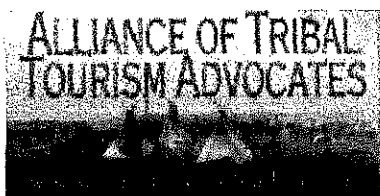


Lost Soul Indians



Small victory claimed for ATTA; first phase monies being sought by Karin Eagle

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RAPID CITY-Despite a few "scary" moments when the outcome of the city council vote was uncertain the Alliance of Tribal Tourism Advocates were able to claim a small victory in the form of a 90 day extension to raise funds for a proposed Native American arts venue in Rapid City.

The He Sapa Interpretive Center for Performing Arts is the project that has come before the city council. The center will consist of a powwow grounds, a living history village, an open arts market area, storytelling and other components including Lakota culinary food presentations and ethnobotany displays.

ATTA has sought to partner with existing programs and organizations such as the Journey Museum.

The project has been in the works for nearly ten years. ATTA has had to rely almost entirely on seeking funding and support from the various Lakota/Dakota tribes in South Dakota with, according to Robert Cook who spoke on behalf of ATTA, little help from philanthropists groups in Rapid City.

The City of Rapid City has set aside 2012 monies over six hundred thousand to help fund the project, which will be granted after a certain amount of money is raised by ATTA to help fund the first phase of the project. ATTA, according to Cook, is approximately three hundred thousand dollars shy of their goal.

The ninety day extension, which puts the deadline at March 31, gives ATTA the opportunity to pursue the interest that various tribes and other Native organizations have expressed in the tourism opportunity.



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as well his pointing out the fact that the city might have supported the project even more than they already have.

"The question is always is the project underfunded," said Weifenbach, "I would not disagree with that, and I wish that when this project comes forward we should look at it and fund the whole thing."

Weifenbach mentioned the projects being funded by the city that will bring in less revenue than the project is projected to bring to the local economy. Weifenbach mentioned the revenue that the Lakota Nation Invitational that brought in.

In regards to the Civic Center expansion that was recently approved by voters Weifenbach stated that he wished the council had "grilled" the supporters of that project like they had grilled Cook. "I would rather put the Civic Center on the back burner to support a project like this," said Weifenbach.

Weifenbach spoke about living in a rich cultural community like Rapid City and not having had the full opportunity to learn more about the Lakota culture in his own community.

Alderman Jerry Wright went as far as encouraging Cook and the ATTA program to look bigger and reach further.

The council voted unanimously in favor of the ninety day extension for ATTA to raise the funds needed to begin phase one of the Center, which would be the basic construction of the powwow grounds.

The Alliance of Tribal Tourism Advocates was organized in 1993 by Tribal governments in South Dakota and chartered under the Rosebud Sioux Tribe as 501 © (3) nonprofit corporation, the consortium works to enhance and promote tourism as a means of economic development and growth, while maintaining respect for Tribal traditions and lands.

A core group of individual met and discussed forming a tourism organization. The name, Alliance of Tribal Tourism Advocates, was selected at a meeting in the fall of 1993, in Chamberlain, SD. The acronym, ATTA, is a Lakota expression which describes something very special.

ATTA membership includes the nine tribes in South Dakota and in off-Indian communities the total native American population in SD is 62,283 (8.3%); out of 2002 South Dakota resident population est.: 761,063.(see attached Tribal Statistics show graphic in appendix) The nine tribes in South Dakota are the Oceti Sakowin, or seven council fires of the Great Sioux Nation. The three Sioux dialects, Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota are still spoken and taught to children in schools and through the six colleges on tribal lands.

The principal purposes of ATTA shall be to promote tourism as a means of responsible economic development for Indian tribes and communities.

To protect Indian and tribal rights, resources and interests in matters relating to tourism development; to enhance communications and networking among tribal and other Indian tourism programs and interests, to provide information and training on tourism development to the organization's members on a regular basis, and to improve communication and working relations with non-tribal governments and non-Indian tourism-