

Wilmington City Council met on Thursday, January 6, 2011, with President Pro Tem Sandy Mongold presiding.

Roll Call: Jaehnig, present; Wells, present; Peterson, present; Wallace, present; Mead, present; Mongold, present; McKay, present.

Assistant Chief Weyand was also present.

Council gave the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

A motion was made by Wells and seconded by Mead to approve the minutes of the December 16, 2010, last regular meeting as received.

Motion passed.

Minutes approved as received.

A motion was made by Wells and seconded by Jaehnig to approve the minutes of the December 29, 2010, special meeting as received.

Motion passed.

Special minutes approved as received.

President of Council Pro Tem– Sandy Mongold: We have with us tonight Debbie Stamper who is with the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Debbie Stamper – Convention and Visitors Bureau: Hello. I'll try to make this as quick as I understand I am the only thing between you and going home. It is that time of year again. Every year I come and give you all our marketing plan and budget for the new year, and since we are in 2011, that is what I am here to do tonight. I have given you all a copy of this and I am not going to go over the whole thing; I am just going to hit on a few highlights. I encourage you to read it in your leisure, because there are some statistics and things in there that you might find interesting. In looking at the travel industry as a whole, 2010 was not a good year. It was not a good year for many of us and our industry was no different. In looking at predictions for what's going to happen in 2011, travelers are going to spend less. Because they are going to spend less, they are going to expect hotel room rates to be less. They are going to stay closer to home. They have been doing that anyway, but it does look like they are going to be willing to travel a little further. Now, if gas prices go to \$4 per gallon, as they are saying may happen by mid-summer, that could throw all that out and people will be staying in their own backyard. So, anyway, hopefully that won't happen and we will see some people that who be doing some driving to destinations. In 2010, we did see leisure travel, which that is your individual travelers, increase 2.8%. Business travel increased 4.2%. Any increase is good. We like to see increases.

Councilmember Jaehnig: I'm sorry. Are those local numbers or state numbers?

Debbie Stamper: This is state; this is overall. That is a good thing, but that doesn't even come close to offsetting what it had dropped over the last two years. It's slow. We keep hearing about 2012, things really will becoming out of this sluggish economy and market. We were told in 2010 that we were in a "less bad situation" and this year it is being called a "ho-hum." That kind of tells you right there what were are going to expect. In looking at how we compared to the norm in 2010, things weren't so great, like I said. We saw 30 % decline in lodging tax collections. That is one of the measurements that we use for travel in our own backyard. Lodging tax collection directly collates to what our budget is. Over the last 2 years we have seen a 40% decrease. We are making adjustments like everyone else.

Debbie Stamper: So, what did we do in 2010? Again, just a quick recap: We starting focusing and continued to focus throughout the year on two special markets that we really feel have potential for bringing in a quite a bit of dollars. That's the sports and meeting markets. We did finish our sports facility inventory. We designed and printed a sports facility guide and we have been using that in direct mail solicitations, and we used

that at a trade show. I attended a national sports expo in Charlotte in August. It was an event where it's called teams. It's where you sit and have face-to-face, one-on-one appointments with these sports event planners. We have a pretty healthy supply of leads that came out of that. The bad thing, I guess in a way, is that it doesn't necessarily mean it is going to translate into business this year. Most of the time, they are working one to three years out. So, it's relationship building, because they want to know that you can handle it. Once we get some and we can use them as an example, it will certainly help us get others. As far as the meeting planners, we continued with paid advertising. We did public relation efforts and direct mail solicitation. I had a booth at... There are two associations in the state that their membership is primarily meeting planners. We are now members of both of those associations, and I had a booth at one of them. They had a trade show and I was able to meet with many meeting planners at that event. Again, relationship building takes a little time but we are working through that.

Debbie Stamper: Another thing that we did...it was all new to me and I've learned a lot and am still learning...but social media. They tell you if you are not doing social media now you are already a year behind the curve. We did implement Facebook, Linked-In, and Twitter pages. We have a Flickr page now that you can click on it and it has all kinds of pictures of Clinton County. We have a You-Tube account that has multiple marketing videos on it about Clinton County. All of these are accessible from our homepage of our website. We also now have a blog, which is kind of like a newsletter I guess you would say. It's a whole different way of marketing. It is great for me to say, come to our beautiful, wonderful Cowan Lake State Park, but people now are looking to other consumers. They want to know a truthful recollection of what that person's experience was. It is a different way of trying to get people interested in what you have to offer. Again, I'm learning, but I think we have made quite a bit of headway. Also, our website was totally re-designed in 2010 – a whole new look, streamlined. It is more user-friendly. We did add our sports facility guide to the website so a sports event planner can go right on to the website and can see all of our facilities and all of the amenities.

Debbie Stamper: Going forward, what do we need to do? There are going to be some, I guess you would say, strategies that we are going to take on in 2011. We will continue to sustain the local and close market. With people driving in...a lot of these people are your leisure travelers. We want them to come back again and again, so we want them to have a good experience here. When the business market fell out from under us, when DHL left, really it has been the leisure travelers that have sustained us all this time. So, they are very important to us. We need to continue to tell people about these compelling experiences and why they should come to Clinton County and to Wilmington. With the whole Glen Beck thing, we were kind of held up as an example to the rest of America. We're talking to people and seeing people that all of a sudden they are more interested in us. What is there? What makes them so special? That's a plus. We are going to continue with the social media thing, We need to get more followers. If you are familiar with social media, you have friends and you have followers and you have all these different kinds of things. We need to get more people so that there are linked up to us and they can get these posts that we are doing all the time.

Debbie Stamper: We are going to continue to digitize our media. Print is never going out. In fact, this year, 2010, we went through 35,000 printed Visitor's Guides. We ran out. We have run out. I have never had that happen. You would think that the quantity that you needed would go down because more and more people are going on-line, but there are still a lot of people that want to hold it in their hands. They want to travel with it. Print is not going away. We are just going to make sure that on our website and through these different social media outlets, that we have everything that is in print available through those sources. We are going to continue to narrow down our focus. We have already been doing it. I've already talked about it: the sports market and also the meeting market. Also, in 2011 we are going to have a video produced that will actually feature all of the sports facilities, so that instead of us just telling people about it or sending them a printed piece of material, they can actually watch this video and they can see it for themselves. We hope to have it with athletes actually playing in these facilities so they can see it as well.

Debbie Stamper: The last thing, I don't know if you are familiar with this, but the whole thing where people using smart phones (you know, the Blackberries, the iPhones, etc.) is just growing at an astronomical rate. If you've ever tried to pull up a website on your smart phone, websites are designed so that there is a lot of imagery and it is visually appealing. But that kind of a site is not user-friendly on a smart phone. You've got this little bitty screen. People who are going to a smart phone and going on the internet are generally, and I'm speaking for myself, you just want to get to the information quick. You want to see what you want and you want to see the link and you want to see a phone number. There is a new technology where they develop a website that is totally designed for a smart phone and it is actually called a mobisite. So, we are going to have a dot-mobisite built for us in 2011. When someone, say they are going down I-71 and they've got their smart phone there and they see they are entering Clinton County. They go into a search and they go to clintoncountyohio.com. The technology on the back end, on our website, will know that it is a smart phone trying to access it and it will directly re-direct it to our mobisite so that they get the right thing. So, it's pretty cool, pretty cutting edge. It has only been out since, this technology and all, for about two years and it is just now kind of coming into its own. That kind of sums up the marketing plan. Marketing is of the most importance is when things are not as good. We are going to be down on budget, but I feel very optimistic that we've streamlined and that our focus is going to give us the results that we need to see.

Debbie Stamper: The next page after the marketing, you are going to see the budget with the actual figures. Then behind that is a summary of each line item. Most of these are because the budget is down and it's going to be the same as last year or less, but I'm just going to hit on five that I think are noteworthy that we need to comment on. I just wanted to go over on advertising, what we are actually going to be doing. What does that mean? We are going to hit every market. So, for the leisure traveler, we're doing an ad in Country Living Magazine, Ohio Camper Magazine. We are going to be in an insert that is going to go in the Plain Dealer that will be mailed to one million people. We will be in the States Ohio Travel Planner, the States spring/summer calendar of events, and then we will also be in an Ohio insert in May that will be inserted into Readers' Digest. For sports, we will have three different ads through the year in Sports Events magazine, and then, of course, I already told you, we are doing a video for our sports venues. The meeting market: We are going to be advertising in a publication called Midwest Meetings magazine three times this year. Then these two associations that have primarily meeting planners as their members: in one of those we are doing a three-time ad and in the other one we are going to have a banner ad on their website for twelve months. In group tours, we are doing two group tour ads: one in Group Travel Leader and also one in Group Tour Magazine. So, as you can see, we are hitting them all. Having been doing this for a few years now, we kind of know where we can get the biggest bang for our buck and get the best results.

Debbie Stamper: On dues and the subscriptions, the only thing that I wanted to mention was that we are joining a new association this year. It's called the National Association of Sports Commission and CVB's. Anybody in the United States, Ohio, whatever state you are in, that wants to attract sporting events is a member of that association. I will be attending a trade show expo in April of that association. This is the same time that I will be sitting and talking one-on-one with these sports event planners.

Debbie Stamper: Grant programs, I just want to bring that up. You know, we have offered our grants for a number of years. It's a little different this year, though. Last year, the Roberts Centre got the opportunity to bid (I may have mentioned this at a prior meeting), to bid on a volleyball tournament. It's a three-day event, 600 athletes. It will fill all of our hotels, I think, it is actually for four nights. Then we are even having to go outside the county for some of the rooms. There were some needs that this event planner needed that kind of exceeded the Roberts budget, so we are actually giving them a grant for \$4,000 for that specific event so we could get it, that's the bottom line. I just wanted to mention the trade show booths. We are going to have the trade show booth at this sports commission, and then also one of the associations for meetings, I'll be at a trade show there. Then, under website costs, that does include the development of our dot-mobisite and further development of our website. Our web developer is going to work on some search engine optimization so we can get higher in the listings. So when you do

like a Google search, we can be higher. That's everything in a nutshell. Is that quick enough, Larry? Are there any questions?

Paul Hunter: Has the Wilmington Inn paid their dues, yet?

Debbie Stamper – Not that I am aware of.

Paul Hunter – How much money does that amount to?

Debbie Stamper – I don't know what the total dollar amount is. I know it is two years.

Councilman Mead: I just want to compliment you on your report. It is short, it is easy to read, the numbers are all there. Job well done.

Debbie Stamper: Thank you. I aim to be concise and quick. Yes, Cindy?

Councilperson Peterson: I just finished...I was on the board of the Convention and Business Bureau, appointed by the Mayor. I have just been honored to serve on that board and have really become committed to the Convention & Visitors Bureau. I really feel it serves a valuable purpose. Personally and professionally, I appreciate the opportunity to work with you.

Debbie Stamper – Thank you. I appreciate your service. We really do. Well, thank you all.

[General comments of approval]

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Mr. Mayor, do you have a report?

Mayor – Mayor Raizk: I have no report Madame President Pro Tem.

Asset, Acquisition and Use –Chairperson Sandy Mongold: Asset. Acquisition and use has no report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Auditor?

Auditor – Auditor David Hollingsworth: No report tonight.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Finance Committee?

Finance Committee – Chairperson Sandy Mongold: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Water Committee?

Water Committee – Councilman Wallace: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem-Sandy Mongold: Streets Committee?

Streets Committee – Chairperson Peterson: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Solid Waste/Recycling?

Solid Waste/Recycling Committee – Chairperson Wells: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem-Sandy Mongold: Wastewater/Sewer?

Wastewater/Sewer Committee: Chairperson Mark McKay: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Thank you. Judiciary Committee?

Judiciary Committee: Chairperson Rob Jaehnig: We do have one item tonight. This is more of a paperwork/housekeeping thing. Every two years we have to renew our

cooperative purchasing agreement with the Ohio Department of Transportation and it is that time to do that again. We will be asking for three readings tonight so we can renew that and participate in that purchasing.

Councilperson Peterson: Is this urgent that we have to have three readings?

Chairperson Rob Jaehnig: Yes, I believe we have to have completed.

A motion was made by Jaehnig and seconded by Peterson to give the first reading on a resolution Authorizing Participation In the Ohio Department Of Transportation Cooperative Purchasing Program.

Motion passed.

Director Law read resolution by title only.

A motion was made by Jaehnig and seconded by Peterson to suspend the rules and give the second and third reading on the resolution by title only.

Roll call: Jaehnig, yes; Wells, yes; Peterson, yes; Wallace, yes; Mead, yes; Mongold, yes; McKay, yes.

Director of Law read resolution by title only.

A motion was made by Jaehnig and seconded by McKay to pass the resolution as read.

Roll call: Jaehnig, yes; Wells, yes; Peterson, yes; Wallace, yes; Mead, yes; Mongold, yes; McKay, yes.

Motion passed.

President of Council Pro Tem declared Resolution No. 2223 passed as read.

Councilmember Jaehnig: Did we determine a Judiciary meeting time?

Clerk of Council: Monday, January 10, 2011, at 5:30 PM.

Councilman Jaehnig: That is all we have, Madame President.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Thank you. Safety Committee?

Safety Committee- Chairperson Rob Jaehnig: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Thank you. Downtown Revitalization Committee?

Downtown Revitalization Committee - Convener Mark McKay: I just wanted to report that I think we continue to get residuals effects from the Beck event and that is all good news. That is all I have.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Thank you. Parks & Recreation Committee?

Parks and Recreation Committee – Convener Mike Wallace: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Service Director?

Service Director- Service Director Larry Reinsmith: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Safety Director?

Safety Director – Mayor Raizk: No report.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Is there a councilmember or a anybody from the audience that would like to speak? Would you please take the podium and state your name and address?

Franklin Wall: My name is Franklin Wall, and I live at 713 Mead Street. I recently came to make a complaint, but I've talked to my city councilman and he has talked to the people who are going to fix what's wrong, so I came up to just let him know that I'm

satisfied. They say they will get it done when the weather is fit, so if they do that, there will be no more complaints. That's all I got to say.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Okay. Thank you very much.

Mayor Raizk – Thanks, Frank.

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Are there any other comments or questions?

President of Council Pro Tem – Sandy Mongold: Do I have a motion to adjourn?

A motion was made by Jaehnig and seconded by Wells to adjourn.

Motion passed.

Meeting adjourned

ATTEST:

President of Council Pro Tem

Clerk of Council