

**City of Sandy Springs, Georgia
Hospitality Board Minutes**

**Regular Meeting
Thursday, May 23, 2024
8:00 A.M.**

Barfield Room (City Hall) 2nd Floor

Member(s) Present: Mayor Rusty Paul, Chairman
Tom Mahaffey, Vice Chairman
Pam Rosenthal, Secretary/Treasurer
John Visconti, Board Member
Eugene Jordan, Board Member

Jason Sheetz, Board Member
Ann Delmas, Board Member
Amanda Singer, Board Member

Staff Present: Jennifer Cruce, Executive Director-Visit Sandy Springs
Samantha Marks, Director of Marketing & Communications-Visit Sandy Springs
Mitchel Gunn, Content & Communications Manager-Visit Sandy Springs
Cynthia Adams, Office Manager-Visit Sandy Springs
Myriam Hysa, Director of Sales-Visit Sandy Springs
Craig Hurlbut, Sales and Marketing Coordinator-Visit Sandy Springs
Toni Carlisle, CFO, City of Sandy Springs
Caroline Galvin, Executive Project Manager, City of Sandy Springs
Bill Haggett, Executive Dir. of the Performing Arts Center, City of Sandy Springs

Others Present: Emina Elwood, Regional Director of Sales, Homewood Suites by Hilton Atlanta/Perimeter Center
Candace Haiston, Director of Sales, Home2Suites by Hilton Atlanta Perimeter Center
Gilbert Jackson, Director of Sales, WaterWalk Atlanta Perimeter Center
Olivier Cugny, General Manager, Home2 Suites by Hilton Atlanta Perimeter Center

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 A.M. by Mayor Paul

Mayor Paul asked for a motion to approve the May 23, 2024 Hospitality Board meeting agenda. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Mr. Sheetz and seconded by Ms. Singer. The meeting agenda was unanimously approved by Board members present.

Mayor Paul asked for a motion to approve the March 28, 2024 Hospitality Board minutes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Visconti and seconded by Mr. Mahaffey. The meeting minutes were unanimously

approved by Board members present.

I. Finance

Toni Carlisle

Financials were presented for March and April 2024. Financial Highlights reports were included in the board packets.

Presentation and Approval of Proposed FY 2025 Budget

Toni Carlisle

Carlisle reported that the FY2025 Hospitality budget would include a 5% COLA increase, and a new FTE, a Digital Marketing Specialist, that brings the total number of employees to 6, with an increase in budget for corresponding benefits. A 12% increase in Medical and Dental fees was included in the upcoming budget. Carlisle explained all the increases in the FY 2025 Operations budget, including Professional Services, Technical Services (including a change of the data services provider from Arrivalist to Zartico and an investment in the Destination International Economic Impact Calculator, Advertising, Printing and Binding, Repair and Maintenance of the Building, Repair and Maintenance of the Vehicle, Building Operating Lease, and Dues & Fees. Ms. Rosenthal asked about the substantial increase in the Printing and Binding budget. Cruce explained that the DMO is preparing to work with Atlanta Magazine Custom Media to create a new visitor guide book.

II. Sandy Springs Hospitality & Tourism Reports

Jennifer Cruce

Marketing and Public Relations

Samantha Marks

Marks presented digital ad campaign reports for March and April 2024. Marks reported campaign overview recaps, metrics, notes and highlights for March and April 2024. Marks also reported on the digital video creative for Google and Meta. Marks presented the Dine Like a Local campaign Highlights for March 2024. Marks presented the latest public relations and prints ads for March and April 2024. Marks also detailed the DMO's next steps with Oracle and Meta.

Social Media

Mitchell Gunn

Gunn presented the social media reports for Instagram and Facebook. Gunn also reported on blog content and newsletter content for March and April 2024. Gunn also presented the Zartico data for March and April 2024.

Sales

Myriam Hysa

Hysa reported on the various outside sales efforts that the sales team has engaged in, including meetings with Discover Dunwoody, Explore Brookhaven, Visit Roswell, Inspire Brands, Alpha Kappa Alpha, Smalls Sliders, Under the Cork Tree, Connect the Dots Digital, Wheel the World, and Highwoods Management. Hysa also reported that she attended various networking events including SSPC Networking Monthly Luncheon, GSAE Networking Luncheon, GBTA Networking Luncheon, and the Cobb Travel and Tourism Open House. Hysa held site inspections with Anjali Sanghvi at the Westin, with U-Tours South, and attended the Sonesta Open House and Inspection. She also provided Small Sliders with a tour of Sandy Springs & Theater, Sandy Springs Christian Church. Hysa told the group that she attended Atlanta Mitzvah Connection Show and the STS Domestic Showcase. She reported that she called on the following hotels: Home2Suites, Westin Perimeter, Springhill Suites, Hyatt House, Waterwalk, Sonesta Galleria, Courtyard, Extended Stay America properties, Intown Suites, Comfort Inn, Hilton Suites, La Quinta by Wyndham, Homewood Suites, Fairfield Inn, Hampton Inn, Holiday Inn & Suites, and Aloft. Hysa also presented the March and April Sales Activity and Sales Activity Highlights.

Smith Travel Report**Jennifer Cruce**

Cruce reported on Smith Travel Report monthly metrics for March and April 2024, including occupancy, ADR, and RevPar.

Meetings, Projects, and Communications**Jennifer Cruce**

Cruce reported on the recurring and key meetings attended by the staff, including digital media planning meetings with Ravenel Digital Media (Cruce, Marks, Gunn), meetings with TKPR (Cruce, Marks), Simpleview CRM and SEO Meetings (Marks, Gunn), Zartico Research Data (Gunn), SSPC Restaurant Council meetings (Cruce, Marks), calls with 100 Digital Creativity for Virtual Tour (Marks), Gray Research Solutions planning meetings (Cruce, Marks, Hysa), DOS Quarterly meeting (Cruce, Hysa, Hurlbut), branding agency selection meetings with city staff & TKPR, (Cruce, Marks), Topside Tap Trail discussions re: passport (Marks), meeting with Rachel Simon, LinkedIn trainer, (Cruce, Hysa, Gunn), meeting to discuss Destinations Int'l Econ. Impact Calculator, (Cruce), Access Atlanta campaign review, (Marks, Gunn), meeting with Wheel the World re: accessibility audit, (Cruce, Hysa), meeting to discuss Crowdriff Creators, (Gunn), strategic planning meeting with C. Cavanaugh, Magellan Strategy Solutions, (Cruce), ETourism Summit (digital marketing college) (Gunn), Destinations International CEO Summit, (Cruce), Sandy Springs visitors guide planning meeting, (Cruce, Marks), meeting with Inspire Brands re: Office-Warming Lunch (Cruce, Marks, Hysa), LinkedIn training with Rachel Simon, (Cruce, Marks, Hysa, Gunn, Hurlbut, video updates discussion with Craig Miller, (Cruce, Marks, Gunn), Cobb Travel & Tourism Open House, (Cruce, Hysa, Hurlbut).

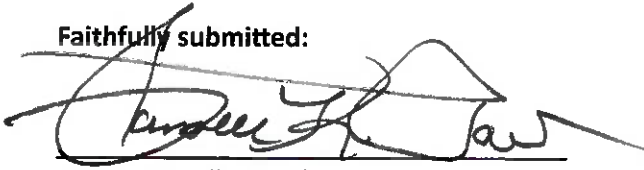
III. Discussion

Mayor Paul made an announcement that Jennifer Cruce has decided to retire at the end of 2024, and noted that there would be an appropriate farewell to come. Mayor Paul also mentioned that he would be traveling to Israel next week to attend that country's version of the US Conference of Mayors and National League of Cities that he attended. He noted that there was a good rapport with Israel when Delta opened a direct flight between Atlanta and Tel Aviv, although that flight is not available anymore. Mayor Paul also discussed the World Cup coming to Atlanta in 2 years and that Jennifer Cruce and Bill Haggett are starting a task force to capitalize on the 8 games coming here. Ms. Rosenthal noted that the All-Star Game is coming next year, and Mayor Paul also said that Atlanta is competing to get the Sundance Film Festival along with 15 other cities. He also confirmed that about the City was about to make an offer to hire a new Economic Development Director and that he expected the announcement to come in a couple of weeks.

Mayor Paul asked for a Motion to adjourn the Board Meeting. Mr. Mahaffey made the motion to adjourn the meeting and the motion was seconded by Mr. Jordan. The motion was passed unanimously. Mayor Paul adjourned the Board Meeting at 9:29 A.M.

Next Meeting: August 22, 2024

Faithfully submitted:



Mayor Russell K. Paul

ATTEST:



Jennifer Cruce, Executive Director-Visit Sandy Springs