

**GATLINBURG DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES**

May 19, 2008

The Gatlinburg Department of Tourism Advisory Board Work Groups met throughout the day on May 19, 2008 in the Board Room of the Convention Center. **The following members were present:** Mr. Kevin Tierney, Mr. Dan Booth, Mr. Bud Lawson, Mr. Sid Maples, Mr. Bob Waikel, Mr. Dan Saffelder, Mr. Joe Waggoner, Ms. Kathy Doyle, Mr. Robert Montgomery, Ms. Jackelyn Schaffer, Mr. Tim King, Mr. Ryan DeSear, Mr. Dennis McAvoy, Ms. Vickie Simms. **Non Members Included:** Mr. Ira Lapidés, Ms. Jackie Leatherwood, Ms. Andrea Richey, and Ms. Shanda Worthington **City of Gatlinburg Staff included:** Executive Director David Perella, Mr. Walter Yeldell, Ms. Sharon Sutton, Mr. Jim Davis, Mr. George Hawkins, and Ms. Kathryn Smith.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

Convention Center/Group Sales 8:30 am – 10:15 am

Public Relations 10:30 am – 12:15 pm

Mass Media 1:00 pm – 2:45 pm

Special Events 3:00 pm – 4:30 pm

These meetings included a conference call and an overhead projector presentation in Power Point from our Marketing Partners. Marketing Partner participants included: BCF, French West & Vaughan, EBrains, and Department of Tourism Staff.

CONVENTION CENTER/GROUP SALES COMMITTEE

Natalie Best with FWV presented the mainstream plan and a promotional campaign. Two packets of information were distributed to committee members that outlined the plan and strategies FWV had created.

Eric Lonning and Katherine Kivlighan presented BCF's Campaign Flowchart.

Discussion was had concerning the Convention Center Sales Department and the Sales Manager position that is currently open. **A motion was made by Mr. Robert Montgomery to fill the open Sales Manager position at the convention center, seconded by Ms. Jackelyn Schaffer.**

Motion passed. After the previous motion, the group discussed the travel budget and agreed that the current \$8,000 budgeted for travel should be increased to \$16,000 when another staff member is added. **A motion was made by Mr. Robert Montgomery to increase the travel budget to \$16,000 once the open Sales Manager position is filled, seconded by Jackie Leatherwood. Motion passed.**

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE

Natalie Best and Greer Beaty presented FWV's public relations information to the committee. The presentation included one handout that covered the information on the overhead. The Group Discussed participating in a Media Campaign. FWV explained that a Media Campaign does not include any money exchanges. An example of compiling a prize pack of Gatlinburg and then approaching radio stations to get airtime was given by Natalie. FWV then explained how they could track the results of the campaign from the back end for evaluation. Although discussions took place, there were no motions made during this committee meeting.

MASS MEDIA COMMITTEE

Eric Lonning, Greg Ward, and Katherine Kivlighan presented BCF's Mass Media Plan Flowchart to committee members. Katherine Kivlighan explained the plan by individually going through each city and the placement of advertising in that location throughout the fiscal year. Renea Dettman presented EBrains' contribution to the Marketing Plan. A handout was distributed that included all of the information from EBrains. The group discussed the overall Budget and the fact that there will have to layers cut from the Marketing Plan. David Perella said that BCF would be willing to make recommendations as to what should be cut in order for the plan to fit into the Budget. **Ms. Kathy Doyle motioned to allow BCF to make the decisions on what to cut or recommend to each of our Marketing Partners in order for the Marketing Plan to fit into our total budget, seconded by Mr. Ryan DeSear. Motion passed.**

SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE

David Perella distributed one handout that included the Special Events breakdown of costs. Mr. Perella and Mr. George Hawkins explained how we save money by considering the locations for events and eliminating any unnecessary expenses. The discussion of fireworks was brought up by Mr. Ryan DeSear. There was discussion regarding the overall worth of the 4th of July Fireworks and whether or not it actually keeps people in town. There was also discussion of incorporating the fireworks into the Midnight Parade. David Perella commented that there were lots of bad comments the last time Gatlinburg did fireworks at midnight. The group hopes that this year's 4th of July will be different due to the holiday falling on a Friday.

Mr. Ryan DeSear suggested we create an event to highlight the Harvest Festival. Mr. George Hawkins suggested looking at the week before Halloween and creating an event to highlight the holiday.

The Tunes and Tales event is currently under consideration for being cut next year. The group discussed the benefits of the event and considered the event's cost compared to our overall budget for the year. Most of the committee agreed that the event was good for the city, but that perhaps we should reconsider the dates. David Perella added that BCF suggested we look into doing Tunes and Tales in the spring. As a closing to the conversation, David Perella said that we may move the dates or trim down what we are currently doing with the event in the future.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next TAB Meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, June 4th at 1:30 pm in the Tennessee Ballroom** at the convention center. The Agenda will include the Marketing Plan Presentation to the Tourism Advisory Board.