed an interest as well with the opportunity to be a preferred hotel on the website accessible to people that are coming down to book their rooms. Talked to Cecilia in the Chamber office, about her going to her Chamber members talking to them about this being an opportunity for them and to get some exposure for their members, outside of the hotels and restaurants.

Twyla would like to figure out a way to get organizations to get together and not to hold large events on the same days, as not to hurt each other's attendance.

**New Business:** Kimberly Skaggs-Henson, County Treasurer candidate: Kimberly came by to introduce and tell us about herself and let us know her qualifications she has for the office she is running for.

No discussion, motion made, second and passed. Motion to adjourn meeting at 6:10pm