

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

January 25, 2008

The Gatlinburg Department of Tourism Convention Center/Group Sales Work Group met on January 25, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in the Board Room of the Convention Center. **The following members were present:** Ms. Jackelyn Schaffer, Mr. Joe Waggoner, Ms. Vickie Simms, Ms. Sharon Sutton, and Mr. David Perella. Business Community Members Included: Ms. Susan Brown, Ms. Angela Wilson, Mr. David Reed, and Ms. Jackie Leatherwood.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Jackelyn Schaffer called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to approve December 14, 2007 Meeting Minutes was made by Ms. Jackie Leatherwood, seconded by Ms. Angela Wilson.

PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

Ms. Sharon Sutton distributed the 2 page template that will be presented to properties at the February 12, 2008 Round Table Meeting. The group hopes that all properties, including those currently having proposal problems, will have the ability to follow this idea. The template is a word document that can be adjusted as necessary.

TROLLEY PASS UPDATE

Mr. David Perella has talked with Cindy Ogle and Buddy Parton regarding this issue. Mr. Buddy Parton's viewpoint on the subject differs from the viewpoints of property owners. The goal is to get ALL the trolleys full ALL the time. David will be meeting with Mr. Parton next week to address the following: idea of developing a Trolley Pass, making the Trolleys convenient for visitors, increasing the number of Trolley users, making the routes more accessible and reconsidering the hours of operation. Letters from the Attractions Association, the Lodging Association, and possibly the Retail Merchants will be provided supporting development of a Trolley Pass will be provided.

SISTER CITY UPDATE

The idea of developing a Sister City would be to share convention center business and sales lead information between the cities. The group agreed that the size of the Sister City's facility would need to be similar to our own and that the cities have the same "draw" to visitors. Ms. Sharon Sutton provided Greensboro, NC as an example. Ms. Vickie Simms suggested we ask our new

advertising agency for their input on finding a good Sister City. Ms. Jackelyn Schaffer ended discussion by suggesting we table this idea until we can do more research and have BCF onboard to provide some input.

GREEN MOVEMENT

Ms. Vickie Simms commented that the Chamber of Commerce will be presenting their Green Initiative in mid February to the business community. The Initiative will include information and suggestions on “going green”. The group agreed that we just want to develop awareness that everyone can do something – and that every little bit helps.

NEW BUSINESS/DISCUSSION

Ms. Jackelyn Schaffer began discussion by commenting on Creative Convention Concepts and how difficult and unprofessional the company has been to work with. Several members of the group agreed and have had similar experiences with the company already. Mr. David Perella wrapped up discussion by stating, “If you don’t rent rooms in Gatlinburg, you will not get the space in the convention center.”

NEXT MEETING DATE

The next scheduled meeting for the Convention/Group Sales Work Group is **Friday, February, 29, 2008 at 9:00 am** in the **Board Room** of the convention center.