

MOTIONS PASSED AT THE COMBINED SPECIAL CALLED BOARD MEETING, May 19, 2020

1. Combined: NONE

SPECIAL CALLED
COMBINED BOARD MEETING
Bay County Tourist Development Council
Panama City Beach Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.
Panama City Beach

Tuesday, May 19, 2020

2:00 P.M.

Council Room, PCB City Hall

Board Members Present:

Phil Chester, Chairman
Clair Pease, Vice Chairman
Yonnie Patronis, Treasurer
Andy Phillips
Phillip Griffiths, Jr.
Paul Casto
Steve Bailey
Buddy Wilkes
Gary Walsingham

I. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Chairman Phil Chester called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

II. ROLL CALL

There were nine members present.

A. Invocation

Mr. Wilkes gave the Invocation.

B. Pledge of Allegiance

Ms. Pease led the Pledge of Allegiance.

III. REQUESTS TO ADDRESS THE BOARD ON AGENDA ITEMS (3 Minutes)

None

IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. OPERATIONS UPDATE, Mr. Dan Rowe

Mr. Rowe stated that the CVB worked, at the direction of the county, on the re-opening/safety plan. That plan was approved by the county and was then pushed out to the CVB partners so they know the rules and where we go from here.

Mr. Rowe gave a summary of current operations:

Beach cleanup (2 x a day) and grooming (2 x a week) has been reinstated

The Visitor's Center lobby is open with two employees and they will be social distancing

A budget amendment will be presented at a future meeting to account for the loss in revenue

The Marketing Department budget will be one million dollars for the rest of the year

The revenue forecast is unknown

The State of Florida has opened short-term rentals

Mr. Rowe also stated that social media marketing, Stay PCB Current, has been pushing out information quickly including the status of the beaches being open or closed. Also, marketing will include all CDC guidelines and will ask visitor's to follow. He also said that the marketing is inviting people back to our beaches from all of our areas except for the CDC named Covid19 hotspots.

Ms. Pease asked if our beach cleaning and LNT company is able to work at night. Mr. Rowe said that nighttime work was not currently being done due to FWC restrictions on social distancing. We have asked for guidance and clarity from FWC on how we can enforce LNT at night. We have not gotten that information back from FWC yet.

Ms. Pease asked if the daytime ambassador program was able to function. Mr. Rowe stated that he does not have that information at present. He is going to speak with the City Manager to see if their employees are already educating people on the beach for Covid 19 protocol. If so, then we can add the LNT to it. Supplementing their efforts can be done as well. Once he has their information, he can determine whether to have the beach cleanup company take on the daytime ambassador program.

Mr. Rowe explained that beach cleanup/raking will be happening twice a day and that the LNT education, beach flag system, and social distancing will be included on the rack cards that will be printed and given to the partners this week. He will be discussing using more rakes at one time to better rake the beaches by working with the turtle watch. In addition, more trash cans have been ordered.

The board discussed the states that are considered hotspots for Covid19 by the CDC. Mr. Phillips suggested for the ambassador program to also keep an eye on the trash and notify beach cleanup if trash needs to be picked up.

Mr. Rowe also stated that the Beach renourishment project by the Army Corps of Engineers will be moving forward and should begin in late fall.

B. MARKETING UPDATE, Ms. Jayna Leach

Ms. Leach discussed the marketing "welcome back" campaign going forward.

The "Stay PCB Current" campaign has been important tool for getting information out to the public.

She then discussed other campaigns in the interim and the results of them. Also, the campaign going forward.

She stated that the marketing would not be released into geographical Covid-19 hotspots as reported by the CDC. The CDC reports will be reviewed daily/weekly as needed.

Mr. Wilkes asked how much of the marketing funds were unused due to the halting of the marketing during the first portion of Covid 19 closures. Ms. Leach responded that approximately 2.6 million were not spent and that 1 million had been allocated for current marketing as well as going forward.

She also outlined the type of media being used during each phase of marketing including digital and static. She stated that the plan going forward would be flexible in order to react to changes in Covid 19. Mr. Wilkes asked if an increase in funding of the current marketing plan more on the front end is possible. He stated that the visitors coming in the next week or two may not come back and that marketing may need to be concentrated on those visitors.

Mr. Rowe explained that the savings in expenses is offsetting the loss in revenue. He also said that until revenue increases, there are not revenues to support putting more money in marketing at present.

The board discussed the current market and visitor activity.

Mr. Phillips stated that he believes that the CVB will make up the lost revenue for the year in the next two weeks. And that the marketing should be done immediately.

Mr. Rowe stated that our marketing would be going out strong. He said it will take several weeks before we can see the rate at which revenue will be increasing. He also stated that other destinations have a greater loss of revenue and that we will be monitoring and expending marketing funds as revenue is available.

The board discussed the event cancellations and impact of them on local economy. Mr. Phillips asked to see the newly forecasted budget before reallocation of funds takes place. Mr. Rowe said he would review those plans and budgets with the each of board members.

Mr. Griffiths suggested the use of beach renourishment funds for some of the beach related expenses such as beach raking and trash pickup.

Mr. Rowe reviewed that state statute governing the use of those funds. Mr. Sale asked if the stimulus package relieved our debt, to which Mr. Rowe replied no.

Mr. Patronis stated that with restaurants only being allowed to open at twenty-five percent, visitors might not have a good experience.

Ms. Leach explained that "Stay PCB Current" gives visitors all information regarding places that are open and other covid related local information.

Mr. Rowe discussed Key Data reservation information. Mr. Phillips disagreed with that data stating that his property and others are booked at a much higher capacity.

The board discussed the governor's plan on short-term rentals.

Mr. Rowe discussed the current beach renourishment project, which will have no cost share.

C. SPORTS COMPLEX OPERATIONS UPDATE, Mr. Jamie Cox

Mr. Cox gave a summary of the sports park plan for events with safety precautions in place for covid19. He stated that SFM has a "back open" committee, which outlined plans for visitor safety and procedures including cleaning, social distancing, and hand sanitizing. Also, closing bleachers, adding signage, and staff training are being implemented. The visiting teams will be given information in advance regarding covid safety.

SFM received the small business loan via the stimulus package, which will qualify to be forgiven.

The park will open a safety information tent that will be able to check temperatures and give community covid assistance information.

The board discussed the park picking up teams from other states due to covid closings.

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT

None.

VI. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

None.

VII. AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully submitted,
Sharon Cook, Recording Secretary