

B&B Association In Limbo - Or Not, Depending On Who You Ask

Tuesday, 23 September 2008

{audio}/images/stories/mp3/080923.bed_and_breakfast.mp3{/audio}

Jay Barrett/KMXT

Who is in charge of the Kodiak Island Bed and Breakfast Association depends on whom you ask. That confusion prompted the Kodiak Island Borough Assembly last week to put off granting the association any money out of the borough's bed tax for promotion of B&Bs in Kodiak. Jay Barrett has more.

Last week, the assembly was considering a grant up to about 16-thousand dollars to the Kodiak Island Bed and Breakfast Association, which is the balance in the borough's tourism promotion account. But an internal dispute in the association caused the assembly to postpone any financial help for them. The problem stems from a disagreement of who runs the association. On one hand, Robin Haight (hayt) says she is the president, while others say John Farentino is rightfully the head of the organization.

Darlene Turner, who identified herself as the association's treasurer, and is aligned with Farentino, asked the assembly to hold off on giving them any money until the group's internal problems are cleared up:

-- (B and B
1 50 sec "As we had talked
in July ... have never been completed.")

Turner said
Haight who was no longer affiliated with the association, and that legal action
has been involved:

-- (B and B
3 26 sec "Robin Haight does
not ... by the duly elected board of directors.")

Minutes
later, Haight called in to refute Turner's claims.

-- (B and B
2 15 sec "This is Robin
Haight ... Bed and Breakfast Association.")

Haight went
on to suggest that if the assembly did not want to redistribute bed tax revenue
to bed and breakfasts, perhaps the B-and-Bs shouldn't be collecting it.

-- (B and B
5 34 sec "And the fact that
we ... different questions regarding that.")

Marion
Owen, who runs a Kodiak bed and breakfast, but is holding off on joining the
association, told the assembly that she doesn't think that any money should be
given to the group, whoever is in charge of it. She said other associations
around the state that she's talked to do not take bed tax money:

-- (B and B
4 37 sec "They rely on
membership ... for the visiting public.")

The Kodiak
Island Convention and Visitors Bureau, which markets B-and-Bs as well as every
other visitor-related business in the borough, has declined to accept membership
money from either of the competing bed and breakfast association boards since
the split. Director Janet Buckingham said the KICVB is doing the same thing as
the borough assembly, and is taking a wait-and-see position to allow the

B-and-B association to work out their own issues.

I'm Jay
Barrett.

###