

Hidden Valleys, Inc.

Board Meeting-September 16, 2015

**Kickapoo Valley Reserve  
S3661 WI Hwy 131  
La Farge, WI**

The meeting was called to order by Vice President Bob Boyle at 11:09 a.m.

Board members present: Bob Boyle, Sandy Williams, Ron Benish, Joe Fisher, Bob Scallon, Don Seep, Gail Muller, and Marie Sersch. Absent: Paul Fredrickson. Absent and excused: Bernie Arena, Kersten Rocksvold, and Harvey Kubly. Sales representatives: Carol Larson, Lon Arbegust, Rob Wilson, and Randy Kirking. Guest: Grant Loy from Grant County.

**WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS**

Bob B. welcomed and commented on the wonderful facility at Kickapoo Valley Reserve.

**MINUTES August 19, 2015**

Motion by Bob S. to accept the minutes of August 19, 2015 meeting as presented. Seconded by Ron Benish. Motion carried.

**TREASURER'S REPORT**

Joe F. made a motion to accept the treasurer's report and place it on file for audit, second by Ron B. Motion carried.

**OFFICE MANAGER'S REPORT**

Sandy again asked for each county to ask that any of their communities submit 2016 events.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT & EXECUTIVE REPORT**

Bob B. read through Bernie's notes:

["Mapping update: There really was no info from Green or Richland County. Dorn is working directly with Mike B. from Richland County. Mike had simply been too busy to get it to him but has promised to have it to him shortly. The original Green County contact (Justin Johnson) does not have the information they need. Noreen R. (Green County Tourism) is working on getting a contact for the GIS map information to Bernie.

Milwaukee ad response from our partners has been great. I have not checked number of website hits as of this writing but hoping it brings many more people to southwest Wisconsin for the "fun". Next Level ended up designing the ad for us because of the huge number of e-mails we had to work with.

Partners 2016 Commitments:

**Driftless Destinations: Trade for a full page ad in our 2016 magazine.**

This motorcycling collaboration has made great strides in our southwest corner of the state. It is heavily supported by many of our communities in-kind and financially. In addition Coordinator Tim Hyma has distributed hundreds of our HV brochures at various shows he attends as well as motorcycle rallies. In addition to distributing the brochures our logo would be placed on the City Page in the

brochure, it would appear as a co –sponsor of the entire website for 2016 (secondary placement); 100,000 impressions of our banner will be on the website; our logo will be on the Google AdSense Ad up to 200,000 impressions; our logo would be on the Facebook advertising up to 200,000 impressions; and two social media releases would direct traffic back to our website.

**Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association: Trade for a full page ad in our 2016 magazine & web ad.**

This is a Foundation partnership in their organization. This organization works to promote agricultural tourism by serving up new ideas, educational initiatives, and marketing plans. Our organization would be promoted at their state wide events and to the general public through their consumer-focused website: [wiagtourism.com](http://wiagtourism.com). We will also be promoted on their membership website: [luv-r-ag.com](http://luv-r-ag.com). We will have a presence at their LUV-R-AG summit scheduled in February with a booth; and at their educational field days held in early spring. They are a voice in advocating for best practices and legislative action regarding issues affecting ag-tourism businesses. They have a strong membership base in our southwest corner and we will benefit greatly with the exposure we get with them.”]

Bob B. called for a motion to accept the partnership of Driftless Destinations trade for a full page ad in our 2016 magazine and Wisconsin Agricultural Tourism Association trade for a full page ad in our 2016 magazine and web ad. Ron made the motion, seconded by Don. Discussion brought out concerns of what are the benefits for Hidden Valleys versus the cost of 2 full pages of advertising? This may be reviewed for future partnerships. Motion carried.

Bob B. read through more of Bernie’s notes:

[“Map concerns: Our office received a communication from an advertiser (Ruth Rupp—Vernon County) upset because in addition to the magazine we had our maps at the Westby Information Center. She stated her ad was not on the map and as an advertiser she felt many people were taking only the map. She wondered if all our ad clients were aware of what we were doing.”]

Discussion included: not printing an extra map for visitors at all, / printing maps but distributing them only at the end of the season as a way to still promote Hidden Valleys once the guides have been distributed, / concern over the cost of extra maps, which was noted \$176 for 5000 maps. This issue will be placed on the standing list for further review.

Bob B. presented information regarding an advertiser in Monroe County, having an original outstanding balance due in 2014. A check submitted by the business caused a nonsufficient funds fee to Hidden Valleys. There is a cost of \$96.50 to file a small claims report in Monroe County. The executive committee recommended taking legal action of small claims court. Joe made a motion, seconded by Ron to negotiate payments immediately. Discussion of this matter concluded with initially having Bernie and Sandy writing a letter explaining the ramifications to the business, and setting a deadline for payment before legal action is taken. Motion was rescinded.

A 2015 Richland Center advertiser has since gone out of business. Consensus from the board in this case was to write off the loss the \$175 due from Maker’s Palette.

Joe expressed concern about ads that don’t get paid, but the sales rep has done the job and should still get the commission noting that Hidden Valleys would pay the commission.

One item on the current standing list to take note of is the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hidden Valleys in 2017 Monroe County will be the featured county. Bob asked for the county reps to start compiling a list of county history with Hidden Valleys & their county HV reps over the years.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

- Audit update:  
The audit has not happened as Harvey hasn't had the time. Sandy was able to contact Harvey but he is unable to have the audit done by October. Bob B. asked for volunteers to do an audit electronically with Sandy. After much discussion, Bob B. and Gail will coordinate with Sandy to accomplish an internal audit looking at such items as bank statements, reimbursements for trade shows, proof of insurance, accounts receivables, profit and loss statements, accounts payable such as phone bills.
- Sandy was asked about a trade with a Juneau County radio station, WRJC. The owner was going to put together a proposal but as of yet, has not accomplished that yet. This will be placed on the October agenda.
- In reviewing the 3 Crawford County cover possibilities presented to the board, an unofficial poll of yes/no written on the back of each sample was circulated. The board did not take a vote today without Kerston Rocksvold, the Crawford County rep, who was unavailable for input today.
- Most present at the meeting were in a photo on the deck area of the Kickapoo Valley Reserve.

#### BOOK COUNT / SALES REPORT

Marie has 2 cases of guides.

Carol reported having a challenging selling season after losing several advertisers. She has 4 cases of guides left between Green, Vernon & Juneau County.

Lon has 6 cases of guides left for Gays Mills Apple Festival coming up. His sales have seen a few new customers but have lost some as well.

Rob has 26 cases of guides, 6 of which he brought to give away today. He will go through several cases at Warrens Cranfest coming up the end of September. He lost the Jellystone full page inside cover ad. Rob suggested having an advertiser's coupon page with 2 prices; one price if purchased with a printed ad and a higher price if a business buys only the coupon. This will be placed on the standing list for further review.

Randy has 3 cases of guides left in Lafayette County. His co-op ads of Boscobel-2 full pages & Belmont-1 full page are coming along. He asked that Potosi Museum be mentioned in the magazine.

Discussion took place to have text for the magazine be done by the county reps. Consensus was to allow Iowa County to add another website address on the top of their pages. No vote was taken.

#### REMARKS / CONCERNS

Ron B. made a motion to adjourn at 12:55 p.m. Seconded by Marie. Motion carried.

Minutes taken by Gail Muller, Secretary

Next meeting November 18, 2015 Richland County.