

HAMILTON COUNTY TOURISM, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS
37 E. Main Street, Carmel, Indiana
November 11, 2021
Minutes of the Board Meeting
Virtual Meeting

Attending the meeting:

Toby Miles, Scott Spillman, Kayla Arnold, Jimia Smith, Gary Miller, Jeffrey Brown, Andrew Newport, Norman Burns, Bob DuBois, Mark Truett, Toby Miles, Chris Stice, Angie Frazier, Kelly Sujka.

Also attending:

Brenda Myers, President/CEO; Karen Radcliff, Vice President/CSO; Betsy Ekelof, Operations Director; Sarah Billman, Visitor Experience Manager; Tina Rodgers, Assistant Director of Resources; Mike Thibieau, Vice President, Workforce Strategy; Christine Altman, legal counsel.

I. Welcome

B. DuBois then welcomed everyone to the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 8:32 a.m.

II. October 2021 Minutes for Review

B. DuBois asked if there were any additions or corrections to the October 2021 HCT Board minutes. N. Burns moved that the minutes be approved as presented. J. Brown seconded. Motion passed.

III. Introduction & Acceptance of Board Member Kayla Arnold

B. DuBois introduced Kayla Arnold, who replaces Angie Smitherman as a Board member. She serves as Director of Westfield Welcome. C. Stice moved that K. Arnold be approved as a Board member. K. Sujka seconded. Motion passed.

IV. 2021 Financials & Metrics

- A. Occupancy Report -- B. Myers presented the occupancy report through September. Demand is at 85% to 2019 peak, with more 4% more rooms available for sale running 12 months. Occupancy in 2019 was 70% for the month of September and was 59% in 2020. Again, weekday business is the slowest market segment to return.
- B. Tax Collection Reports -- Lodging tax collections through the November deposit (September's receipts submitted in October) were up 27% over the budget forecast, however, bringing in \$109,290.47 more than anticipated with a total of \$513,290.47.
- C. 2021 Budget Report -- Through September, income was 78% to budget or \$3,457,286 and expenses totaled \$3,106,020 or \$351,266 net of expenses. All categories of expenses are tracking appropriately. Revenue is anticipated to meet goal.
B. DuBois asked for acceptance of the financial reports. C. Stice moved they be accepted as presented. J. Brown seconded. Motion passed.
- D. 2021 Tourism Bond Resolution -B. DuBois explained that since the Board does not meet again until February 4, 2022, and since a desire has been expressed to retire the 2011 Hamilton County Tourism Bond early as part of pandemic recovery planning due to available revenues, a resolution is needed to allow the executive committee to negotiate the retirement pending approval of legal counsel. C. Altman, counsel, recommended the Board agree to defer any contract payments to pay on the note given that technically the Commission is the entity obligated to the note. Rather than transfer money to HCT in January on the contract, and have HCT write funds back to the Commission, it might be cleaner. She suggested there might be the need for a meeting in January prior to the February meeting to ratify. The resolution was not adopted but HCT will not request any drawdown until the situation is resolved and has the cash on hand to do so.
- E. 2020 Wages ARPA Recovery - The Board Executive Committee recently asked the HCT staff to present how much it would cost to give staff wage recovery from the period in Spring 2020 and for some through early 2021 when a reduction in pay was made out of an abundance of caution. B. Myers presented what it would cost for those employees who remained full-time and working and who saw reduced wages. That total was \$84,100. B. Myers did note that a small \$250 holiday bonus would then not be paid to the staff. N. Burns asked why we would not include

the bonus, and B. Myers noted it was to remain frugal. Consensus was by the Board to include the small holiday bonus as was custom prior to the pandemic. M. Truett moved that the wage recovery be made, and K. Sujka seconded. Motion passed. The Board was thanked profusely for its generosity and support of staff.

V. New Business

- A. HCT Values Statements Review - T. Rodgers provided background on the HCT's almost year-long revisiting of our core values statements. She then provided the draft values statements for review. J. Brown expressed concern that the values seemed more like what we do rather than who we are. T. Rodgers noted that in preparing for the values exercise, she used the idea that values are what shape and guide our behavior. She noted HCT met with Amplify about their process and made it a point to have the values development be staff driven which guided the HCT process. The Board asked for time to review the values and will revisit at the February 2022 Board meeting.
- B. 2022 Budget & Contract Proposal - B. Myers noted that the Commission had not provided the final contract amendment for 2022 from its attorney. The agreement will request \$4,831,173 in funding and outline the payment schedule. As a reminder, it was determined that the contract would be adopted every three years and amendments to the contract provided every two years in between. The biggest change in the 2022 funding agreement will be at the quest of the auditor -- changing the language to allow for a general audit rather than a government audit. She asked for approval to have the executive committee review the funding agreement and sign if legal counsel approves. The Board endorsed the proposal.
- C. 2021 Holiday Creative Preview - K. Radcliff showcased the upcoming holiday campaign, which was built off of creative from 2020. The program is focused on central Indiana and designed to support local businesses.
- D. 2022 Meeting Schedule - B. Myers presented the 2022 meetings calendar.

B. Myers asked that the agenda be amended to add review of the 2022 Hamilton County Economic Development Corporation MOU. C. Stice moved that the agenda be amended. A. Newport seconded. Motion passed.

E. HCEDC MOU -- B. Myers presented the 2022 MOU which includes not only the HCEDC partnership but also the partnership with the Hamilton County Center for Career Achievement project in partnership with HCEDC. The "not to exceed" amount is new, as HCT and HCEDC work together in December each year to only request transfer of funds that cover actual or agreed-upon expenses. This MOU will likely change as HCEDC and the Career Center are seeking grants to help expand their work. J. Brown moved that the MOU be accepted. C. Stice seconded. Motion passed.

VI. Old Business

- A. Nominating Committee Update -- B. Myers noted that the nominating committee is still in discussion about 2022 officers. The proposed idea is to seek an Executive Committee for one year, suspending the bylaws, and allowing N. Burns to move into the Chair position in 2023-2024 when a transition committee will be formed pending the retirement of B. Myers. Anyone interested in serving that year, please let B. Myers know. Discussion took place as to whether B. DuBois would entertain a fourth year, and the Board indicated it would be appreciative if that could be considered, and no one saw any concerns. The slate will be presented at the February 2022 meeting.
- B. HCSEA Updates -- K. Radcliff provided updates on the Sports and Entertainment Commission. The EDA grant was submitted, and we hope to hear by the end of the year as to whether it will be received.
- C. Innovation Lab Updates -- B. Myers presented a quick overview on the hospitality workforce program but given the time said more details would be provided this winter. But work continues on this idea. The 2022 budget includes ARPA funds dedicated to economic development to assist with this project.

VII. There being no further business, J. Brown moved that the meeting be adjourned at 10:07 a.m. M. Truett seconded. Motion passed.