

Bloomington-Normal Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
Zoom Board Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2020
8:30 a.m.

Present: Carlo Robustelli, Crystal Howard, Cheryl Magnuson, Kevin McCarthy, Kathleen Lorenz, Scott Black, Charlie Moore, Beth Whisman, Steve Newman, Mayor Renner

Call to Order

Carlo Robustelli called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m.

Carlo welcomed Cheryl Magnuson to the CVB board and thanked her for joining. He stated she brings experience with her work in the community and welcomes the insight she can bring to this group.

Public Comment

None

Consent Agenda

Carlo asked for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Kevin McCarthy moved. Seconded by Scott Black. All in favor. Motion passed.

Regular Agenda

2020-2021 Budget revision

Crystal Howard reviewed the revised budget that the CVB has set for 2020-2021. Crystal reviewed the revisions as the LTCB grant funds we are to receive have been reduced by 50%.

She indicated with the board's approval the CVB would like to revise the Visitor Guide income. Due to the pandemic our industry has had great losses. The CVB would like to offer advertising in the guide at no charge for those who advertised last year. Expenses will be reduced as we will not order as many guides. Discussion was held on the advertising.

Cheryl Magnuson asked about the hotel advertisements. Crystal stated that as long as we don't have to change the ads then there are no extra charges occurring. Kevin McCarthy asked about hotels who have never advertised before. Crystal indicated that we would offer an ad as long as they commit to taking an ad out in the 2022 Visitor Guide. Kathleen Lorenz also indicated that it was a good idea to honor the loyalty of the past advertisers.

Kevin McCarthy moved for approval. Seconded by Scott Black. All in favor. Motion Passes.

Chairman Discussion

Relocation of the CVB Offices

Carlo Robustelli shared the history of the CVB and the relocation committee findings from last year. The City of Bloomington is proposing that the CVB offices move into Grossing Motors Arena. Carlo indicated that our 2020-2022 Strategic Plan includes relocating the CVB offices. Carlo pointed out the proposed costs which were substantially lower. He also indicated the CVB's lease with CIRA ends in October 2021 and consideration will have to be made for the lease parameters.

Kevin McCarthy stated he supports getting relocation back in focus with looking at the Arena and also other locations. Discussion held on the proposal. Crystal Howard indicated that the Arena offices meet all of our criteria and more.

Scott Black stated that this could be a great move for the CVB and warrants a discussion with Carl Olson regarding the lease. Beth Whisman mentioned that the offices and retail would be close to the Route 66 Visitor Center in the McLean County Museum of History and we will need to take public perception into consideration.

Cheryl Magnuson would like to see the space and the layout for walk-in traffic and indicated it will be a destination in Downtown Bloomington. Charlie Moore added that signage and accessibility are important and he would like to see what the shared administrative space would look like. He also stated this shows there is reinvestment in Downtown and in the Arena.

Mayor Renner stated this would be a location lease arrangement and not affect the amount of money the City of Bloomington contributes to CVB. Mayor Renner said parking across the street is available for patrons to the potential CVB retail space as the City of Bloomington owns that parking lot.

Carlo stated that there is a consensus to move forward and consider this relocation proposal and a committee should be formed. Kevin McCarthy, Cheryl Magnuson, and Charlie Moore volunteered to be on this relocation committee. Migidi Tembo will also be asked to stay on the committee. Carlo indicated the CVB will organize a walk through at the Arena to help visualize the space. and the Board will keep this topic on our agenda.

Board Discussion

Beth Whisman stated that our attractions are devastated in addition to the hotels. She would like the CVB to consider advertisements in the guide for them. Crystal stated that we are currently doing digital advertising and have asked all attractions for photos, videos, and other information to help promote them on social media, ads, and we will be highlighting them in the Visitor Guide.

Steve Newman asked what the CVB would need from the Sports Commission to assist with the development of the Sports Commission. Carlo suggested getting a proposal for resources they would need from the CVB whether that be human resources or financial resources. Discussion held on the Sports Complex and the CVB and Sports Commissions involvement. Steve suggested that the board look at the IL Fire Juniors proposal on their website. Crystal will send out the link to all board members for them to view.

Kevin McCarthy also stated he likes seeing the shift in digital marketing and seeing what is happening with our online presence.

Charlie Moore thanked Crystal and staff for work with the CommUNITY Confident initiative. He asked the board to help the campaign in promoting pledging. Carlo thanked both Charlie and Crystal for their work on this campaign which will help increase consumer confidence in our community.

Adjournment

Carlo Robustelli adjourned the meeting at 9:21 a.m.