

**GATLINBURG DEPARTMENT OF TOURISM
CONVENTION CENTER/GROUP SALES WORK GROUP MINUTES**

August 22, 2008

The Gatlinburg Department of Tourism Convention Center/Group Sales Work Group met on August 22, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Convention Center. **The following members were present:** Ms. Jackelyn Schafer, Mr. Joe Waggoner, Ms. Vickie Simms, Ms. Sharon Rinehart, and Mr. David Perella. Business Community Members Included: Mr. David Reed, Ms. Jackie Leatherwood, Mr. Brian Holland, Ms. Caroline Polakowski, and Ms. Andrea Richey.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Jackelyn Schafer called the meeting to order.

READING/ APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve Meeting Minutes was made by Mr. Joe Waggoner, seconded by Ms. Andrea Richey

TROLLEY PASS UPDATE

David Perella presented the Trolley Pass update. In the month of July, there were over 5,000 passes sold at \$2.00 each. The program will roll out to the community in mid-October. We have also been given approval for a new Trolley Route that will run downtown and help our visitors get around on the parkway. The new Route will help us handle the needs of the Groups in the convention center and the visitors that we have in town. The new Route will begin on September 1st for a trial period. Ms. Jackie Leatherwood suggested designing a 'Welcome Flyer' for hotel guests. The flyer could consist of information such as: Trolley operation hours, important phone numbers for the City, events taking place, and information that visitors or particular groups might find helpful. Ms. Sharon Rinehart agreed that the flyer information needed to be available at the time of booking and when the guests arrive in town to check in.

HOUSING BUREAU

We are still in the creative stages of developing a housing bureau program. Sharon Rinehart has a meeting with Ric (our data system administrator) to setup and go over some planning to begin creating a reservation system. Sharon Rinehart will be giving the Group updates on the progress of the Housing Bureau.

The Group also had a discussion about Resurrection and CCC. Properties, at this point, are handling Resurrection and bookings with CCC on an individual basis.

CO-OP ADVERTISING

Ms. Sharon Rinehart distributed 3 handouts from the Convention Center Sales Office. The handouts give information and an example of what the co-op ads will look like. The ad sizes and

costs are based on a limit of 6 properties per page. A packet of information will be sent out with details and instructions on how to participate in the program. The group agreed that the ad is clean and matches well. Jackelyn Schaffer stated that it is good that 1 agency is doing all of the creative so that the advertisements will be uniformed.

www.gatlinburg-tn.com WEBSITE

The –TN website will be redesigned by BCF. David Perella showed an example of Virginia Beach’s website to give the Group an idea of what the new site will consist of. The roll out date for the new site is expected to be 8-10 weeks.

David Perella also discussed the micro site that BCF has designed. This site will be for visitors to interact with our ‘Reach Higher Ground Brand.’ A demonstration of the site will be available at the next meeting.

UPDATE ON SALES PROPOSALS

The newly structured sales proposals are working well with the properties that are participating. Participants now include cabin rentals and condos that have not been involved in the past. The program and proposals will be an annual recommitment so that businesses stay involved and updated on information.

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for **Friday, October 24, 2008 at 9:00** am in the **Board Room** at the convention center. The Agenda will include:

An update on the Trolley Pass Program, the Trolley Route progress, an update on the Housing Bureau, Website updates and demonstrations, Print Ad Co-Op updates, and an update on the Virtual Tradeshow with demonstrations