

eXplore Lawrence

DRAFT - Board Minutes

September 15, 2021

Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Mike Logan, Fally Afani, Jamie Hays Szelc, Peter Bobkowski, Hugh Carter* (joined at about 4:10), Sally Zogry* Stuart Boley*, Porter Arneill*

Members absent: Heidi Champagne, Danny Caine

*ex-officio members

Staff: Kim Anspach, Executive Director

Guests: None

Meeting Materials provided by email: September 2021 Board Packet

Meeting began at 3:33 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes – August board meeting
Action: Jamie moved; Peter seconded. Approved.
2. Finance Report – Kim
 - Kim reviewed the report from the board packet
 - Continuing to run under budget as designed
3. Staff Reports
 - Kim shared Strategic Plan report
 - TGT revenue is up by 32.6% over 2020. Possibly related to KU students returning and events reopening.
 - Continue working on the Strategic Plan
 - Holding “touch bases” once per month
 - Looking into using ‘Bandwagon’ for 2022, an integrated place marketing agency.
(<https://yourbandwagon.com/>)
 - Visitor Center
 - 764 guests in August (Was closed during an AC outage and during a plumbing problem which likely effected number of visitors)
 - Hosted a vaccine clinic with help from Sally and Meredith of Wonder Fair
 - Holding off on mailing visitor guide due to cost and will send 2022 guide at the end of December
 - Fally was photographer for Final Friday, celebrating local music

- Sales Report
 - Reviewed list of possible bookings as printed in board packet
 - Barber Shop group cancelled for this year due to COVID but plan to return next year. There was an issue with Meeting Max charging those who signed up \$3. Will reimburse the group next year.

- Marketing
 - Web site
 - Event calendar is most popular, showing a return to events
 - Live on Mass was most visited

4. Executive Director Report

- Hosted 11 people to a preview for Encountering John Brown exhibition
- Tourism ambassadors are still engaged. Looking into how to continue supporting and growing the program
- Working with Diane Stoddard to explore EPA ARPA funds coming for outdoor infrastructure recreation.
- Met with Hardwood Classic. Thought they were coming because they were on SPL calendar but they are waiting to learn what financial support is available. Will continue working with them.
- Andrea was selected as a member of the Leadership Lawrence class of 2022!
- Sent RFP for new accounting service for accounting
 - Received four proposals, one shows promise
 - Mike – We'd like to interview at least 3. May want to reach out again
 - Working with current accountant to review scope and determine how to move forward to reach out to other accountants/firms. It appears that people are busy and not looking for work.

5. Budget Update

- Kim is working with City Finance and is looking at 2022 projections.
- It appears that the October State disbursement will be enough to provide a fully budgeted 4th quarter disbursement of \$249,000. Still depends on September results.
- Quarter 1 payment would be in mid-January, 2022
- Occupancy and revenue is recovering. Indications at this point are positive.
- Taking advantage of having two open staff positions but/and want to add staff back to reduce load on current staff.
- Mike asked about the ARPA meeting Kim attended virtually regarding funding.
 - First presenter spoke about missed opportunities and possible available funds
 - Can make up lost revenue for tourism efforts
 - City included ARPA funds in the FY2022 budget

- County to hold a meeting tonight on how they are planning to use ARPA funds

TGT Grant Advisory Board representative

- Mike shared background information about the TGT Grant program
- Porter and Stuart added that there is money budgeted for 2022
- Porter said that the schedule may change a little under the COVID circumstances.

Notes

Mike offered kudos to the staff for continuing to be working through such a challenging time. Stuart also conveyed his kudos to staff. He also shared that some people still express to him that the Visitor Center should not have moved but it is clearly a success based on the strong numbers.

Motion to Adjourn

Action: With no quorum the Chair adjourned the meeting.

Meeting Ended at 4:19 p.m.

Next meeting October 20, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.