

**eXplore Lawrence**

**DRAFT - Board Minutes**

**August 18, 2021**

**Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.**

Members Present: Ivan Simac chaired the meeting, Jamie Hays Szelc, Hugh Carter\*, Fally Afani, Danny Caine, Peter Bobkowski, Porter Arneill\*

Members absent: Mike Logan, Heidi Champagne, Sally Zogry\* Stuart Boley\*,  
\*ex-officio members

Staff: Kim Anspach, Executive Director

Guests: None

Meeting Materials provided by email: August 2021 Board Packet, Monthly STR Report

Meeting began at 3:35 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes – July board meeting  
Action: Jamie moved; Peter seconded. Approved.
2. Finance Report – Kim
  - Kim reviewed the budget and clarified a few entries that required minor adjustments
  - Keeping in line with reduced income. Running about \$103,500 lower than anticipated at this point.
3. Staff Reports
  - Kim shared Strategic Plan document
    - TGT revenue is up by %15.09 YTD and 161.28% for Qtr2
    - Relaunch Partner Portal in July was successful
    - Web site is also up and staff continues to make adjustments and improvements according to usage
  - Visitor Center
    - 990 guests in July; more than visitors in a year at the Train Depot
    - Saturdays and Sundays are busy
    - Scavenger hunt is finished
    - Fally is working on live music at Visitors Center during August Final Friday
    - Also print show related to Watkins John Brown exhibit
  - Sales Report
    - Various meetings

- KU meeting spaces
- Jayhawk Experience/tailgating options and tours
- Working with Brandy at Parks and Recreation on updating event contracts – tiered structure for cancellations

Ivan asked about the KC Prenationals volleyball tournament cancellation and whether that weekend has been rebooked. Kim said not yet but they are working on it.

Peter asked about discussions with KU Athletics and partnering on facilities that might be available for other events. One challenge is practice schedules with limits availability to holidays. Slow progress and the discussion continues.

- Marketing
  - Web site
    - Rebrand and relaunch with partner portal in July
    - Data driven content

#### 4. Executive Director Report

- John Brown exhibit starts September 3
  - Working with hotel partners
  - Sept. 9 & 10 private showings
- Met with Taylor at SPL
  - Kiosk at visitor center doesn't get used with live staff, asked about moving it to SPL which was agreeable
- Accounting RFP is finished. Plan to send on Friday with a September 10 due date.
- Met with Heidi and Ivan RE Meeting Max online product to reserve room blocks
  - From an ROI perspective, not supporting staff -- creates double work, and creates a potential management problem as hotels sometimes double book. There are also pros: good data, pick-up numbers, etc. Helps with decisions going forward and incentives. Renewal is coming up for \$1,500. Considering not renewing and going back to prior ways working directly with hotels and using web booking links. Requires a \$5,000 set-up fee to restart if we decided to in the future.
- TGT Grant Advisory Board is preparing to meet. Looking for an eXplore Lawrence representative. Kim proposed that she could serve on the board. Porter will explore whether the director of EL can serve on the board.
- Exploring an internship program for communications staff support
- Judith Gibb from Haskell invited staff to welcome new Haskell students. Staff attended and passed out guides and helped with welcoming.

#### 5. Budget Update

- STR report is looking more positive and TGT funding is looking favorable but it is still lower than in years past. Kim is working with Finance regarding the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter payment and developing a proposal. Will have to review the budget to determine needs and where there can be reductions.

Peter asked about the City Commissioner's comments last month about having reserve funds and how that affects their decision making on budget.

Kim explained that there are emergency and EIDL funds which the board would have to approve.

Kim is looking into whether ARPA funds can be used to replenish TGT funds.

Kim continues working with Finance.

**Motion to Adjourn**

Action: Peter moved; Jamie seconded – Approved Unanimously

Meeting Ended at 4:20 p.m.

Next meeting September 15, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.