

Executive Committee Meeting Minutes

Galena Country Tourism

Mon., Feb. 8, 2021, 1 p.m.

Eagle Ridge Resort

444 Eagle Ridge Dr, Galena IL 61036

Call to order by presiding officer - 1:03 p.m.

Roll call - Colin Sanderson, Nikki Peebles, Merri Sevey, Raechelle Ahmed and Rose Noble

Citizen Comments - None.

Old business/Board director concerns. - None.

New business - FY'21 budget discussion -The committee began discussions with a run through y-t-d budget numbers, current money in the bank (\$1,032,757 in checkings) lodging tax collected so far (\$856,605.16) in the fiscal year and an update on the PPP Loan award granted to the organization in earl February (\$72,107).

Next, Noble broke down the predicted FY'21 lodging tax collection (\$900,000) with current collections so far (\$856,605.16), noting that the organization has almost met their predictions with collections only tallied July through November. To date, the tax collection is only -2% in comparison to the same time-frame in FY'20. Noble reminded the committee that FY'21 budget was written considering the organization ending with -30% decrease in collected funds. The committee then discussed amending the budget to reflect only a -20% decrease.

With this in mind the committee considered the additional projected revenue that would generate from altering the budget prediction, as well as the awared PP Loan and current money in the checkings account if the remaining FY'21 budget was executed as planned. This scenerio resulted in a projected surplus of \$231,277.07 that can be spent.

Noble proposed a spending plan, adding funds back into the Marketing line item, and spent in FY'21. The committee reviewed the proposed options which included:

- A Co-op Advertising Program that would be offered to all tourism-related stakeholders - \$30,000
- A Tourism Master Planning process that was originally recommended by the Strategic Committee back in fall of 2019 and approved to secure in preliminary draft FY'21 budget proposals in the Finance Committee and board discussions prior to COVID - \$150,000
- A Search Engine Marketing boost for the Forever Original brand during quarter 4, which would include dollars added to an already scheduled, multi-layered digital marketing promotions. - \$60,000
- A Destination Development Beautification program, working directly with the County's larger municipalities on collaborative projects that enhance quality of place. -\$51,000
- Options to add funds to promotions that were originally in the pre-COVID round of FY21 budget presentations, including Facebook, Madden Media, Group Travel Magazine, Local X Marketing, Illinois Office of Tourism, Trip Advisor and ABC7 Chicago. \$\$ - price varies - \$\$

After reviewing and discussion the options presented, the committee agreed to make a recommendation to the full board in a special-called board meeting in the coming weeks. The Executive Committee will recommend, based on reporting of positive lodging tax collection, a PPP Loan award, and updated fiscal year budget predictions.:

- *"To approve the suggested budget amendment, which includes adding \$231,277.00 dollars to the budget to pay for:*
 - *A co-op advertising program that will directly impact our tourism-related stakeholders.*
 - *A destination development, beautification program, that will directly impact our clients.*
 - *A tourism master plan that will directly impact our organization and entire destination."*

Adjourn - With no other business to discuss, the commitee adjourned at 2:13 p.m.