

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAFAYETTE CONVENTION & VISITORS COMMISSION, STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD APRIL 16, 2025

The Board of Commissioners of the Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission, State of Louisiana, met in person at the Lafayette Convention & Visitors Commission boardroom, 1100 Lafayette St., Lafayette, LA at 3:15 pm.

In attendance were the board of Commissioners as follows: Gerald Breaux, Dr. Jessica Leger, and John O'Meara.

Commissioners Dr. Vincent June, Chair, Chris Alack, Vice-Chair, Nayan Patel, Treasurer, Jim Doré, Ricky Patel, and Brenda Trahan were absent due to other obligations.

GUESTS: Jamey Abshire, Director of Parks & Recreation, Broussard Sports Complex, Sonia Kurowski, and Kaleb Speyrer

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner O'Meara clarified there was no quorum for a meeting and no action could be taken, but staff reports would be heard.

MINUTES FROM REGULAR MEETING MARCH 19, 2025

No action was taken on this agenda item because there was not a quorum present.

MARCH FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORT

No action was taken on this agenda item because there was not a quorum present.

QUARTERLY DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

TRAVEL TRADE

Jimmy Mouton, Chief Sales Officer, gave the Travel Trade department report for Eugenie Mitchell, VP of Tourism Sales. He noted the number of group and FIT room nights was 3,433 for Q1 2025 due to repeat business by multiple groups.

Mr. Mouton reported that the Travel Trade department hosted the largest number of tour groups to date for the VIP Mardi Gras Experience.

Mr. Mouton noted Irene Breaux received an award for completion of the Louisiana Tourism Leadership Academy.

Mr. Mouton stated the Travel Trade department hosted eight FAM tours during Q1.

MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, & SPORTS SALES

Mr. Mouton gave the Meetings, Conventions, & Sports Sales department report. He reported that leads to hotels, definite bookings, and outside definites all increased in Q1 2025 compared to Q1 2024.

Mr. Mouton summarized sales team production from Q1 with 25,800 room nights and an economic impact of \$16.49 million, noting sales team room production is ahead of the Q1 goal.

Mr. Mouton reported on the reasons for lost business for Q1 2025, which totaled \$12.2 million in economic impact.

Mr. Mouton reported on several notable definites during the first quarter, including 2028 National Catholic Forensic Leagues Grand National Speech and Debate, LA Little League State Championships, 2025 USSSA Fastpitch Southern Nationals, 2025-2027 LHSAA Volleyball Championships, 2025 LA Little League State Softball Championships, and the American Loggers Council National Convention.

SALES SUMMARY-MARKETING INITIATIVES

Mr. Mouton also presented the Sales Summary & Marketing Initiatives report to Commissioners. He reported USATF Jr. Cross Country National Championships are confirmed for 2026-2027, with an interest in 2025.

Mr. Mouton noted a verbal confirmation for the 2026 USA Boxing National Championships held in December.

Mr. Mouton reported USSSA National All-State Games verbally confirmed Lafayette as host for the 2025 July-August championships.

Mr. Mouton noted Danielle Tassin, Senior Sales Director, attended the RCMA Annual Conference, and Smart Meetings.

Mr. Mouton stated in 2025 Lafayette Parish hosted both the largest Senior Beta nationally, and the largest Junior Beta in Louisiana.

COMMUNICATIONS

Jesse Guidry, VP of Communications, presented the Communications departmental report. Mr. Guidry noted the top performing pages on the website included Mardi Gras, Events, Krewe of Rio and Krewe Allons parades, and Lafayette Hotels.

Mr. Guidry noted 21,000+ people clicked through to a member's website or event, and the largest number of website users originated from paid and organic searches.

Mr. Guidry stated nearly 100,000 emails were sent with an open rate of 63%, which is 23% above the industry average, with a click-through rate of 6%, twice the industry average.

Mr. Guidry reported on the top performing social media reels included Mardi Gras, Doc's Pop-In, Basin Landing and Turtles Bar, Empanada Guys, King Cake, and crawfish.

Mr. Guidry reported on visitation statistics to indicate how specific advertising expenditures resulted in visible visitor traffic. Specifically, he noted an increase in the average length of stay and number of visitor days.

Mr. Guidry noted seven earned media mentions with an earned media reach of 127,000 for the month of March.

MEMBERSHIP

Hollis Conway, VP of Membership and External Affairs, gave the Membership and External Affairs report. Mr. Conway recapped several external affairs events and activities he attended including Big Towns Planning meetings, New Orleans & Co. Superbowl Media Party, UL Council for Inclusive Excellence, Zydeco Creole Awards Banquet, Business Mixer at Wildcat Brothers, Future Business Leaders of America judge, Jr. Leadership Arts & Culture day, and several more.

Mr. Conway reported he visited 75 members or potential new members and has focused on cleaning up the membership database.

Mr. Conway reported on a variety of tasks associated with the Allons Inspiration Journal advertisement sales, member listing updates, and sales of tear sheet map advertisements.

Mr. Conway noted four new Lafayette Travel members and the total membership revenue year to date through Q1 2025 was \$11,250.

CREATIVE

Lance LeBlanc, VP of Creative, gave the Creative departmental report summarizing the creative efforts during the first quarter of 2025. He noted the following completed projects:

Communiqué, monthly newsletters, Allons Journal, Lafayette Airport digital board updates, numerous digital and print advertising & promotional campaigns for spring and summer, video series of local cultural ambassadors, photos of Mardi Gras parades and Indians, and photos for the Po-boy trail brochure, Crawfish Crawl and EatLafayette videos, Lafayette Travel tear sheet map, sports facilities promo video, and video of the Robert Dafford Mural Workshop.

PRESIDENT & CEO'S REPORT

Ben Berthelot, President & CEO, reported plans for EatLafayette 2025 are ongoing and he confirmed there will be no kickoff event, but noted the partnership between EatLafayette and Acadiana Eats Festival was confirmed.

Mr. Berthelot noted National Travel and Tourism Week is May 4-10 and we will host a FAM tour, membership luncheon, and show the economic role of tourism on our social media platforms.

Mr. Berthelot stated before the legislative session began April 14, he met with new state representative Annie Spell, and he attended a bill review and legislative reception held by the Louisiana Travel Association.

Mr. Berthelot noted LCVC staff participated in the Love the Boot cleanup event at our Visitors' Center, an initiative headed by the Lt. Governor's office.

Mr. Berthelot reported Visitor Enterprise Grant applications have been received and he will be reviewing applications with the committee.

Mr. Berthelot stated he joined Eugenie Mitchell for Travel South Global Week during which the partnership between the state of Louisiana and the Michelin Guide was announced.

Mr. Berthelot stated organizers of the 1st Clubs for Kids Foundation American Junior Golf Association tournament championship confirmed the event will be held again at Le Triomphe in October.

Mr. Berthelot noted the Lafayette Garden Club honored LCVC and the Visitors' Center with the April Civic Pride Award.

Mr. Berthelot reported he joined the International Food, Wine, and Travel Writers Association member webinar to discuss the region for their upcoming annual meeting in Lafayette Parish in October.

Mr. Berthelot noted he met with officials from downtown Lafayette regarding the Downtown Cultural Venue Plan.

Mr. Berthelot reported that the Louisiana Office of Tourism has confirmed their sponsorship of Festival Interceltique de Lorient, where Lafayette Parish and Louisiana will be featured.

Mr. Berthelot stated at their request he presented to the "Grand Lafayette" group, formed by area stakeholders after the Grand Rapids, MI canvas trip, to discuss important projects like the indoor sports complex and full-service hotel at the Cajundome.

Mr. Berthelot noted recommendations from the Sound Music Cities survey are finalized and he met with project lead Sami Parbhoo to discuss the recommendations and next steps.

OLD BUSINESS

Indoor sports complex updates

Mr. Berthelot noted he received updated projections for bonding numbers from the municipal financial advisors of The Sisung Group. He stated the next step will be follow up calls between Synergy Sports, The Sisung Group, and LCVC regarding the shared proforma projections. Based on initial projections from The Sisung Group, estimates are coming in higher than anticipated.

Mr. Berthelot shared the considerable interest from the "Grand Lafayette" group in locating the indoor sports complex at the proposed UL location, and several local organizations will write letters in support of building the facility at that location.

Mr. Berthelot reported that the Rue Louis property is back on the market after the recent contract failed to close.

There was no further discussion.



John O'Meara
Commissioner



Benjamin J. Berthelot
President & CEO