

GCVB Board of Directors Minutes

March 20, 2024

Location: Explore Gwinnett - Paul Duke Room

Attendance:

Members in attendance were Kevin Hill, Richard Tucker, Laura Grams, Adrienne Hood, Jose Marquez, and Beth Hilscher.

Also present were Lisa Anders, Stan Hall, Robyn Ali, Jennifer Silas, Leigh Hooten, Monte Ortel, Sondra Thomas-Moore, Katie Brejda, Lee Tucker, Hannah Sechrist, and Olivia Hedges.

Board Members Marcy Adams, Nick Masino, Commissioner Kirkland Carden, Norberto Sanchez, Chairwoman Nicole Love Hendrickson, Rick Desai, and Tommy Hughes were absent.

Call to Order:

Board Member Kevin Hill welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 4:07 PM.

Adoption of Minutes:

Minutes of the January 25, 2024 Board of Directors meeting were previously forwarded to all board members for their review.

Financial Report GSD/ GCVB:

Kevin Hill provided the financial report for January and February. All accounts and reserves are appropriately funded. Jennifer Silas provided an R&E update.

GCVB Update:

Lisa Anders reported a gradual start to the year in Hotel/Motel revenues for February, with an expected increase in April. Gwinnett continues to lead in occupancy rate at 64.5% and ADR at 89.61% in February.

Ms. Anders provided a group sales update. The sales team booked 12,828 definite room nights through mid-March, including 56 definite groups and 24 different venues booked, and is pacing 30% ahead of 2023.

Ms. Anders highlighted the county-wide impact of recent Explore Gwinnett bookings, including three major conventions totaling 6,000 room nights annually for 2024 and 2025.

In marketing, Ms. Anders gave an update on Explore Gwinnett's ongoing *2024 Gwinnett Burger Week*, with new participation and prize initiatives. Ms. Anders shared that Explore Gwinnett entered the 2023 Explore Gwinnett visitor magazine in the NATJA Awards Competition and the magazine received the Gold Award, which recognizes the top DMO visitor guide nationwide.

In Film & TV, Ms. Anders relayed that production continues to climb back to pre-strike levels, with 15 productions currently being filmed in Gwinnett.

Ms. Anders provided an update on the Gwinnett Creativity Fund, with \$186,000 in *Operations + Projects Grants* awarded. Ms. Anders detailed the start of a new grant, the GCPS Middle Schools “Micro Grant,” for arts, theatre, and music programs. Ms. Anders also reported over \$1.6 million in grants awarded through the *2023-24 Hospitality, Arts, + Entertainment ARPA Grant* cycle.

GSC Update:

Leigh Hooten shared a hiring update, with Adam Young joining the team as Sales & Marketing Manager.

Ms. Hooten shared two facility updates with Suwanee Sports Academy being sold to a Korean church and maintaining a long-term contract with A5 volleyball, as well as Georgia Gwinnett College opening its Convocation Center in Q3 of 2024, with outside bookings to begin in mid-2025.

Ms. Hooten announced upcoming events for April to May, including the *Men’s Region 8 Gymnastics Championships*, *DUPR Collegiate Pickleball GA Super Regional*, and the *Southeast Regional Championship* (USA Wrestling).

Ms. Hooten gave an update regarding the Gwinnett County professional teams.

MEC Update:

Monte Ortel announced a presenting partner for the 2024 golf tournament, now titled Mitsubishi Electric Classic presented by Vensure, and that the tournament will be hosted by eight-time PGA TOUR winner, Stewart Cink.

Mr. Ortel highlighted two military initiatives for the tournament, the *Patriots’ Outpost* and *Folds of Honor Friday*, as well as the tournament sustainability program.

Mr. Ortel provided a player field update and shared the schedule of events for the tournament on April 22-28, 2024.

GSD Update:

Jennifer Silas gave an update of year-to-date event income and expenses through February.

Robyn Ali reported on year-to-date event attendance as 177,845 from 77 events.

Ms. Ali shared Arena highlights, including first-time event *Bulls, Bands, and Barrels*, the inaugural Atlanta VIBE game on February 1, and *Andrea Bocelli* being the highest revenue event in arena history.

Ms. Ali gave a Convention Center sales update, reporting that the sales team secured *Festival of Trees* for 2024 and 2025 and are increasing their booking momentum.

Ms. Ali provided Theater highlights, with *Queen Nation*, *Ginger Billy*, and *Pink Floyd Laser Spectacular* all selling out. Ms. Ali shared that the Theater is fully booked through May.

Ms. Ali provided a Marketing and Business Development update.

Ms. Ali outlined upcoming events including Men's Gymnastics, The Avett Brothers, Kid Cudi, Orange Conference, TEDx, proms, and graduations.

Old Business:

Stan Hall provided an organizational and project update.

New Business:

Stan Hall shared a hiring update, with Hannah Sechrist joining the team as Director of Special Projects.

Adjournment:

It was agreed the next meeting of the GCVB Board of Directors will be held Wednesday, May 22, 2024 in Explore Gwinnett's Paul Duke Room. There being no further business, Kevin Hill adjourned the meeting at 4:58 PM.



Stan L. Hall, Chief Executive Officer
Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau/Gas South District