

PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF THE LAFAYETTE CONVENTION & VISITORS COMMISSION, STATE OF LOUISIANA, TAKEN AT A REGULAR MEETING HELD MAY 20, 2020

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

In attendance were the board of Commissioners as follows: via Zoom Matt Roth, Chair, Buddy Schilling and Susannah Malbreaux, Treasurer. In person John O'Meara, Vice-Chair, and Jimmy Thackston.

Commissioners Williams, Batiste and Trahan were absent from the meeting.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chair O'Meara called the meeting to order. Chair Roth joined the board meeting via Zoom after the meeting was called to order.

MINUTES FROM MARCH 11, 2020

Commissioner Thackston motioned to accept the **March 2020** minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Chair Roth. There was no public comment. Motion carried.

MARCH/APRIL FINANCIAL STATEMENT REPORTS

Vice-Chair O'Meara presented the **March 2020** financial report to Commissioners. Commissioner Thackston motioned to approve the **March 2020** financial report as presented by Vice-Chair O'Meara. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Malbreaux. There was no public comment. Motion carried.

Vice-Chair O'Meara presented the **April 2020** financial report to Commissioners. Commissioner Thackston motioned to approve the **April 2020** financial report as presented by Vice-Chair O'Meara. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Schilling. There was no public comment. Motion carried.

President & CEO Berthelot reviewed monthly operating expenses with Commissioners and the effects of decreased revenue (due to COVID-19) from the Hotel & Lodging Accommodations Tax.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

TOUR & VISITORS REPORT

Eugenie Mitchell, Vice-President of Tourism Sales, reported that 18 tour groups cancelled in the month of **April** due to COVID-19 that reflected a negative economic impact of \$173,700.00.

Ms. Mitchell reported that Tour & Travel Department has been working remotely since March 19 due to COVID-19. She stated the department has been concentrating on reaching out to future group tours, updating databases and attending pertinent webinars and meetings.

Ms. Mitchell reported on leads, RFP's and requested information sent out to prospective groups for fall 2020 dates and beyond. She also reported that the Visitor Center has been closed to the public since March 19 and the entire month of **April** due to COVID-19.

CONVENTION DEPARTMENT

Mike Roebuck, Chief Sales Officer, reported that 8 leads were sent to area hotels and 2 turned definite in the month of **April** with an economic impact of \$1.3 million. Mr. Roebuck reported that 10 conventions, meetings and athletic events (2,490 rooms) were lost in **April 2020** due to COVID-19 for a negative economic impact of \$1,114,390. Mr. Roebuck clarified that these events were counted as the month the cancelation was decided, not necessarily the month the convention would have been held. He confirmed total business lost, including group tourism (thru May Board Meeting) of 126 events and 37,673 room nights for a negative economic impact of \$50,554,760.

Mr. Roebuck reported notable leads included True Talent Football Showcase (1,150 rooms/July 2020), Lifeway Resources (900 rooms/June 2021, Louisiana Vet Medical Association (300 rooms/February 2023 and IRS Disadvantaged Taxpayer Training (770 rooms/December 2020).

Mr. Roebuck reported that the Convention Department has been working remotely since March 19 due to COVID-19. He stated the department has been concentrating on re-bookings and they also started an e-mail/phone campaign to 500+ LSAE members.

COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

Jesse Guidry, Vice-President of Communications, reported that the Communications Department contacted local Eat Lafayette partners and restaurants and compiled TO-GO and delivery information which has been posted on the Lafayette Travel website.

Mr. Guidry reported that all new print and digital advertising has been suspended until June due to COVID-19.

Mr. Guidry reported that weekly conference calls with organizers of TBEX conference planned for October and are looking at contingency plans if COVID-19 concerns are still a threat.

Mr. Guidry also reported on communications to LCVC Membership on any relevant updates related to COVID-19.

MEMBERSHIP DEPARTMENT

Sadie French, Controller, reported that LCVC had 3 renewals and revenue of \$450.00 for the month of **April** with 433 members. Ms. French reported the LCVC Membership Luncheon was held virtually

via Zoom on May 6th (National Travel & Tourism Week) with special guest speaker Lt. Governor Nungesser and had 80 attendees.

PRESIDENT & CEO's REPORT

Mr. Berthelot reported that during National Travel & Tourism Week, Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser announced an 8th straight record-breaking year for visitation to Louisiana at the virtual LCVC Membership Luncheon that was held on May 6th.

Mr. Berthelot reported that Rep. Steven Dwight's Short-Term Rental Bill is moving through the legislative process and recently passed through the House with a 90-2 vote.

Mr. Berthelot reported that the Visitor Enterprise Grant money has been received and is he working with the committee to see about a one-year waiver to allow expenditures to be spent on overhead, which was previously not allowed.

Mr. Berthelot reported that LCVC worked with Festival International for their virtual Festival by supplying content to be used as part of the successful virtual weekend with national recognition.

Mr. Berthelot reported that the Louisiana Seafood Cook-off and Taste of Eat Lafayette kick-off has been pushed back to a tentative date of August 25.

Mr. Berthelot reported that he was asked to serve on the Resilient Louisiana Commission Hospitality Task Force and is also working as part of the CVB and Festival sub-committees, which have been meeting weekly.

Mr. Berthelot reported that he has been the point person for the Feed the Envie Fundraiser to assist hospitality workers in Lafayette Parish who have been affected by COVID-19.

Mr. Berthelot reported that he is participating on a call twice a week with a government consulting group, Cornerstone, that has been hired by the Louisiana Travel Association to assist on securing federal funding for our industry and CVB's.

Mr. Berthelot reported that he also has been participating in weekly calls with the Louisiana Association of Conventions and Bureaus.

Mr. Berthelot reported that he was invited to present to a sub-committee of the Louisiana Legislative Task Force that was formed around COVID-19 regarding the impact on the tourism industry and what the legislature can do to assist.

There was no other business. There was no public comment. Vice-Chair O'Meara adjourned the meeting.



John O'Meara
Vice-Chair



Benjamin J. Berthelot
President & CEO