



## Minutes

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**Visit Bastrop  
Board Meeting**

**Piney Creek Chop House  
703 Chestnut St., Bastrop, TX 78602**

**Thursday, May 17, 2018  
8:30 A.M.**

The Visit Bastrop Board of Directors convened in a regular meeting at the Bastrop Chamber of Commerce, 703 Chestnut Street, Bastrop, TX 78602 on Thursday, May 17, 2018, at 8:30 a.m. Notice of said meeting, giving date, place, and subject thereof having been posted as prescribed Article 6252-17 V.A.T.C.S., Government Code, Chapter 551, with the following Board members present:

Brenda Abbott  
Rick Brackett  
Cindy Ginsel

Clint Howard  
Naseem Khonsari-Nainani  
Shawn Anthea-Pletsch

Kevin Plunkett  
Tom Scott  
Veena Tewani

*Ex Officio Board Members present:*

Sarah O'Brien, Dale Lockett, Becki Womble

*Visit Bastrop Staff present:*

Ashton LaFuente, Kathie Reyer, Shane Sorenson

*Guests present:*

Julie Hart, CFO by Design; Karen Kennard, attorney; Linda Kjellberg, Linda Kjellberg Artworks; Sandra Grawunder, Caledonia Cottage Quilts & More; Linda Micklos, Linda Marie's boutique; Bob Micklos, Stanberry Real Estate; Nicole Newman, Searchwide; Zona Sweeney, Hampton Inn; James York, Quicksilver Mining Co.

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Clint Howard called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Those present introduced themselves.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Tom Scott moved to approve the April 19, 2018 Board meeting minutes. Cindy seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed.

**III. MARCH FINANCIAL REPORT** – Julie Hart, CFO by Design

Julie Hart presented the financial report for April 2018 to include the balance sheet, year-to-date statement of activities, summary of year-to-date expenses. Julie commented that Visit Bastrop's financials are in "good shape," partly due to delayed staffing.

**IV. BOARD NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT** – Becki Womble

Becki reported the Nominating Committee met to discuss the nomination(s) of two Board positions. As the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) felt it was important to have a member on the Board, they recommended Marcus O'Connor step in to replace Thomas Grundin as an At Large member. In turn, the Bastrop Independent School District (BISD) recommended Andrew (Andy) Sexton join the Board to replace Robert Jones in the Category of Sports.

Tom Scott moved to accept the nominations of Marcos O'Connor and Andy Sexton to fill the vacant Board positions. Naseem seconded the motion. No discussion. The motion passed. Dale will ensure the new members receive an orientation package with Open Meetings training information.

**V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT** – Dale Lockett

Dale presented the President's Report, including the lodging industry report, a comparison between 2017 and 2018 figures. Current convention sales and marketing initiatives are detailed in the report.

Discussion as follows:

- A. Dale announced the Bastrop Music Festival is slated to begin later that day and that the event has been actively promoted.
- B. Dale reported Visit Bastrop branding has begun. Kathie said there will be a mailing at the end of the month to residents to solicit opinions to ensure all have an opportunity to provide input toward the new brand. Dale added there will be in-person interviews with City leadership. According to Dale, the goal is to create a brand that will be universally accepted.
- C. Dale said the next big event will be the Bastrop Patriotic Festival. Becki added there will be lots of new activities which will require a lot of volunteers and asked all to consider participating in the event.
- D. Dale reported Visit Bastrop has ended its retainer agreement with Proof Advertising, but will try to continue working with them on a project-by-project basis.
- E. Dale noted in his report a mention of the Tough Mudder event which took place May 5-6, stating its promotion was a partnership between Visit Bastrop and Explore Bastrop County. Visit Bastrop promoted Bastrop's hotels and arranged for an after-party for attendees.
- F. Dale said the National Tourism Week event, "Travel, Then and Now," which took place at the Bastrop Opera House May 10, was also a partnership between Visit Bastrop and Explore Bastrop County. Sarah Page of the Texas Association of Convention and Visitor Bureaus (TACVB), Margo Richards of the LCRA and Andrea Barefield of the Texas Brazos Trail Region served as panel speakers. Mayor Connie Schroeder proclaimed May 6 through May 12, 2018, National Tourism Week and presented multiple awards of recognition to employees who have excelled in various facets of the hospitality industry.

**VI. STAFF REPORTS – Shane Sorenson and Ashton LaFuenta**

Shane provided an update regarding his efforts to bring groups to Bastrop. He has been working closely with the Military Reunion Network in anticipation they will choose Bastrop for a future event.

Ashton provided an overview, via a Powerpoint® presentation to detail the promotional efforts for the Bastrop Music Festival (BMF). Beyond billboards, the BMF was advertised with signs on gas pumps at 12 locations. There were also banners, give-away contests and advertising in *Texas Monthly*.

**VII. CHAIR REPORT – Clint Howard**

Clint reported Visit Bastrop Executive Committee members met with Nicole Newman of SearchWide Needs Assessment the evening of May 16 to begin work toward replacing Dale in the September timeframe. The title of the position has changed from CEO to Executive Director.

**VIII. SEARCHWIDE NEEDS ASSESSMENT – Nicole Newman**

Nicole Newman walked the Board through the activities she will oversee in her effort to help the Board find a replacement for Dale. She plans to narrow the number of candidates to seven to eight people. Of that number, the Board will most likely choose two to three candidates to interview. The Board signed nondisclosure agreements to ensure the privacy of the candidates. The timeline is as follows.

- Needs Assessment Interviews May 16 - 17
- Develop Position Description and Marketing Plan Week of May 21
- Prospecting / Qualifying Candidates May 21 – June 29
- Review Candidate List with Search Committee Week of July 2 or July 9
- SearchWide™ Interviewing / Reference July 9 – 20 and Background Check

**IX. EXECUTIVE SESSION – The Board discussed Section 551.074 Personnel Matters.**

**X. BOARD COMMENTS – Clint Howard**

Clint opened the floor to Board comments. Several attendees voiced their concern regarding the number of empty stores on Main Street and reported their businesses are struggling. Sarah said she has been working exhaustively with the City of Bastrop to work on this situation. Naseem said she has not found tenants with sustainable businesses to rent her family's vacant buildings. Sarah O'Brien said Kathy Danielson of the City of Bastrop will begin working more closely with the downtown shops.

**Important:** Sarah announced there will be a joint workshop with Visit Bastrop and the City of Bastrop on June 14, 2018, at City Council Chambers and encouraged all Board members to attend.

**XI. NEXT MEETING DATE – The next Visit Bastrop Board meeting will be June 21, 2018, at 8:30. The location will be announced at a later date.**

**XII. ADJOURN – Tom moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:44 a.m. Cindye seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.**