

TOWN OF BURKE BOARD SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
June 30, 2014
5:00 p.m.

Board Members in attendance: Supervisor Berg; Supervisor Hess-acting Chair; Supervisor Nimmow and Supervisor Searls. Excused: Viney. Also in attendance: Brenda Ayers, Clerk/Treasurer.

ALL AGENDA ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO POSSIBLE ACTION

1) ADMINISTRATIVE

- a) It was determined that a quorum was present and that the meeting was properly posted.
- b) The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m. by Hess.
- c) The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

2) NEW BUSINESS

- a) Discussion of Town of Vienna's withdrawal from the Joint Room Tax Commission effective December 31, 2014. On June 27 the Town received written notice of Vienna's withdrawal effective December 31, 2014. Per the agreement participating municipalities may withdraw at the end of the year if they provide written notice by June 30, 2014. Vienna intends to form their own commission and focus on their interstate exit.
- b) Discuss/possible action on whether or not the Town of Burke will continue to participate in the Joint Room Tax Commission (JRTC) and possible alternatives. Ayers provided that Board with a document containing information regarding the background of the JRTC, immediate concerns and possible alternatives with pros and cons. By State Statutes and the agreement member municipalities are required to contribute 70% of room tax revenue to a tourism entity. The remaining 30% may be retained by the municipalities. Vienna currently contributes 68% of the Commission's average \$65,000 revenue. Vienna's withdrawal leaves Burke, Windsor and DeForest in the Room Tax Commission. DeForest does not have any room tax entities. Burke and Windsor combined contribute an average of \$21,000 per year to the Commission and the Commission currently has an agreement with the Chamber to pay \$10,000 per year for staff, office space and equipment. The remaining \$11,000 leaves little for promoting tourism. The Commission may withdraw from the Chamber agreement if it gives notice by October 1, 2014. The Commission currently has \$98,669 cash on hand and neither the agreement nor State Statutes address what happens to the funds when members withdraw. The 30% of the room tax collections retained by the Town of Burke is used to fund the Town picnic, Easter Egg Hunt, and \$400 towards the Token Creek Lions 4th of July parade. The Board was presented with three options for moving forward: 1) follow Vienna's lead and give notice 2) repeal the room tax ordinance at the next Board meeting (July 16) 3) Do nothing and remain in the agreement for another year. Options 1 and 3 will allow the Town to have a vote in how to expend the cash on hand for tourism in the area. Option 2 automatically removes the Town from the Commission and will not allow the Town to have a vote on how to expend the room tax dollars collected to date. Option 1 also gives the Town six months to review their room tax ordinance and explore other tourism avenues. Ayers reported that she spoke with Pat Fischbeck of the Speckled Hen and Fischbeck supported the Town's withdrawal from the Commission. She also indicated that she would be willing to work with Ayers over the next six months to determine if the Town should repeal the room tax ordinance effective January 1 or find other tourism options. The Board noted that

if they repealed the room tax, the Town would need to find an additional \$5-7,000 to fund the picnic, egg hunt and parade. Ayers noted that the Town could also reconsider sponsoring these events or possibly downsize what the Town contributes. Motion: Nimmow/Searls to proceed with option 1- to give notice to withdraw effective December 31, 2014. Motion carried. A letter giving notice was drafted by Ayers in anticipation of the Board's action. The Board reviewed the letter and recommended that letter is revised to note that it was an unanimous vote of the Board to withdraw from the Commission.

3) NEXT MEETING DATE. July 16, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.

4) ADJOURNMENT. Motion: Searls/Berg to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

Brenda Ayers
Clerk/Treasurer
07/10/2014