

**Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting
Thursday, July 18, 2019**

8:00 a.m. Alton City Hall – Council Chambers

Present: John Hopkins, Lauren Pattan, Kristi Hyten, Mitch Bair, Michael Barker, Cameo Foster, Tom Guarino, Sandy Hefner, Cathy Luttrell, Mike McCormick, Dave Miller, Patty Rotermund, Doug Stotler, Erin Ventimiglia and Cindy Warke

Absent: Karen Brncic, Brian Campbell, Kim Durr, Stacy Friedrich-Hinrichs, Linda Jun, JD Lorton

Staff: Brett Stawar, Nathan Grimm, Barbara Strack and Stephanie Tate

Guest: Mary Lillesve, Village of Grafton

Call to order: The meeting was called to order by John Hopkins.

Opening remarks from Chairman: John thanked everyone for making it to the meeting, and welcomed the newest board member, Doug Stotler, the Athletic Director at LCCC. He will represent the Sports/Recreation board seat. Everyone introduced himself or herself, including Nathan Grimm, the newly hired Tourism Development Manager at the Tourism Bureau. Nathan will lead our sports efforts, private partnerships, support international sales efforts and content support for our marketing efforts.

Board Minutes: John asked the board to review the June minutes. Mike McCormick made the motion to approve the June minutes; seconded by Michael Barker. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

Financial Statements: John asked the board to review the June financial statements. Since June is the fiscal year end, the June financials are not final. We are waiting for additional revenues and expenses to come in. Tom Guarino made a motion to approve the June financials as presented; seconded by Cindy Warke. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

None

REPORT OF BUREAU ACTIVITIES:

After the June board meeting, we learned the LTCB grant calculations had an error. Our new grant amount is \$490,774. This is closer to our anticipated amount that we originally budgeted for.

Mitch and Brett met to discuss the strategic plan. They are looking at other tourism plans to create workable goals for the board and staff, build upon our sports efforts and move forward with community support. They hope to have a draft by the next meeting.

The Bureau is in the middle of the Summer All-Star Restaurant Week in Alton, Bethalto, Godfrey and Grafton with 25 confirmed partners. It runs from July 12-21.

We met with the City of Edwardsville's new City Administrator, Kevin Head, to review our current scope and develop a renewal plan. We have meetings with the finance committee in July to review our past performances and request contract renewal.

We met with a group of Greene County tourism partners in conjunction with the U of I extension to discuss how we will be supporting them and weaving them into our brand and efforts.

We continue to work with the USTA Edwardsville Futures, OperaEdwardsville, Italian Fest, Alton Amphitheater and the Edwardsville Art Fair on support of their signature events.

We have been working hard on getting the Kid'Cation campaign ready. We have 40 events and 30 deals throughout our service area. We are enhancing the sweet treat trail and outdoor adventure trail as part of this campaign, which runs July 26 – August 4.

Other Business:

New Business:

General Announcements: Mary Lillesve gave a flood update on Grafton. Many businesses have opened back up, including the zipline and they have resumed working on the Sky Tram. She received notification that the Grafton Ferry will start back up tomorrow, and Marcus Lemonis, from the TV show The Profit, visited Grafton. She encouraged everyone to visit Grafton.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by John Hopkins and seconded by Mike McCormick.

Publications distributed: None

Respectfully submitted by,

Brett Stawar
President/CEO

Kristi Hyten
Secretary/Treasurer