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CITY OF BRANSON

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NEWS RELEASE

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Action taken by Branson Board of Aldermen at March 9, 2010 meeting

SECOND READING AND FINAL PASSAGE BILLS

Architect selected for city hall modifications

Final approval given to contract with Pellham-Phillips Architects of Springfield to design the remodeling of the police department and city clerk/municipal court offices in city hall. Both departments need more space and this remodeling would be a short term solution. The design contract would cost \$27,000. The actual construction cost is estimated to be \$273,000. Funds were budgeted for these projects.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS (Presentations and 1st Readings)

Year end marketing report from the Branson Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce

Overall visitation in 2009 was down 3.8% compared to 2008 – from 7.5 million visits in '08 to 7.2 million in '09. However, the number of first time visitors increased 7% and the number of families coming to Branson also increased 2%. The average age of the Branson visitor dropped from 51 to 49. Visitors stayed an average of 4.5 nights. And spending per party increased to \$961 which is more than \$80 over 2008.

2010 strategies include: marketing in cities closer to Branson to leverage the trend of travelers staying closer to home, but not abandoning national cable TV outreach; stress new attractions in advertising messages to increase appeal to a repeat audience; and stress the value that Branson affords its visitors in all messages.

Branson Convention Center yearend report from Hilton officials

For the year 2009, convention center revenues were down to budget by \$667,000. However, concessions exceeded budget by \$81,000.

The number of event days stayed equal. There were 251 event days at the convention center in 2009 compared to 252 in 2008.

61% of the business booked originated in Missouri with 27% coming from Jefferson City and 26% from Springfield. Kansas and Arkansas are the next states where the most convention center business came from.

The convention center brought to Branson in 2009 an additional 21,000 room nights.

Board amends ordinance dealing with special events permits

The changes include: all special events involving street closures will need Board of Aldermen approval; applicants for special events must submit their applications 90 days before the event; and the new ordinance eliminates a section requiring reimbursement by the event organizers for any costs incurred by the city as a result of the event.

Bonds to finance sewer improvements approved

The Board approved on first and second reading a bill authorizing the city to issue \$7.5 million in tourism tax revenue bonds for improvements to the Compton Drive Wastewater Treatment Plant and a sewer lift station. These projects are considered the highest priority capital improvements currently needed by the city.

Changes made to special event permits

These changes deal with special event permits that involve street closings. All special events involving street closures will need Board of Aldermen approval. Applicants for such events must submit their applications 90 days prior to the event. However, exceptions may be granted at the discretion of the city administrator. And Board of Aldermen has the option of assessing a fee for expenses incurred by the city for the event. Second reading on the bill is March 23.

Amendments made to city code pertaining to alcoholic beverages

The recommended changes, on first reading, modify the city's liquor code in the following areas:

1. The managing officer of the liquor establishment must be an employee of the business.
2. Deletes the license for non-intoxicating beer which has been repealed by the Missouri General Assembly.
3. Specifies the number of package liquor licenses for establishments under 20,000 square feet to be 20 of the 26 allowable. This represents no change in the total number of package liquor licenses.
4. Requires a 6 day beer and light wine license holder to also sell prepared foods.
5. Sets a \$5,000 annual minimum sales level for a package liquor store
6. Requires liquor training participation by servers and cashiers every two years and within the first two months of employment.

Bid Awards

Coca-Cola for providing soft drinks and other merchandise at the RecPlex for \$25,000 for 2010.

Mathes Landscaping of Walnut Shade, MO for maintenance at the city-owned Par 3 golf course for \$31,400. This contract runs through the end of the year.