

**City of Sandy Springs, Georgia**  
**Hospitality Board Minutes**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**Thursday, January 28, 2021**  
**8:00 am**

**Live via Zoom Webinar**

**Members Present:** Mayor Rusty Paul, Chairman  
Tom Mahaffey, Vice Chairman  
Bruce Alterman, Secretary/Treasurer  
Eugene Jordan, Board Member  
John Visconti, Board Member  
Pam Rosenthal, Board Member

**Staff Present:** Jennifer Cruce, Executive Director-Visit Sandy Springs  
Samantha Marks, Marketing & Social Media Manager- Visit Sandy Springs  
Cynthia Adams, Office and Welcome Center Manager - Visit Sandy Springs  
Peyton Callanan-Marketing Coordinator-Visit Sandy Springs  
Lia Jones-Deputy City Clerk, (City of Sandy Springs)  
Toni Carlisle, Assistant Finance Director, (City of Sandy Springs)  
Andrea Worthy-Economic Development Director, (City of Sandy Springs)  
Sharon Kraun-Communications Director, (City of Sandy Springs)  
Caroline David-Economic Development Specialist, (City of Sandy Springs)  
Raquel Gonzalez-City Clerk, (City of Sandy Springs)  
Samantha Dulac-Assistant to the City Manager (City of Sandy Springs)  
Dan Lee-Attorney for Visit Sandy Springs

**Others Present:** Kris Phillips, Director of Sales, Hyatt House Atlanta Perimeter Center  
Carol Jackson, Dir .of Sales, Homewood Suites by Hilton Atlanta/Perimeter Center  
Katyana Edwards, Director of Sales, Springhill Suites Atlanta Perimeter Center  
Zsuzsa Nagy, Hyatt House Atlanta Perimeter Center  
Jennifer Johnson, Partner, General Muir Restaurant, City Springs

The Meeting was called to order at 8:06 AM by Mayor Paul.

Mayor Paul asked for a motion to approve the December 3, 2020 Hospitality Board meeting minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Visconti and seconded by Mr. Jordan. The Meeting Minutes were unanimously approved by Board members present.

**I. Legal**

**Consideration to Enter Into a Lease Termination Agreement with SIG Northside Tower, LLC** **Dan Lee**

Dan Lee stated after a long and contentious negotiations, an agreement with Northside Tower to terminate the lease with 1 year remaining. 4 1/2 months termination fee and the relinquishing of the security deposit which is short of \$20,000 would end the lease agreement. Mr. Lee recommended the board approve the resolution before them and authorize the termination of the lease agreement upon payment. Mr. Visconti made a motion to approve the lease termination agreement as outlined. The motion was unanimously approved by Board members present.

**Consideration of a Bank Account with CenterState Bank and Designation of Authorized Signatories** **Dan Lee**

Dan Lee reported that Hospitality/Visit Sandy Springs is seeking an application to the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) through CenterState Bank. In order to complete this in a timely manner, the Board was asked to consider the assignment of Russell Paul, Jennifer Cruce and Toni Jo Howard (City Finance Director) as the signatories for the Hospitality bank account, pursuant to the Bylaws of the Board Section 2.9. As such, he presented a ratification of the Resolution of the Board of Directors of The Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism, Inc. (Visit Sandy Springs) to Designate Authorized Signatory submitted and unanimously approved by the board via electronic communication on January 26, 2021. A motion to approve was made by Pam Rosenthal. The motion was seconded by Eugene Jordan. The motion was unanimously approved by Board members present.

**II. Finance**

**Toni Carlisle**

Financials were presented for November and December 2020. The financial highlights reports for November and December 2020 were emailed to all board members prior to the meeting.

**Consideration of Proposed additional FY 2021 Budget Amendment** **Toni Carlisle**

Toni Carlisle stated that additional budget amendments had been proposed to meet the minimal needs of the business during the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposed reductions to the budget were (for the remainder of the Fiscal Year 2021:

elimination of the Open Sales Position; a 10% salary reduction for all employees, elimination of the annual COLA increase (1.5%); applicable taxes and Retirement contribution match (5%), resulting from the salary reduction and position elimination; elimination of the Profit Sharing contribution to the retirement plan; some reductions to Technical Services and a reduction of the Building Operating Lease due to early termination of the lease. Mr. Alterman raised a concern about the profit sharing growth loss of dollars that will never be recovered. Ms. Cruce explained details of the reductions to Technical Services (\$7500 annual Audio Eye fee). Mayor Paul stated that the main goal for these amendments is to preserve jobs and the holding on to human capital is the most important objective. Mr. Alterman asked if the PPP loan will alleviate the need for the reduction. Mayor Paul stated that, if secured, the PPP may offer some relief but the additional savings measures were put in place for Visit Sandy Springs to be able to continue to operate for the long run until revenues can return to pre-pandemic levels. Mr. Visconti made a motion to approve the budget amendment as proposed. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mahaffey. The motion was unanimously approved by Board members present.

**III. Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism Reports                      Jennifer Cruce**

**Smith Travel Report**

Cruce reported on Smith Travel Report weekly metrics for November and December 2020 including Occupancy, ADR, and RevPar.

**Marketing and Public Relations**

Marks presented the print and digital ads for November and December 2020 and a summary of Partnership Initiatives during that period. Samantha reported about paid social ads, paid search and search retargeting and organic traffic.

**Social Media**

Callanan presented the social media reports for Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and blog content for November and December 2020.

Jennifer Johnson of the General Muir Restaurant was introduced to the Board and welcomed to the City of Sandy Springs. She stated that she is glad to be here.

**Meetings, Projects, and Communications**

Cruce reported on the meetings attended by the staff including Performing Arts Center "Create Sandy Springs" Marketing (Cruce, Marks weekly), Southeast Tourism Society DMO executive check ins, GACVB Peer Check In meetings (Sales, Marketing), and GACVB Board and CEO member check-in meetings. She also provided information concerning working with City of Sandy Springs Finance Department to apply for the PPP loan, now open to 501c6 corporations. She

described communications efforts of the DMO, which included bi-weekly newsletters to hotels that has been updated to advise hotel staff of the restaurant openings, events and highlighted attractions in Sandy Springs.

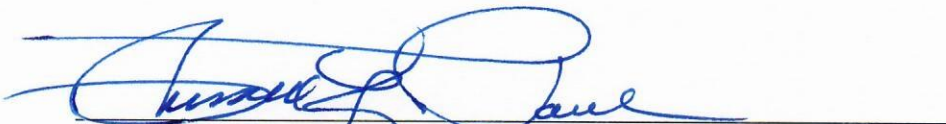
### III. Discussion

Mr. Alterman inquired about the percentage are DMO and hotels are down in revenue. Ms. Cruce and Mr. Visconti stated the revenue for the hotels is down about 60 to 70% and the revenue numbers were note expected to rebound for a couple of years. Mr. Alterman also inquired about corporate travel. Mr. Visconti stated that corporate travel is around 10% and would not be back probably until 2024. Mayor Paul stated that now is the time to get creative and use the staff to build market share, and encouraged the use of non-paid media, such as blogs about things to do in Sandy Springs and safe measures for returning to to travel. Mayor Paul stated that people are ready to have something and that we have to get creative on how to get our name out there. Ms. Cruce stated that during the pandemic, she has seen the value of the blogs in a way that she hadn't seen before, as most people are resigned to searching online for information.

Mayor Paul asked for a Motion to adjourn the Board Meeting. Mr. Visconti made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was passed unanimously. Mayor Paul adjourned the Board Meeting at 9:14 A.M.

Next meeting March 25, 2021 at 8 AM.

Faithfully submitted:



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Mayor Russell K. Paul, Chairman

ATTEST:



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Jennifer Cruce, Executive Director – Hospitality and Tourism