

Convention and Visitors Bureau
Board Meeting/ Meeting Agenda

Tuesday, November 30, 2004 – 6.30 p.m.

Meeting Call to Order: Jeff Butcher

Roll Call: Present – Shane Horton, Marilyn Josephson, Herb VanCleve, Tom Crandall, Jeff Butcher

Absent – Karen Hess, Judy Heinmiller, Darsie Colbeck, Norm Smith

Also Present – Lori Stepansky, Debra Schnabel, Janet Mell

Approval of Agenda: Approved

Public Comments: (At Debra Schnabel’s request to the chair, public comments were moved to first item of the meeting.)

Debra Schnabel submitted to the board the suggested amendments for the by-laws she had brought up during the November 23 Assembly meeting. Debra also stated that the suggested Borough Code changes would decrease the power and responsibilities of the CVB Board by creating a department where staff is appointed by the Borough Manager. She also stated that the current structure of having the Borough Manager appoint staff to the visitor center and not being managed by the board is not how code was written or how it always has been structured and questioned why the Bureau has not been developed as the code was written. Debra also said that the Bureau was written into code to be structured as a department the same as the Library and the Museum. Herb VanCleve discussed the tourism department’s difference from the Library and the Museum due to budget and funding and that the reason for the changes in the code was to clarify these meanings. Lori Stepansky commented that she was hired as the Tourism Director specified to be the department head for the Tourism Department in the Haines Borough and that it is established that she reports to the City Manager and the Mayor. Marilyn Josephson asked Debra if she recalled there being a tourism department before the 1% sales tax funding tourism was passed. Debra did not recall. Tom Crandall stated that having a meeting to go over the by-laws again would be a good idea to better define the changes and use them as a tool to inform the community and assembly the purpose and function of the Board. Jeff Butcher moved to schedule a meeting to discuss the by-laws further.

President’s Report: Director’s staffing proposal to City Manager – Lori explained a proposal she submitted to city manager Robert Venables about restructuring her department staffing which would save \$25k to \$30k in this fiscal year’s budget. She explained that Robert Venables requested a letter of support from the CVB Board for this idea. The board agreed that such personnel

issues are her decision and should be handled between her and the city manager who is also the personnel manager. Jeff Butcher will call or write a letter to Robert Venables reflecting these thoughts of the Board.

Quick Review of Budget – Flexible areas – Jeff Butcher discussed segments of the budget and how much is available for different items and stated that there isn't much left over to really work with to accomplish the goals of the department and the Board. He mentioned speaking with Debra Schnabel and telling her that the Board needed to spend less time defending the budget from being dipped into by other sources and more time working on projects outlined by the McDowell Report.

Define Measurable Results – Jeff Butcher suggested defining ways to measure progress of improvement for areas defined by the McDowell Report. Shane discussed how measurable some items can be as many strategies are seeded efforts that may not produce results for several years down the road. Tom commented that tourism is larger issue to the city's revenue than realized by the community and educating people about it is needed. Tom also stated that to improve tourism for Haines, efforts need to be made to make the community attractive to tourism such as flowers, benches, bathrooms, infrastructure and suggested creating a 5-year plan to reflect working on these tourism related projects.

Old Business:

Review of Strategies of McDowell Report – Jeff Butcher went through approximately all of the items listed in the strategic planning section of the McDowell Report asking board members to contribute their thoughts on what percentage increase they felt would be a measurable goal to set. For the convention marketing section, Shane suggested writing a letter of support to the school board regarding the new school and bonding issue coming up and requesting that the new school design be constructed to support convention center facilities as well as community center type facilities. Shane made a motion to propose to the school board and the Assembly referencing the new school center to include a design and function for convention center facilities. Motion was seconded by Jeff who will write the letter to the school board and Assembly.

By-Law changes – (discussed in public comments section with Debra Schnabel at the beginning of the meeting)

New Business:

Branding Campaign – All on the board agreed to move forward with writing an RFP to solicit bids for a logo and branding campaign. Lori will talk to Robert Venables about writing the RFP. Jeff would like to see bids solicited by Aasman Design in Whitehorse and Reed Company.

Pavilion Structure – Robert Venables has requested that the CVB Board

schedule a meeting with him to discuss the design of the pavilion to be located adjacent to the Port Chilkoot Dock. Lori Stepansky will contact Robert to coordinate a meeting time.

Directors Report: McDowell Reports – Haines Tourism Management Plan and Haines Convention Center Feasibility Study reports were ordered and arrived. Board members present who have not received a copy were given one.

Vacation Planner proofs – Text and picture changes for the Haines Vacation Planner were submitted and returned for a first and second proof by Aasman Design. Production is under way and the delivery deadline for the end of January should be met.

Alaska Insight Guide - Lori Stepansky reported placing a ½ page ad with this publication which is sold at trade shows and stores such as Barnes and Noble and Borders and Books. Included in the price of the ad is every business listed in the Haines Vacation Planner will also be listed in the guide as well as on the publication's internet site with phone numbers, emails, and web addresses.

Eagle Festival – Lori reported that the Eagle Festival went smoothly with the Visitor Center's participation and she believed overall the festival had gone well although not quite as many in attendance as last year.

ABA Conference – Lori will be attending the American Bus Association conference in Chicago in February. She is currently working on scheduling appointments with tour operators at the conference and may be able to obtain as many as 53 appointments.

Scenic By-Way Grant - Lori reported the Haines Corridor Management Plan Grant will send monies to the State DOT in January or February in which contracts will be sent to Haines. Lori also stated that the grant was strictly for creating a marketing plan for the Haines Highway and when in place, it will allow for applying for national designation as a scenic by-way as well as federal funds to implement the plan. A committee to head up the project will need to be created and formed by the Haines Convention and Visitor Bureau. Lori indicated communicating with Yukon representatives about this and their eagerness to be actively involved in the processes.

Set Next Meeting Date: December 17, 2004, 6:30 p.m. Assembly Hall