

Charter Review Commission  
Minutes of Governance Sub-Committee Meeting on 5/6/21

The following were discussed:

1. Call to Order - Meeting on Zoom called to order at 7:03 pm by Dave Anderson, Chair.
2. Roll Call - Present: Dave Anderson, Janet Brownell, David Dehlendorf, Jane Fuller, Tony Ghazel, Dick Grout, & Olivia Roseberry. Kevin Ranker was absent.
3. Approval of 4/29/21 Minutes - No discussion or vote was taken to approve the 4/29/21 minutes.
4. Issues #15 & #16 (Transfer Management of Tourism Promotion to County) - Discussions continued from previous meetings of the proposed transfer of the Visitors Bureau's tourism promotional activities to a new county sustainable tourism department. We started with a presentation by Deborah Hoskinson, Executive Director of the Visitors Bureau, followed by Q&A. Deborah discussed the history of the VB since its founding in 2003 funded by an increase in the existing lodging tax. Deborah was its first and since its only executive director. She emphasized that the VB's mission statement has contained a stewardship element from its beginning. (She suggested we replace the term "sustainable tourism" with "regenerative tourism", the updated term now used in the industry.) In 2019 the VB received approval from the Lodging Tax Advisory Board (LTAB) and the County Council of a grant for a tourism management plan with four pillars, specifically quality of environment, quality of residents life, quality of local economy, and quality of visitor experience. Implementation was originally planned for 2020 starting with an RFP for a consultant, but because of Covid-19, implementation has been delayed indefinitely. She suggested we speak with Jamie Stephen, chair of the lodging tax advisory board, about the timing and details of the study. Deborah suggested we look to Sedona, AZ as a town and county that have already conducted and implemented a similar plan. In response to our questions, Deborah defended the timing of the VB's reaction to the Covid-19 crisis in spring 2020. She informed us that most VBs in the state are private entities. If the VB were to become part of the county, she suggested it appoint an advisory committee similar to what the VB has today. Deborah said she would be interested in continuing to manage the new county department and to bring her current staff with her subject to county council approval. Various commissioners emphasized that they are not anti-tourism and recognized its importance to the local economy. After Deborah's participation ended, Brownell informed us that Gaylord has stated that the charter cannot direct the LTAB to spend the lodging tax in a specific manner. Instead, he suggested the following wording "The county manager, or designee, is vested with the duty to apply for lodging tax funds and to manage tourism marketing/promotion services to be provided directly by the county". Grout commented that any such provision should include an affordable housing provision tied to seasonal workers. Brownell suggested that instead of a possible charter amendment, we consider a possible recommendation to the County Council outside of the charter. There was also discussion of possibly taking no action whatsoever, but that instead we as non-appointed individuals work with the general public to assure that the eventual tourism management plan incorporates the vision and other elements that reflect community priorities. A motion was approved 7-0 to not take any action today but instead to continue discussion at our next weekly meeting on May

13. Roseberry informed us that any recommendation we may eventually decide to make to the full CRC is already scheduled for its May 19 meeting.

5. New Business - None.

6. Public Comment - Other than Deborah Hoskinson, no members of the public were present.

7. Adjournment - Motion to adjourn approved 7-0 at 8:20 pm.

Minutes prepared by David Dehlendorf and submitted to chair on 5/11/21.