

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
SHREVEPORT-BOSSIER CONVENTION & TOURIST BUREAU
March – April - May 2021

March 25, 2021

Call to Order

Ashley Warner, Board Chairman, called to order the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 11:46 a.m. on March 25, 2021. The meeting was held at the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, 629 Spring Street, Shreveport, LA. A video conference was set up for listening purposes and public participation only.

Board Members Present: Ashley Warner, Beth Smiley, Dick Bremer, Jason Roberts, Joanna Folse-Alexander, Pam Glorioso, Randy Slagle, Rob Brown, Jerome Dubose, and Shelli Murphy.

Board Members on Conference Call: Taylor Jamison

Board Members Absent: Edie Festavan, Emma Hebert, Matthew Snyder, and Wanda Bennett.

Public on Conference Call: None

Staff Members Present: Stacy Brown, Taylor Gullatt and Charlie Rice.

Special Guest: Shelly Ragle, Shreveport Public Assembly & Recreation (SPAR)

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Warner called for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Glorioso made a motion to approve the agenda and seconded by Mr. Dubose. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Warner called for a motion to approve the February 26, 2021 regular scheduled Board meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Smiley and seconded by Ms. Folse-Alexander. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

Stageworks – Request from City of Shreveport – Ms. Ragle gave the board an update on Stageworks and what repairs need to be done to bring the building up to code for a multi-purpose facility. The Shreveport-Bossier Sport Commission Advisory Board agreed to pay half of the cost for the engineer's plan needed and Ms. Ragle asked the board if they would pay the other half. Ms. Glorioso made a motion to approve \$27,375 which includes a contingency if needed. Mr. Brown seconded. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

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President's Report

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has set aside \$750 million in EDA grants exclusively for communities and states who have experienced severe job loss in travel, tourism, and outdoor sector industries.

Travel sentiment increasing with more vaccines, slower start but increasing well, with projections looking good.

Working with the Louisiana Travel Association and Civitas to create an industry-led funding mechanism to support tourism.

Communications: Working with our new ad agency on an information dashboard to see results at a glance. Visitor Center walk-ins, 20x49 Blog and web engagement slowing increasing. 318 Restaurant Week went well. Excellence in Hospitality Awards is quickly evolving and is scheduled for May 6, 2021. Email blasts and a save the date card will go out soon. Gearing up for National Travel and Tourism Week.

Conventions: Louisiana School Board Association hosted the first in person meeting for 350 attendees at the Shreveport Convention Center. Attended a luncheon in Dallas with five partners at the Meeting Professionals International DFW Chapter; Shreveport was recognized on stage for hosting their board retreat in November 2020. Monkey Fest Motorcycle Rally is securing a space at the Fair Grounds for a June event expecting 4,000 attendees. Society of American Travel Writers South Central States will be in town for a site visit for the 2022 SATW SCS Conference.

Sports: A news conference was held today for the USA National Boxing Championships; there will be 1,600 participates and COVID protocols in place. The boxing championships will be held March 25 – April 3, 2021 at the Shreveport Convention Center. Secured the Texas Cornhole League (TCL). LSU Health is the title sponsor for the Times Athlete of the Year Awards Program. The United Kennel Club (UKC) Invitational will take place in October 2021 at the Shreveport Convention Center, with 1,000 room nights. The Super Retriever Series will be held in the field next to Margaritaville.

Litter Clean Ups: Working with Shreveport Green and Keep Bossier Beautiful. Clean up is scheduled for April 10, 2021.

Financials

- A. Financial Report –Mr. Gullatt reviewed the financial reports for February. Mr. Dubose made a motion to approve. Ms. Smiley seconded. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

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- B. Check Register – Ms. Brown answered all questions regarding the check register for February.
- C. Occupancy Tax Report – Ms. Brown reviewed the occupancy report for February. Overall Shreveport-Bossier is down 17.50%.
- D. Tourism Summary Report – Ms. Brown reviewed the Tourism Summary report for February.
- E. PPP Discussion – Mr. Gullatt gave the board an update that the \$360,000 received will be used by the end of April. Applying for forgiveness and a second draw.
- F. Employee Rehire – The Finance Committee made a motion to bring back Gina DePingle' full time with benefits. Mr. Bremer seconded. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.
- G. Grant Applications – Ms. Murphy abstained and left the room prior to grant review. The Finance Committee made a motion to approve the following grants: *Mudbug Madness* – up to \$12,500, *State Fair of Louisiana – Spring* – up to \$12,500, *SciPort-GamePort* – up to \$5,000 and *Barksdale AFB Air Show & Open House* – up to \$5,000. Mr. Brown seconded. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

Chairman's Report

A. Association Reports

- a. Restaurant Association –No report.
- b. Hotel/Motel Association – March meeting was held on March 11, 2021 at the Flying Heart Brewing & Pub; Sylvester Marshall, event planner, and Kelly Wells, Shreveport-Bossier Sports Commission, presented on the Bayou Classic game and ancillary events. April meeting will be held on April 22, 2021 at Marilynn's Place; FMLA, EEOC and exempt/non-exempt will be discussed.
- c. Attraction Association – Considering a name change for "Be a Fan". Have three board spots open.

Next Meeting:

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Board Meeting – Thursday, April 15, 2021

Agenda items for upcoming meeting:

Adjourned: Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:55 p.m.

Approved:

Ashley Warner
Chairman

Jason Roberts
Secretary

OFFICIAL PROCEEDINGS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE
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April 15, 2021

Call to Order

Ashley Warner, Board Chairman, called to order the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 11:42 a.m. on April 15, 2021. The meeting was held at the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, 629 Spring Street, Shreveport, LA. A video conference was set up for listening purposes and public participation only.

Board Members Present: Ashley Warner, Beth Smiley, Dick Bremer, Jason Roberts, Joanna Folse-Alexander, Matthew Snyder, Pam Glorioso, Randy Slagle, Rob Brown, Jerome Dubose, Taylor Jamison, and Wanda Bennett.

Board Members on Conference Call: None

Board Members Absent: Edie Festavan, Emma Hebert, and Shelli Murphy.

Public on Conference Call: None

Staff Members Present: Stacy Brown, Taylor Gullatt and Charlie Rice.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Warner called for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Bremer made a motion to approve the agenda and seconded by Ms. Glorioso. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Warner called for a motion to approve the March 25, 2021 regular scheduled Board meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Glorioso and seconded by Ms. Smiley. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

President's Report

A Port City Weekend/Bayou Classic news conference was held this morning with the African American Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Brown updated the board on the Civil Rights Trail Marker that is being placed in front of the Little Union Baptist Church in Shreveport on Friday, May 7, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

Communications: Expedia campaign resulted in 2,700 hotel bookings and 893 airline bookings. Website sessions are up significantly over last month and last year. Restaurant Week was a success with 41 restaurants participating. Every area of social media increased during Restaurant Week. Be a Fan Ambassador Tour is scheduled for May 11, 2021. Email reminders and save the date flyers have been circulating to get people to nominate their star

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employee for this year's Excellence in Hospitality Awards. Be a Fan week is May 1-9, 2021, this year our attractions are offering discounts and deals.

Conventions: Hosted the LA. School Board Association at SCC. Getaroom.com has produced 3,282 room nights in Q1, 2021 vs. last year's 1,231 room nights for the same period. A 63% increase. A site visit is scheduled for Society of American Travel Writers for the end of April. Conducted a Sales Zoom meeting in March delivering information and playing a game to keep the salespeople communicating. Continuing to do in person sales calls in Dallas. Reissued Montford Point Marines to April-June 2022 with 700 room nights.

Sports: The final numbers for the USA Boxing National Championship were 1,150 boxers, 850 coaches, 125 officials, 1,840 family/fans over nine days of competition. Attendees were from 47 states and Washington, D.C. Hosting the USA Track and Field Southern Regionals June 23-27, 2021 at Lee Hedges Stadium. Secured Kite Flying Exhibition to enhance entertainment at the CenterPoint Energy Red River Balloon Rally. Progressing with the city on the Stageworks facilities. YTD room nights booked, and lead room nights are up.

Litter Clean Ups: Working with Shreveport Green and Keep Bossier Beautiful. Clean up for Shreveport was for April 10 and the Bossier clean up is schedule for this weekend.

Tourism Awareness Week/Excellence in Hospitality Awards – Nominations are now open for the Excellence in Hospitality Awards until April 29. The awards dinner will be held at LeBossier, Thursday, May 6, 2021 with limited seating.

Legislative Update – Ms. Brown reviewed the upcoming gaming legislation, tax consolidation, TRID and Film bills with the board.

Financial Disclosure Statement – Due May 15, 2021.

Building Repairs & Bollards – Material has been ordered to start the repair of the building. The bollards are being fabricated this week.

Financials

- H. Financial Report –Mr. Gullatt reviewed the financial reports for March. The Finance Committee made a motion to approve. Ms. Glorioso seconded. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.
- I. Check Register – Ms. Brown answered all questions regarding the check register for March.

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- J. Occupancy Tax Report – Ms. Brown reviewed the occupancy report for March. Overall Shreveport-Bossier is down 19.61%.
- K. Investment & Reserve Strategy Sub-Committee – The Board Officers will review how much money is needed for the reserve account and to solidify financial stability considering continued fluctuation due to COVID. The committee will also look at ways to invest funds to provide a return on investment.
- L. Port City Fest – Funds from the bureau have been transferred into the Port City Fest account for cash flow. Funds will be transferred back to the bureau when committed funds have been received.
- M. PPP Discussion – Mr. Gullatt gave the board an update that we received the second PPP loan of \$360,000 and we have applied for forgiveness of the first loan.

Chairman's Report

B. Association Reports

- d. Restaurant Association –No report.
- e. Hotel/Motel Association –April meeting will be held on April 22, 2021 at Marilyn's Place; FMLA, EEOC and exempt/non-exempt will be discussed.
- f. Attraction Association – A new app called GooseChase will be used for city-wide scavenger hunt for Be a Fan Week (May 1-9). New grants that are being offered are a \$1,000 Sustainably Grant and five \$200 grants for Social Media.

Next Meeting:

Board Meeting – Thursday, May 20, 2021

Agenda items for upcoming meeting:

Adjourned: Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:23 p.m.

Approved:

Ashley Warner
Chairman

Jason Roberts
Secretary

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May 20, 2021

Call to Order

Ashley Warner, Board Chairman, called to order the regular meeting of the Board of Directors at 12.24 a.m. on May 20, 2021. The meeting was held at the Shreveport-Bossier Convention and Tourist Bureau, 629 Spring Street, Shreveport, LA. A video conference was set up for listening purposes and public participation only.

Board Members Present: Ashley Warner, Beth Smiley, Joanna Folse-Alexander, Pam Glorioso, Randy Slagle, Rob Brown, Jerome Dubose, Shelli Murphy, and Taylor Jamison.

Board Members Absent: Dick Bremer, Edie Festavan, Emma Hebert, Jason Roberts, Matthew Snyder, and Wanda Bennett.

Staff Members Present: Stacy Brown, Taylor Gullatt and Charlie Rice.

Approval of Agenda

Ms. Warner called for a motion to approve the agenda. Ms. Folse-Alexander made a motion to approve the agenda and seconded by Ms. Glorioso. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Warner called for a motion to approve the April 15, 2021, regular scheduled Board meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Folse-Alexander and seconded by Ms. Glorioso. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

Special Guests

Kendall Palko, Rudy Webb, Brittney Litchfield from Paradise Advertising presented information that is loaded into the Data Depot to produce monthly tourism reports.

- N. Financial Report –Mr. Gullatt reviewed the financial reports for April. The Finance Committee made a motion to approve. Mr. Brown seconded. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.
- O. Check Register – Ms. Brown answered all questions regarding the check register for April.
- P. Occupancy Tax Report – Ms. Brown reviewed the occupancy report for April. Overall Shreveport-Bossier is down 0.64%.

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- Q. Tourism Summary Report – Ms. Brown reviewed the tourism summary report for March & April.
- R. Investment & Reserve Strategy Sub-Committee – The Finance Committee made a motion to move \$500,000 into the reserve account; seconded by Mr. Jamison. All in favor none opposed with no public comment. The goal is to have six-months of operating reserve by the end of 2023. The Finance Committee made a motion to give the bureau staff a 1.3% cost of living increase effective June 1, 2021. Mr. Jamison made a motion to change the 1.3% cost of living increase to 2.6%; seconded by Ms. Slagle. All in favor except one opposed with no public comment.
- S. Resolutions – The Finance Committee made a motion to authorize Ms. Brown, to sign on behalf of the Bureau, a Cooperative Marketing Program agreement with the Louisiana Office of Tourism; seconded by Ms. Glorioso. All in favor none opposed with no public comment. The Finance Committee made a motion to authorize Mr. Gullatt to try out a credit card from Regions Bank that can be used with the bureau accounting system; seconded by Ms. Glorioso. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.
- T. Ordinance 21-1 – The Finance Committee made a motion to amend the hotel definition provided in Ordinance 15-1; seconded by Ms. Glorioso. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.
- U. Grant Applications – *Roses & Rose'* – the Finance Committee made a motion to approve up to \$3,500; seconded by Mr. Brown. All in favor none opposed with no public comment. *Let the Good Times Roll* – the Finance Committee made a motion to approve up to \$5,000; seconded by Ms. Smiley. All in favor none opposed with no public comment.

President's Report

Building repairs underway, bollards are in process, working on permits. Met with the Dallas Federal Reserve Focus Group for tourism.

Communications: Expedia campaign YTD results are 2,600 hotel bookings and 1,000 airline bookings. Visitor, social media, and web engagement are up for the month of April. Out of the five top viewed pages four are events. The top three videos were National Travel and Tourism Week, Boom or Bust Byway and Bayou Classic. Currently updating the Retire Shreveport-Bossier website and redesigning the SB Fun Guide.

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Conventions: Tourism is participating in a promotional blog with international travel agencies along with the Louisiana Office of Tourism promoting 2022 programs. Met with the ASM Global team to restart the Municipal tours. A representative from Get a Room has asked for help to bring more hotels to join the program. SATW Central States has booked for February 2022. Working closely with hotel partners to participate and join the team on sales missions and day trips. Partnered with Baton Rouge on Rendezvous South to minimize cost and evaluate the current quality of meeting planners.

Sports: Partnered with the Shreveport Times for the Athlete of the Year, 36 Awards were given out to the best athletes and coaches in the North Louisiana. Leads, bookings and room nights are up from 2019. The IFBB/NPC Optimum Classic Championships (body building) will be held on May 22, 2021 at the Shreveport Convention Center.

Tourism Awareness Week/Excellence in Hospitality Awards – Excellence in Hospitality Awards was held on May 6, 2021, at the LeBossier Hotel and Event Center in Bossier City. Be a Fan Ambassador Tour is scheduled for May 11, 2021.

Legislative Update – Ms. Brown updated the board on H.B. 415.

Civil Right Trail – The Lt. Governor was in town for the Interpretive Marker Unveiling to commemorate the role of the Little Union Baptist Church in the Louisiana Civil Rights Movement was held on May 7, 2021.

Financial Disclosure Statement – Were due on May 15, 2021. Ms. Brown strongly urged the board if they have not submitted the financial disclosure statement to do so.

Boom or Bust Byway - Construction for the Earl G. Williamson Park Pavilion will start in March 2022.

Chairman's Report

C. Association Reports

- g. Restaurant Association –No report.
- h. Hotel/Motel Association –Meeting was held on May 5, 2021, at the Louisiana State Fair the topic of discussion was upcoming events for the Shreveport/Bossier area.
- i. Attraction Association – Social Media & Product Development Grants are due May 31, 2021. Be a Fan of Shreveport-Bossier campaign is the entire month of May; locals and visitors are encouraged to visit many attractions while taking

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advantage of exclusive deals and discounts.

Next Meeting:

Board Meeting – Thursday, June 17, 2021

Agenda items for upcoming meeting:

Adjourned: Meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:40 p.m.

Approved:

Ashley Warner
Chairman

Jason Roberts
Secretary