

JULY 8, 2008 SESSION
OF THE
WALWORTH COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE
AMENDED

The Walworth County Board Committee of the Whole meeting was called to order by Chair Russell at 5:01 p.m. in the County Board Room at the Walworth County Government Center, 100 W. Walworth Street, Elkhorn, Wisconsin.

Roll Call

Roll call was conducted and all Supervisors were present except Supervisor Weber.

Presentation by Walworth County Economic Development Alliance (WCEDA) concerning its accomplishments in the county during the past year and plans for 2009

Fred Burkhart conducted the Power Point presentation by giving an overview of funding sources. He said that 62% of WCEDA's revenues are derived from government: 44% from the county and 18% from local jurisdictions. Other funding includes private investments 24%, in-kind 11%, and grants 3%. He said that the allocations are spent primarily in time. He said time is allocated between programming, development of the strategic plan, and all meetings, which are necessary for them to attend.

Mr. Burkhart said that the biggest on-going programming for 2008 has been for the 2016 Olympics. He said they are fairly assured that Chicago will be getting the Olympics in 2016 and he said they are preparing a package for distribution to the International Olympic committees from all over the world, offering U.W. Whitewater as a site for training. He went on to describe WCEDA's other general business activities, which included business start-ups, business retention, business expansion, and attraction of new businesses.

Supervisor Grant said that he had sent Mr. Burkhart a letter with questions and he asked if he would answer those questions at the Committee of the Whole meeting. Mr. Burkhart said that he would not answer the questions at this meeting but he would answer at a later date.

Mr. Burkhart said that the funding request for 2009 is estimated to not exceed \$112,500 and will be program specific. He said that they would give the Board a firm number in mid August.

Supervisor Weber arrived at 5:07 p.m.

Presentation by Walworth County Visitors' Bureau concerning its accomplishments in the county during the past year and plans for 2009

Kathy Seeberg, Executive Director, Walworth County Visitors Bureau, introduced Karen Beckman, Treasurer of the Visitors Bureau Board and owner of Bailey House Bed and Breakfast

in Williams Bay, and Marilyn McGair, Account Executive for Marketing Images, the Visitors Bureau marketing communications company.

Ms. Seeberg gave an overview of each of the handouts, which she had distributed to the Supervisors. She said that their office recently moved to Lincoln Street in Elkhorn and she thinks it is a great location. Ms. Seeberg said that the Department of Transportation closed the only Visitors Welcome Center in the County, which was in the Genoa City area, and that the Visitors Bureau is filling a lot of requests that the Welcome Center would have received and is now distributing Wisconsin materials to visitors as well. She said they have a volunteer staff to assist visitors and Bureau members and they are now open on Saturdays.

Ms. Seeberg said that this year the Visitors Bureau owns the *Walworth County Travel Guide*. Ms. Seeberg said they now have an online travel guide on the website: www.visitwalworthcounty.com. She said that they have developed an email marketing campaign and are also affiliated with a marketing and communications firm. The marketing firm is Marketing Images.

Ms. Seeberg introduced Marilyn McGair, Account Manager and Director of Public Relations for Marketing Images. Ms. McGair said they recently completed an extensive marketing plan for the Visitors Bureau, which recommends using outdoor billboards in both Illinois and Wisconsin and a combination of print advertising and on-line advertising. The plan also recommended a booth at the Walworth County Fair and the Wisconsin State Fair to advertise to both Wisconsin and Illinois visitors. News releases and articles will also be used throughout the year to promote Walworth County and Wisconsin.

Ms. Seeberg outlined the Visitors Bureau objectives and goals for 2008 and 2009. The plan is to promote the website as the source of information for the County. Ms. Seeberg said that one of their goals is to promote motor coach tourism. These tourists would want to come year round, during mid-week, when the crowds are less and the hotel prices may be a little less. She said they are looking to hire a staff person to tap that market, to develop itineraries, and be group leaders.

Kathleen Tober, President, Walworth County Farm Bureau, spoke on behalf of the Visitors Bureau. She said the Bureau promotes the Farmers Market and Dairy Breakfast on the website and the Farm Bureau is using the Visitors Bureau website. People call or use the Visitors Bureau's website to find farm tours, the apple barn, and destinations to pick strawberries and pumpkins.

Mike Frazier, 444 Eugene Drive, Lake Geneva, President of the Lake Geneva Community Orchestra, a non-profit community arts organization, and a member of the Visitors Bureau, addressed the Board. He said they get more exposure from the Visitors Bureau Internet site because the Orchestra cannot afford that much exposure any other way. He said he cares about the quality of life in Walworth County and he thinks that the Visitors Bureau brings in quality visitors.

Karen Beckmann is an owner of Bailey House, a small Bed and Breakfast in Williams Bay, and is a member of the Visitors Bureau. Ms. Beckmann spoke favorably about the accomplishments of this organization and she is amazed that it is run by only one full-time and one three-quarter-time employee and volunteers.

Ms. Seeberg addressed the topic of group tours. She explained that, since the staff is so small, they do not have the time to invest in putting together itineraries or to be contacting group tour leaders and operators to get them to come here. She said they would like to hire a full-time person to run the motor coach tours.

On motion by Supervisor Weber, seconded by Supervisor Schaefer, the Committee of the Whole adjourned at 5:49 p.m.

Kimberly S. Bushey
County Clerk

STATE OF WISCONSIN)
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COUNTY OF WALWORTH)

I, Kimberly S. Bushey, County Clerk in and for the County aforesaid, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the proceedings of the County Board of Supervisors Committee of the Whole for the July 8, 2008 meeting.