

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE HOTEL/MOTEL TAX ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE VILLAGE OF WILLOWBROOK HELD ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 16, 2016, AT THE VILLAGE OF WILLOWBROOK, 835 MIDWAY DRIVE, WILLOWBROOK, ILLINOIS.

1. CALL TO ORDER

Trustee Gayle Neal called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Those present were Trustee Gayle Neal, Member Rashmi Patel (Econo Lodge), Member Frank Fishella (Chamber of Commerce), Member Roswitha Korpas (La Quinta) arrived at 4:08, Village Administrator Timothy Halik, Director of Finance Carrie Dittman, Administrative Intern Tiffany Kolodziej and Beth Marchetti, DuPage Convention and Visitors Bureau.

ABSENT: Member Alan Gagnon (Red Roof Inn Plus) and Member Jaimin Shah (Willowbrook Inn).

3. VISITOR'S BUSINESS

There were no visitors present.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - January 28, 2016

Motion by Frank Fishella, second by Rashmi Patel, to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried.

5. MONTHLY FINANCIAL REPORT - February 29, 2016

Director Dittman presented the fiscal year to date financials through February 29, 2016 to the Committee. Cash on hand is \$135,353, accounts receivable is \$4,724, prepaid expenditures is \$3,000, and opening fund balance at May 1, 2015 was \$496.

The fund has received \$182,810 in hotel/motel tax to date compared to budget of \$210,000 and interest income of \$40. Director Dittman noted each of the expenditure line items which total \$40,269 compared to budget of \$82,825; at February 29, fund balance of the fund is \$143,077.

6. UPDATE - New Businesses

Administrative Intern Tiffany Kolodziej gave an update on the new businesses that have opened in Willowbrook including Bates Water Solutions, Inc., Chishack, Diamond Edge Academy and European Wax Center. Pending projects include Compass Arena (opening unknown), Petco (opening mid-April), and Pete's Fresh Market (opening unknown).

7. PRESS RELEASE - DuPage CVB's Tourism Grant Program

Director Dittman shared a press release that was sent to the Village by the DuPage Convention & Visitor's Bureau on the newly developed Tourism Grant Program. The DCVB awarded its first grant to Eaglewood Resort & Spa in Itasca in February 2016.

The grant money comes from DuPage County and participating communities and is used to secure new business for the hotels. The Village has allocated \$5000 in the current fiscal year budget and \$5000 in next year's budget for this program.

Beth Marchetti added that the DCVB has just awarded its second grant for an event at Christmastime that will occur in Lombard. She noted that Roswitha may be able to use this program for the Rt. 66 motorcycle group that sometimes comes to town, or for different sports groups.

8. DISCUSSION – GENERAL COMMITTEE DIRECTION

Village Administrator Timothy Halik noted that he had been in contact with his counterpart at the City of Elmhurst that has a trolley program. He then introduced Administrative Intern Tiffany Kolodziej who has been researching the trolley company and she presented her findings and passed around a pamphlet. Elmhurst uses The Trolley Car & Bus Company, which employs a professional uniformed driver, and the trolley can play a CD over a PA system to give facts about the town and provides advertising. A bus is also available. Designated stops can be set in town at key locations. The owner offered to make a presentation to the H/M Committee at a future meeting and bring the trolley for the Committee to see.

The Committee discussed that the trolley sounded better than a bus, offering more flair, and that possible stops could be at the Town Center (where there are already benches), at the Whole Foods shopping center and possibly a village park like Willow Pond for picnics and recreational activities. The trolley would stop at the hotels and loop to these other stops. Construction/congestion around 63rd Street was discussed and possibly adding that area as a second phase once the construction was complete would be a good idea. It was mentioned that perhaps Harlem-Irving Co. who owns the Town Center development could be invited to the trolley presentation meeting to see if they would like to participate.

The Committee discussed the promotion of the trolley, such as pamphlets placed in the hotels, signs at the stops, advertising in the Village's newsletter and on the mobile phone app, and the Mayor could perform a ribbon-cutting on the first run.

The Committee agreed to invite the trolley company owner to present at a future meeting, date TBD.

Beth Marchetti discussed collaboration between DCVB, Mayor Trilla and Willowbrook area schools to bring international travel camps called Steam Discovery Tours to the area. The tours consist of gifted students interested in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics with stops at locations like the Museum of Science and Industry, Argonne National Laboratory and Fermilab.

Beth also noted that an ad will go on Choose Chicago's website geared towards McCormick Place visitors and ads will be placed at Midway Airport. There was discussion about use of a taxi company such as American Taxi to shuttle between the Village and Midway, and perhaps ride packages could be purchased. A link could be placed on the WB mobile phone app. Beth will reach out to American Taxi.

Additionally, a billboard will be going up on I-55 by Lemont Rd. around April 15th. Beth is looking into a billboard ad closer to Midway airport as well but believes these are sold out until May or June.

Finally, Trustee Neal discussed adding flower pot displays at each of the hotel entrances and has been in contact with Hinsdale Nurseries. This could be funded with the landscape beautification line item funds. The Willowbrook Inn has been progressing on their remodeling but no opening date has been specified. They will be going back to the Holiday Inn branding.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Frank Fishella, seconded by Rashmi Patel at 4:45 p.m.

The next special meeting of the Hotel/Motel Tax Advisory Committee will be determined when the schedule of the trolley company owner permits.

Minutes transcribed by Carrie Dittman, 3/18/2016