
EAST CENTRAL ITBEC BOARD

Wednesday, July 8, 2015

Winnebago County Administration Building
Oshkosh, WI

MINUTES

ALL AGENDA ITEMS ARE ASSUMED TO BE ACTION ITEMS

CALL TO ORDER: East Central ITBEC Board Chair Paul Sundquist called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

ROLL CALL: PRESENT: Dena Mooney, Calumet County; Lisa Pauly, Fond du Lac County; Paul Sundquist and Wendy Hielsberg, Winnebago County. **EXCUSED:** Ralph Prescott, Calumet County; Brenda Schneider, Fond du Lac County; Ken Tebon, Kewaunee County. **STAFF:** Bill Korrer, Wisconsin Counties Association (WCA) Field Services Representative. **OTHERS:** Matt Payette, Director of Calumet County Planning, Zoning, and Land Information Department; Dave Myers, Kewaunee County; Lyn Pilch, Pilch & Barnet.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 10, 2015 MINUTES: Motion by Mooney, second by Sundquist, to approve the June 10, 2015 minutes as printed. Motion carried.

CHAIR'S REMARKS: Chair Sundquist welcomed everybody to today's meeting. Chair Sundquist also said Lifest is occurring in Oshkosh right now.

PROJECT DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

- a. Northwoods Rail Transit Commission: Bill Korrer said that the Rail Transit Commission is pursuing two grants targeting the addition of dedicated forest product cars into northern Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula. They are looking at Wisconsin's Freight Rail Preservation Program (FRPP) for 50 cars at a total cost of approximately \$6 million - \$4.2M from the FRPP and a \$1.2M match from Canadian National. They have also submitted a scaled down TIGER Grant of \$6 million for 50 cars using a similar Canadian National match formula. Their next meeting is scheduled for July 24, 2015 in Rhinelander.

- b. Wisconsin Ag Tourism Association: Wedding/event barns were the hot topic. Essentially, wedding barns need to understand that they fall into the same category as other types of commercial buildings that host events. There is a 180 day seasonal exception to some of the rules, but the confusing part is whether or not they need to be sprinklered. If they are classified as an event hall, then the threshold is 300 people or more before tighter regulations come into play, when compared to tavern-type businesses with smaller maximum capacity occupancy numbers. It would appear that a legislative remedy is the most likely way to address this rising problem.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Bill Korrer reported that because no checks were issued since the last meeting, all the account balances remain the same. There is an undesignated fund balance of \$27,361.59.

DISCUSSION/DECISION - Strategic Planning Session Follow-Up Action: Lyn Pilch said that her firm had a lengthy internal discussion on how to use the East Central ITBEC's website to achieve the strategic planning goals. Search engine optimization (SEO) helps push a site higher and therefore more likely to be noticed and clicked on. Linking websites helps the SEO, but searchability is another method that shows good results. It can also be described as "good content" compared against the traditional "hub and spoke" associated with linking. A related concept is to focus more on articles and posts, which is trending online. This is a very Google-friendly trick that helps for some good SEO. Ms. Pilch also said that her team felt a blog-style concept would work best for the website. Something that's mobile friendly and easy to update are key elements. Ms. Pilch said she would submit a web design proposal to the Board. Ideally, it would be ready for the 2016 summer season. No action was taken by the Board.

TOURISM RELATED PROJECTS: Chair Sundquist said with the strategic planning just completed and the Board just getting into a website revamping, it is probably best that these other projects be kept simmering until the general direction the Board wants to head becomes a bit more clear. Members agreed that they didn't want to put time and effort into something that could have a completely different look in six months or a year. Chair Sundquist added that he did contact David Spielberg from the Department of Tourism and they do not go to the Chicago Boat Show any more.

- a. Taste of the Lakes Reprint: No action taken.
- b. Strategic Plan for Marketing: No action taken.
- c. Unique Your Trip - Possibly Combine with Another Brochure?: No action taken.
- d. Antiquing/Collectables/Crafts Brochure: No action taken.
- e. Winter Promotion - Ice, Sturgeon: No action taken.
- f. Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway: No action taken.
- g. Chicago Boat Show: No action taken.
- h. Future Projects: No action taken.

East Central ITBEC Board Minutes

Page 3

July 8, 2015

ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA: Nothing new was suggested at this time.

SET NEXT MEETING DATE: The next meeting will be on August 18, 2015 starting at 1:00 p.m. in Kewaunee County.

ADJOURNMENT: With all business being conducted, Chair Sundquist declared the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.