

**GATLINBURG DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM  
MASS MEDIA WORK GROUP MINUTES**

*December 10, 2008*

The Gatlinburg Department of Tourism Mass Media Work Group met on December 10, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Convention Center. **The following members were present:** Eric Lonning, Greg Ward, Mayor Mike Werner, Joe Waggoner, Kathy Doyle, Dan Booth, Dennis McAvoy, Bob Waikel, Logan, Tim King, Sid maples, Andy MacKinnon, Vickie Simms, Angela Caruthers, Ryan Desear, Walter Yeldell, Jim Davis, David Perella, and City manager Cindy Ogle

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. David Perella called the meeting to order.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**A motion was made to approve the November 17<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes by Mr. Andy MacKinnon. Seconded by Mr. Joe Waggoner. Motion passed.**

**MARKETING ASSESSMENT PRESENTATION**

BCF presented a Marketing Assessment that included a handout for members to review and follow throughout the presentation. They discussed the economy and what is expected for the future, recommendations for changes to our current Marketing Plan, and a timeline of expected events.

Jessica, a representative from BCF's Public Relations Department, gave a presentation from a PR perspective of our current activity and reports from French, West, and Vaughan.

The members had a group discussion regarding email blasts and flyers and discussed the differences or the similarities between the two. The goal of the whole program is to get a better open rate and inform visitors of Gatlinburg and the opportunities that are being offered.

**WINTER STIMULUS PLAN**

A worksheet of information and a flowchart of the scheduling was distributed to members. The stimulus will begin the 4th of January and includes changes made to the radio, newspaper, and internet portions of the marketing plan. BCF presented that media schedule to the group and explained many of the changes that were up for consideration.

**A motion was made by Mr. Joe Waggoner to approve the Winter Stimulus Plan with the idea of making the plan lucid and allowing it to change over the future months as the economy does. Motion seconded by Mr. Sid maples. Motion passed.**

Ms. Cindy Ogle added that this stimulus has to be more than 'Reaching Higher Ground.' She commented that we have to push affordability and packages rather than 'Reaching Higher Ground.'

The passed motion will be going to City Commission for further approval. The group was reminded that this is a change to the overall Marketing Plan but it will not be changing the actual funds of the plan.

## **LOYALTY CARD**

**A motion was made by Mr. Sid Maples to table the Loyalty Card discussion until the next meeting date. Seconded by Mr. Ryan DeSear. Motion passed.**

## **UNSCHEDULED ITEMS**

Ms. Kathy Doyle commented that Ober had a great opening weekend and that she will keep everyone informed of the anticipated opening of the Tubing Park.

Mayor Mike Werner reminded that group to keep an open mind on the message of 'Reaching Higher Ground.'

Ms. Cindy Ogle added that they are keeping a close eye on revenue figures and that the Mid-Year Review meeting has been pushed up so that a reevaluation can occur. She added that the City has a strong savings account but that future years have to be considered regarding those funds.

Mr. Ryan DeSear commented on the costs of energy bills and encouraged members to contact the Sevier County Utility District over their surcharge.

## **NEXT MEETING DATE**

The Mass Media work Group's next meeting will be determined after the first of the year. Members will be informed of the next meeting date ASAP.