

**Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau  
D/B/A South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority  
Minutes of December 15, 2022**

Board of Directors of the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Met in a **REGULAR MEETING**  
Indiana Welcome Center  
7770 Corinne Drive, Hammond, IN 46323  
Thursday, December 15, 2022 at 12:00 PM (CST)

PURSUANT TO AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BYLAWS AND  
STANDING RULES

**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. REPORTS**

**A. Roll Call**

Chairman Andy Qunell called the December 15, 2022 regular meeting of the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau to order at 12:11 P.M. (CST). Secretary Chareice White called the roll.

The roll call was as follows:

**Board Members Present:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Board Members Absent:** Tom Dabertin, Peter Klideris, and Matt Schuffert.

**Staff Present:** President & CEO David Uran, Chief Financial Officer Cathy Svetanoff, Chief Operations Officer Greg Falkowski, Chief Marketing Officer Heather Becerra, and Chief Sports and Leisure Officer Megan Goodan.

**Also Present:** Attorney Scott McClure and Parliamentarian Andrew Kyres.

**B. Pledge Of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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**C. Report of the Executive Committee**

None to Present.

**D. Report of the Standing Committee**

There were no additional nominations or discussion surrounding the slate of officers for 2023.

Board members approved the following slate of officers for 2023:

Chairman - Andy Qunell

Vice Chairman - Brent Brashier

Treasurer - Matt Maloney

Secretary - Chareice White

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve the 2023 slate of officers as listed above. Vice Chairman Brent Brashier made the motion and Terry Velligan seconded the motion.

Secretary Chareice White called the role for a roll-call vote.

**Ayes:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Nayes:** None

**Abstain:** None

Motion carried 15-0-0.

**E. President/CEO Report - Attached**

Staff Board reports were also attached for board members to view in individual iPads during the meeting.

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**II. OLD BUSINESS**

None to Present.

**III. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Addition of New Items to Agenda**

**1. President/CEO Vacation Rollover and COLA Adjustment**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to add the above listed item to the agenda. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, and seconded by Member Bernie Grisolia.

Motion approved by voice vote 15-0-0.

**B. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings**

**1. Executive Session Meeting Minutes From November 17, 2022**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the executive session meeting minutes held on November 17, 2022. Motion was made by Member Doug Spencer, and seconded by Member Christine Cash.

Motion carried by voice vote 15-0-0.

**2. Regular Meeting Minutes from November 17, 2022**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the regular board meeting held on November 17, 2022. Motion was made by Treasurer Matt Maloney, and seconded by Member Terry Velligan.

Motion carried by voice vote 15-0-0.

**C. Finance Report**

**1. Approval of Claims: APV #23965-#27091 in the Amount of \$1,007,438.19.**

CFO Cathy Svetanoff gave a brief explanation of the voucher amounts for the month.

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Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve claims #23965-#27091 in the amount of \$1,007,438.19. Member Sal Espino motioned, which was seconded by Vice Chairman Brent Brashier.

Secretary Chareice White called the role for a roll-call vote.

**Ayes:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Nayes:** None

**Abstain:** None

Motion carried 15-0-0.

**D. Resolutions**

**1. Resolution No. 2022-12-19: A Resolution To Approve Salaries And Certain Benefits For Employees Of The Lake County Convention And Visitors Bureau As Fixed By The Board Of Directors For The Year 2023**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 2022-12-19. Member Pat Reardon made the motion, and it was seconded by Member Christine Cash.

Secretary Chareice White called the role for a roll-call vote.

**Ayes:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Nayes:** None

**Abstain:** None

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Motion carried 15-0-0.

2. **Resolution No. 2022-12-20: A Resolution Adopting Policies For Gift Shop Sales, Rental Fees, And Other Miscellaneous Fees For the Year 2022**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 2022-12-20. Motion was made by Member Terry Velligan, and seconded by Vice Chairman Brent Brashier.

Secretary Chareice White called the role for a roll-call vote.

**Ayes:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Nayes:** None

**Abstain:** None

Motion carried 15-0-0.

3. **RESCIND Resolution No. 2019-07-12: A Resolution Amending Resolution NO. 2011-11-20: A Resolution Establishing A 15% Partnership Discount For The Lake County Convention And Visitors Bureau**

(vote below)

4. **RESCIND Resolution No. 2011-11-20: A Resolution Establishing A 15% Partnership Discount For The Lake County Convention And Visitors Bureau**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to RESCIND both Resolution No. 2019-07-12 and Resolution No. 2011-11-20. Motion was made by Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, and seconded by Sal Espino.

Secretary Chareice White called the role for a roll-call vote.

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**Ayes:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Nayes:** None

**Abstain:** None

Motion carried 15-0-0.

**5. Resolution No. 2022-12-21: A Resolution Appropriating Monies For The Purpose Of Defraying Expenses Of The Lake County Convention And Visitors Bureau Beginning January 1, 2023 And Ending December 31, 2023**

President/CEO David Uran provided the board members with an overview of the 2023 budget. The following adjustments were made to the 2023 budget:

- An addition of \$72,000 to Appropriation 100.001.320.020 P-Marketing-Advertising and Publications to fund the SSCVA Regional Promotion Project with the NWI Times and Local 219
- The estimated amount remaining for cash reserves was approximately \$276,000, less Payoll 1 processed in December just under \$64,000. As a result, \$212,000 will be added into the 2023 budget to Appropriation 100.001.320.045 P-Marketing-Email Processing.

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve Resolution No. 2022-12-21 with the two amendments outlined above. Motion was made by Member John Bushemi, and seconded by Vice Chairman Brent Brashier.

Secretary Chareice White called the role for a roll-call vote.

**Ayes:** Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Sal Espino, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Nikki Lopez, Darnail Lyles, Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon,

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Doug Spencer, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

**Nayes:** None

**Abstain:** None

Motion carried 15-0-0.

**II. Other New Business**

**1. Permission for CFO to Balance 2022 Appropriation Accounts Before Year-End Via Transfers (Board Approval in January 2023)**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to allow the CFO to balance negative accounts within the 2022 budget prior to year-end, with a follow-up for board members at the January 2023 meeting. Member Nikki Lopez make the motion, and it was seconded by Member Taryl Bonds.

Motion carried by voice vote 15-0-0.

**2. President/CEO Vacation Rollover**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to allow President/CEO David Uran to carryover 80 hours of vacation from 2022, to be used by March 1, 2023. Vice Chairman Brent Brashier made the motion, and it was seconded by Member Bernie Grisolia.

Motion carried by voice vote 15-0-0.

**3. President/CEO Cost of Living Adjustment – January 2023**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve President/CEO David Uran's Cost of Living adjustment to January 1 as opposed to his anniversary date June. Treasurer Matt Maloney made the motion, which was seconded by Member Nikki Lopez.

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Motion carried by voice vote 15-0-0.

**IV. PRESENTATIONS**

1. None to Present

**V. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS**

- A. Public Comment - None
- B. Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, January 19, 2023 - 12:00  
Noon - Indiana Welcome Center

**VI. FINANCIALS**

Board report attachment.

**VII. MISCELLANEOUS**

1. Member Matt Maloney commented about legal representation and financial coverage for board members personally named in the lawsuit with Speros A. Batistatos.

Vice Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to authorize Attorney Scott McClure to draft a resolution "To allow board members, individually and personally named in the current pending federal litigation to hire and attorney, at the cost of the South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority (SSCVA), to represent the individual legal concerns, and to have the SSCVA indemnify these names board members from any financial judgment".

Treasurer Matt Maloney made the motion, which was seconded by Member Terry Velligan.

2. Chairman Andy Qunell appointed Member John Bushemi to serve as the chair of the SSCVA Bylaws Committee and work to update the organization's bylaws. Member Bushemi was asked to provide the names of board members he would like to work with on behalf of this committee. He was also asked to communicate with Attorney Scott McClure as needed



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3. President/CEO David Uran was also asked to provide current list of committees and members, and the purpose for each committee.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Hearing of no other business to come before the board, Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motioned by Member Darnail Lyles and seconded by Member Sal Espino. The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m. (CST).

**Approved:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Andy Qunell, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Attest:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chareice White, Secretary

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

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President/CEO notes:

**1. Good of the Order:**

- a. D&L Wood Products produced the Charcuterie Boards for our Board of Directors
- b. On December 14 - we conducted our first lunch and learn for our staff.
- c. Staff Xmas Party - December 19 / 11-3 pm

**2. Facilities Update:**

- a. SSCVA Welcome Center has submitted its application for a full civic liquor license with the ATC.
- b. Damage to the Welcome Center Sign has been processed and payment is forthcoming.
- c. During the repairs - we will be refreshing other aspects of that sign.

**3. NITDC Report**

- a. Our regular board for November was canceled.

**4. SSCVA Community Outreach:**

- a. Indiana Society of Chicago took place on December 3 and was a huge success. The SSCVA is going to work directly with ISOC board members in 2023 on the main event.
- b. Christmas Party was well attended and we received several positive post event comments
- c. Special Thanks to Kristin Taylor on knocking both events out of the park.

**5. Indiana Welcome Center / Gift Shop**

- a. Indiana Welcome Center Visitors
  - i. November 2022 - 7,733
  - ii. 480+ Students from 7 elementary schools
  - iii. December 2022: 6057 visitors vs. 5256 visitors in 2021
- b. South Shore Gift Shop
  - i. November 2022 - \$23,366
  - ii. December \$28k + (half way through December) up from \$21K in 2021

**6. Sports & Leisure Board Report Update: SPORTS**

- a. Truman State University from the Great Lakes Valley Conference won the America's Crossroads Bowl Championship 28 to 27.
- b. There was a lot of positive press surrounding the bowl game with The Times & NWI Life.
  - i. This was the last year on the contract to host this NCAA Division II bowl game and we will discuss the future of the America's Crossroads bowl with the GLVC & G-MAC

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conferences in January.

c. Conducted a site visit with the commissioner of the Great Lakes Valley Conference at the Hammond Civic Center to be a potential host site for the 2023 GLVC Volleyball Championships & the 2024 Men's & Women's Basketball Championships.

i. We will continue conversations and put together a bid package to host these events for multiple years.

ii. The 2023 sporting events list is complete.

iii. At the moment, we are committed to hosting 70 sporting events that includes: swimming, basketball, volleyball, softball, baseball, wrestling, soccer, football, bowling, Taekwondo and Leon's Triathlon & Obstacle Course Race.

iv. These events will generate over 12,525 room nights with an estimated economic impact of \$10,545,500 for Northwest Indiana.

v. More events will be added throughout the year as we prospect new event opportunities at various conferences and conventions.

**PARTNERSHIP**

d. 40 new partners year-to-date for 2022; 181 current partners for a total of \$142,842.50 in total sales 22% increase in new partnerships

e. Barb has hit the ground running sharing our new partnership packages and benefits for 2023 with existing and prospective partners.

**HOUSING / SERVICING**

f. 2,251 room nights were generated in our current service in 2022.

g. Current # of rooms reserved through Meetingmax for 2023 = 4,014

h. To date 291 rooms have been booked through Meetingmax for these events.

i. The National Softball Association room block has been created and will go live this week.

**7. Office of Marketing:**

**Data Reports/Research**

a. **Occupancy** and ADR were both up in October. ADR was up almost 8%!

i. October 2022 Occupancy - 74.5%

ii. October 2021 Occupancy - 73.8%

iii. October 2022 ADR - \$107.48

iv. October 2021 ADR - \$99.96

**b. Datafy Key Insights for past year (October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022)**

i. Visitor days increased, while total trips and unique visitors decreased. Trip length has also steadily increased. This means trips are getting longer and the South Shore saw a lot more repeat visitors in 2022 than we did the year prior.

ii. Top Visitor Market DMA is Chicago.

iii. Top Visitor Market Out-of-State is Illinois followed by Michigan.

iv. Top Spending Market is Indianapolis followed by Chicago.

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v. Visitation to Attractions and Downtowns saw a big increase from 2021 to 2022 while Beaches saw a big decrease. Visitation to indoor locations and activities is on a big rebound.

vi. Top Demographics In-State: Ages 45-64, under \$50k household income, 1-2 in household; Top Demographics Out-of-State: Ages 45-64, \$100k+ household income, 3-5 in household.

**Website**

c. Overall stats for October 1, 2021 - September 30, 2022

i. 505,166 users (9% increase from previous year)

ii. 633,838 sessions (9% increase from previous year)

iii. 1,186,660 (13% increase from previous year)

iv. 1.87 pages per session (3% increase from previous year)

v. Average session duration 1 minute, 45 seconds (3% increase from previous year)

vi. Bounce rate 56.47% (6% decrease from previous year)

**Communications/Social-Media**

d. Instagram Update

i. 72.6 % more accounts reached in November compared to October 2022.

ii. 61.1% more accounts engaged in November compared to October 2022.

iii. 1.4% increase in followers in November compared to October 2022.

**Marketing Campaign Highlights**

e. Fall Getaway Campaign (with Visit Indiana)

f. More than 3.2 million impressions between social and display.

g. Average time on the South Shore landing page was 1 minute, 27 seconds. Benchmark is 54 seconds.

h. Winter Getaway Campaign (with MPI)

i. Full campaign has been running for less than a month. Will have a full report at the January meeting.

**8. SSCVA Upcoming Speaking Engagements:**

a. Nothing scheduled for the remainder of the 2022 calendar year as far as outside visits

b. Field Trips have been added to the book of business which will have nearly 600+ students visiting our Welcome Center in December.

**This concludes my Executive Report!**