

Hidden Valleys, Inc.

Board Meeting

May 18, 2016

11:00 am

Winneshiek Bar & Grill
32785 Co Rd K,
Prairie du Chien, WI

The meeting was called to order by 1st Vice President Bob Boyle at 11:07 a.m.

Board members present, Bob Boyle, Sandy Williams, Ron Benish, Joe Fisher, Bob Scallon, Larry Jewell, Kersten Rocksvold, and Marie Sersch. Absent and excused: Bernie Arena, Mary Rae, Paul Fredrickson, and Harvey Kubly. Sales representatives: Carol Larson, Dave Anderson, Rob Wilson, Randy Kirking, and Lon Arbegust. Guest: Mary Benish, Grant Loy, Laverna Kingslin, Jon Fields, Steve Marsolek of LaCrosse Graphics, Sherry Quamme of Crawford County Tourism, Eric Frydenlund of Driftless Wisconsin, and Patrick Reinsma from Wisconsin Department of Tourism.

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS

Bob B. welcomed the group. Each person introduced themselves.

MINUTES of April 20, 2016

Motion by Ron B. to accept the minutes of the April 20, 2016 meeting as presented. Seconded by Kersten. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

It was noted to have the end of the fiscal year report from May 31, 2015 to compare to May 31, 2016 at the next board meeting. Sandy will bring those reports in June. Ron B. made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and place it on file for audit, second by Joe F. Motion carried.

OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT

Sandy passed along information about Bernie's letter in process to the Department of Tourism concerning the division of the state for Southwest Wisconsin.

Sandy read a note from Donna Douglas in support of Hidden Valleys. "I fully support Hidden Valleys of Southwest Wisconsin, and that we are the only regional tourism promotional organization that can claim 39 years of service to the Department of Tourism! It was an honor for me to serve as president for eight years and now as past president, and see the accomplishments of Hidden Valleys with Bernie Arena serving as President, and the support of the board members representing each county."

Many informational items were included in today's meeting packets including county centerfold rotation. In 2017 Monroe County will be the featured county and in 2018 Grant County will be featured. A partnership update from Tim Hyma of Driftless Destinations was read concerning the distribution of 2016 guides. Tim distributed 5 cases in Madison for the Midwest bicycle sale/show, 5 cases in Milwaukee for Wheel & Sprocket, 1 case Sparta Sports Expo, 1 case La Crosse networking event. He still has RAGBRAI in July and WCCE conference in September (probably one case at each).

PRESIDENT'S REPORT / EXECUTIVE REPORT

Bernie sent a memo which Bob B. read to all in attendance.

Memo May 17, 2016 From: Bernie Arena, President

To: The Hidden Valleys 2015-2016 Board and Sales Team, the new 2016-2017 Hidden Valleys Board, Friends of Hidden Valleys & Honored Guests.

Welcome to our annual meeting. Our team effort this past year has led to many great accomplishments. First, another great publication that is respected and recognized as a huge regional tourism effort. We work to bring visitors to Southwest Wisconsin but in that effort we also promote the entire state of Wisconsin, the Great River Road, parts of Iowa and Minnesota and many neighboring communities. In turn they also promote us. I want to recognize our partnership organizations:

- **Driftless Destinations:** Tim Hyma heads up this group of regional promoters. They delivered many books at shows they attended extending our reach many times over. We are also promoted on their website.
- **Wisconsin Agriculture Tourism Association:** Gail Muller and I attended their 2-day conference in Marshfield, WI. We had a free booth and our conference registrations were complimentary. Through them I also attended the 2-day Women's Agricultural Summit in Middleton, Wisconsin where our magazines were also distributed. In addition we are promoted and linked to their website.
- **Marquette-McGregor Chamber of Commerce:** Thank you for your financial support. In turn we distributed their brochures at our shows.

Some of our highlights this year include the full page color ad in the Milwaukee Journal and new maps in the magazine.

Each board member has stepped up in some manner. Whether it was helping unload magazines, stepping up to attend shows at the last minute, delivering books, making presentations to your county board, getting information for the mapping project, and generally promoting Hidden Valleys. Thank you so very much.

To all the amazing sales team, thank you! You are the face of Hidden Valleys across the entire region. We appreciate your input and efforts.

Special thanks to my Executive Board for your input and support. You put in many extra hours. Thanks Gail Muller and Bob Boyle for doing the in-house audit.

We had a great graphic design team-- Next Level and print company--LaCrosse Graphics. Thanks Tierra, Nellie and Steve.

Thanks to Sandy and Rob for stepping up and working the Milwaukee Show at the very last minute-- literally. Thanks to each county board for the support and strong commitment to this organization. I want to thank everyone for all the kind thoughts, cards and calls sent while I am "stuck" at home with this broken leg. Have a great meeting. See you in June in Fennimore!

NEW BUSINESS:

Bob B. reported the recommendation from the executive committee concerning introductory web coupons prices on advertising contracts at \$45 for being on a county page and \$100 for being on the homepage. Bob B. asked for input from the sales people regarding web coupons.

Suggestions included; 2 tier pricing for print advertisers versus non-print advertisers / a \$100 increase for non advertisers to get a web coupon / using an email list to contact advertisers about web coupons. Unanswered questions at this time include, do the coupons get printed from website or will each advertiser honor a digital link? Besides putting coupons on the website, what other involvement does Hidden Valleys have? Would the coupons have a deadline being on line?

Ron made a motion seconded by Marie to have the executive committee continue further discussion with suggestions. Motion approved. All the sales people are invited to attend the executive committee meeting in June to add to the web coupon discussion.

Patrick Reinsma, the Regional Tourism Representative from the Department of Tourism spoke about the power of tourism in Wisconsin with a PowerPoint presentation. The impact of the Hidden Valleys region alone for state and local taxes was \$44.1 million dollars in the nine county region. Patrick also passed along information about tourism's impact on revenue being additional \$640 annual taxes per household if revenue generated by tourism taxes disappeared. This information will be forwarded to the Hidden Valleys office if anyone would like to receive it.

Sherry Quamme of Crawford County spoke briefly about the Great River Road and the weekend event of 70 miles of rummage sales along the Great River Road. Eric Frydenlund spoke about the region of Driftless Wisconsin. Sherry thanked Hidden Valleys for the opportunity for Crawford County being the featured county for the 2016 guide.

REMARKS / CONCERNS

Bob S. made a motion to adjourn at 12:24 p.m. Seconded by Ron. Motion carried.

Minutes taken by Joe Fisher, Acting Secretary

Next scheduled meeting June 15, 2016 Grant County.

Patrick Reinsma, age 44, passed away unexpectedly on June 2, 2016.