

eXplore Lawrence

DRAFT - Board Minutes

October 20, 2021

Zoom meeting – 3:30 p.m.

Members Present: Mike Logan, Fally Afani, Jamie Hays Szelc, Peter Bobkowski, Sally Zogry, Stuart Boley, Heidi Champagne, Danny Caine, Ivan Simac

Members absent: Porter Arneill, Hugh Carter
*ex-officio members

Staff: Kim Anspach, Executive Director

Guests: None

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

Meeting began at 3:33 p.m.

1. Approval of Minutes – September board meeting
Action: Jamie moved; Ivan seconded. Approved.
2. Finance Report – Heidi
 - Heidi went over assets: \$416,629.14
 - Mike Reserved fund and loan, loan repayment required in June of 2022.
3. Staff Reports
 - Visitor Center
 - 661 visitors in September. Buskerfest was busy weekend.
 - Caleb working on scheduling for tabling for Belgian Waffle Race, include community partners.
 - New postcards designed in house this month with our photography.
 - Our Final Friday in September was John Brown themed to coincide with the exhibit. Show will run through November, so October Final Fridays will also be John Brown.
 - Our part time visitor's center manager is going to be out due to isolation needs. Staff will cover Visitor's Center.
 - Sales Report
 - Two leads generated, neither panned out.
 - Luncheon rescheduled for COVID.
 - Unable to secure soccer referee camp.
 - Kendra attended conference in Atlantic City in collaboration with Sports Kansas.

- Working on bid for the Hardwood Classic (in July). Worked with Parks and Rec to provide value.
- Working on Kansas Museum conference.
- Developing sales plan to present at November board meeting.
- Marketing
 - Web site
 - 63.6 increase in web traffic over last month.
 - Epic football contest where we gave away prizes, added 1500 new subscribers to our enewsletter list.
 - Buskerfest, Encountering John Brown, and the football promotion were our digital campaign for the month. Over 1 million impressions.
 - SeaSource Advertising – people who saw our Buskerfest marketing arrived in Lawrence.
 - Delaying launch of video to promote website so that we can include promotional footage of Indigenous Culture.

4. Executive Director Report

- Kim shared Strategic Plan report
 - Focusing on regional partnerships.
 - Met with Sean Dixon of Visit Topeka, discussed partnerships and pushing rooms to each other's cities and how to collaborate on bidding on incentives.
 - Accounting RFP Update: Received two competitive bids, a third one gave an hourly rate. So we have three to interview by the second week of November.
 - Want to start a conversation about Equity, Diversion, and Inclusion. We do a good job with marketing DEI. Destinations International had a good study and road map we can use to implement this more. We want to put together a working group of board members to go through the road map, and then go through actionable and achievable items to include in our strategic plan. Fally, Jamie, and Danny volunteered will be on this working group.
- TGT Grant Committee
 - Need a board representative on the TGT Grant advisory board. The board decided Peter would be a good fit.

5. Budget Update

- Kim went over the STAR report.
- We're above 2019 in occupancy. Average daily rate is neck and neck from 2019 and now. Revenue is also up over 2019. For August, we also beat out 2019 numbers.
- Kim is optimistic about TGT collections for September.

- Kim anticipates full funding in Quarter 2.
- Fally and Ivan's seats expiring, will discuss whether they want to refill those seats. Mike will also expire in December.
- Mike wants Kim to give background on executive committee, bylaws, terms...

Notes

Sally discussed changes to the Santa Rescue. It will move to Friday, December 3rd, Winter Wonder weekend, lead into the horse parade. Change it to parade of 1, just Santa, riding the antique fire truck at Station 1 and a marching band to escort him. He'll start at 6th, come down the street and lights coming on with each block he passes. The goal is to encourage spectators to spread out along Mass Street, instead of concentrated in one area.

Ivan gave update on hotels, says things are moving in the right direction but there are a lot of unknowns. Feels that next year will be good, but says it's ultimately up to vaccination rates.

Ivan proposed moving our meetings back to in person.

Motion to Adjourn

Action: Moved by Peter, seconded by Jamie.

Meeting Ended at 4:19 p.m.

Next meeting November 17, 2021 - 3:30 p.m.