

**From:** John Kelsh [mailto:jkelsh@destinationdevelopment.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, February 24, 2007 10:48 PM  
**To:** de510  
**Cc:** fjohnson@marshalltexas.net; jcook; Roger Brooks  
**Subject:** Re: The Marshall Tourism Marketing Function and Organization

Ron:

I am responding to your memo to DDI (undated) sent on February 22, 2007, "Re: The Marshall Tourism Marketing Function and Organization"

In the memo you asked us two questions:

- Is it correct that Frank Johnson said he did not have a problem with the proposal and Destination Development expected it to be voted on at the Thursday, February 22 meeting?
- Does Destination Development see any reason that the City Commission should delay a vote on the organization until the City receives your final report?

City Manager Frank Johnson sent an email to Roger Brooks on February 14, 2007 stating that a city council member requested that an item be placed on the February 22 Council meeting agenda to decide whether to leave Marshall's Convention and Visitor Development office under the responsibility and supervision of the Chamber of Commerce or move it under the responsibility and supervision of the City. Frank Johnson wrote to us to see if we could provide a recommendation on this issue at once, in advance of our final report, or in lieu of a recommendation, any insights on the best direction to go. We took this request seriously as Frank stated that it would be awkward "... if we act on February 22 to move this office under the responsibility of the City if your recommendation a few weeks later is going to be for it to stay where it is."

Therefore, we responded later on the same day via email to Frank Johnson. We stated,

*"Our recommendation is that the tourism program not be contracted with the Chamber of Commerce. This has nothing to do with record keeping issues. Here is the reasoning:"*

We then went on to outline how we envision the CVB as an independent 501(c) 3 corporation. We saw this as our recommendation based on several months of work and presented it with the understanding that it would be discussed and voted on at the February 22 City Council meeting.

On February 15, 2007 I received a conference call from Frank Johnson and Janet Cook. To the best of my recollection, Frank said that they had reviewed our recommendation, had no significant problems with what we recommended, and could work with it. The

bulk of the conversation focused on what we had written about the Main Street program, e.g.

*“In Marshall, this program fell under the City's umbrella where it's funding got cut in half, basically gutting the program.”*

Janet Cook sent me a follow up email the same day to explain that the Main Street manager position was initially 51% Main Street, 49% Small Business Development Coordinator, so in fact, the position had not been cut.

So the answer to your first question is yes, Frank Johnson seemed not to have any problems with our recommendation – at least none that required us to revisit our recommendation, rewrite it to. Also, we internally thought the premise of Frank's request still held - that some action was likely to take place on February 22.

To answer your second question, no we don't see any reason why the City Council cannot take action upon our recommendation prior to our final report. In fact, we suggested in our recommendation that the city attorney investigate the 501(c) 3 as it takes time to create one - as long as six months. You may infer from this that we expect the corporation to be created soon. During this year 2007, the CVB corporation should be formed, Board members appointed, office space established, create their website and other items.

Let me turn to the matter of the Main Street program, as statements regarding it in our recommendation we were told by Frank and Janet, were incorrect.

In our initial in-person interviews, we were told that the Main Street program was only half-time and that this was because while the State Main Street program required a full-time position to start, that after three years, it could be less than full time. I actually made comment of this when I met in person with the Tourism Council. Ron, you have the audiotape, but I believe I said that the Main Street program would not succeed with a half-time position and needed more support.

There are differences of opinion as to whether or not the Main Street program is doing well, or not so well. While we've heard officially that there are no problems at the State with Marshall's program, we have also heard from other sources, both in and outside Marshall, that the program is not doing well. There is room for disagreement on this issue, because people's perceptions are different. Our role, as outside consultants, is to weigh the information, and sources, and arrive at our own conclusions, based on our experience with many other Main Street programs. We are not here to cast stones, play politics or dwell on the past, but to recommend a course of action for the future. The fact is, the Main Street program has a role to play in the development of Marshall's tourism brand. We will make recommendations on what we think that role should be. There will be more than enough work for everyone in the community – the private sector, the city, the Main Street program, the Chamber, the CVB, etc.

I hope that this answers your questions.

John