



**TOURISM DESTINY DRIVER
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY AUGUST 9, 2017 @ 5:15 PM
I'FALLS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE/CVB OFFICE**

STEWARDS PRESENT: Pete Schultz, Sherril Gautreaux, Bob DeGross, Joan Nelson, Cory Gustafson, Tricia Heibel, Dan Schermerhorn

I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS (sign-up sheet)

II. VOYAGEUR COUNTRY ATV UPDATE

Schultz reported that the ARDC is developing a Comprehensive Trail Plan for Koochiching County. He spoke about the different existing trails that will be linked together. In addition Koochiching County is providing substantial funding to the project. ATV riding is becoming one of the fastest growing recreational activities and there are many tourism opportunities available for expansion.

III. SHORT TERM VACATION RENTALS

The group discussed the issues around short term vacation rentals such as those through on-line services like VRBO, AirBnB, Home Away From Home, etc. In Koochiching County and its cities, these short term vacation rentals are not necessarily regulated. Some see the “short term vacation rentals” as having an unfair advantage over hotels, motels, resorts, bed and breakfasts because they do not have to go through any Department of Health licensure and may not always collect and pay sales and lodging taxes. Some cities have passed ordinances regulating these rentals which include specific insurance requirements, fire code and minimum health standards. Other factors to consider are rules regarding parking availability, noise levels, interaction with neighbors, water access. The group suggests that Koochiching County look at passing a county-wide ordinance and will draft some guidelines to present to the Board.

A motion to support drafting guidelines on “short term vacation rentals” to be forwarded to Koochiching County Commission was made by Heibel; seconded by Gustafson and passed unanimously.

IV. OPEN DISCUSSION

The group reviewed the marketing message piece being developed by the VF Marketing Committee. The group also reviewed the piece published in Lake Time magazine about VNP. Joan Nelson from Big Falls reported that the grant application for the Big Falls Campground expansion and rehabilitation project will be decided upon in November. Littlefork and Big Falls reported that the construction on the Great Northern Transmission Line is a boon for their resorts and restaurants. VNP Superintendent Bob DeGross reported that the campsite reservation system is working well – he is getting positive feedback on the system. Camping reservations are up from last year. Schultz reported that the CVB Rainy Lake video has gotten positive results on Facebook. Heibel reported that the I’Falls Chamber will host a Google Map workshop in the fall @ RRCC.

V. ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 6:15.