

**Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau
D/B/A South Shore Convention and Visitors Authority
Minutes of March 16, 2023**

Board of Directors of the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Met in a **REGULAR MEETING**
Culinary Misfits
208 S. Main Street, Crown Point, IN 46307
Thursday, March 16, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. (CST)

PURSUANT TO AND IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE BYLAWS AND
STANDING RULES

MEETING MINUTES

I. REPORTS

A. Roll Call

Chairman Andy Qunell called the March February 16, 2023 regular meeting of the Lake County Convention and Visitors Bureau to order at 5:02 P.M. (CST). Secretary Chareice White called the roll.

The roll call was as follows:

Board Members Present: John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Tom Dabertin, Sal Espino, Peter Klideris, Nikki Lopez, Treasurer Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Matt Schuffert, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

Board Members Absent: Taryl Bonds, Vice Chairman Brent Brashier, Bernie Grisolia, Fred Koegel, Darnail Lyles, and Doug Spencer.

Staff Present: President/CEO David Uran, Chief Operations Officer Greg Falkowski, Chief Marketing Officer Heather Becerra, Chief Sports and Leisure Officer Megan Goodan, and Accounting Manager Megan Grezovski.

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

1. By-Laws Committee – Update: No report.
2. Legislative – Update (included in President/CEO Report below)

E. President/CEO Report – Attached

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

President/CEO David Uran indicated that he would like to add an agenda item to today’s agenda for professional services to determine land, design and operational costs for a convention center associated with Senate Bill 434. As this bill moves through the legislative process, it becomes more important that we have information about the cost of the potential convention center in Lake County, Indiana.

Chairman Qunell asked for a motion to add this item to the agenda. Member Tom Dabertin made the motion to add this agenda item, and Member Terry Velligan seconded the motion.

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

Ayes: John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Tom Dabertin, Sal Espino, Peter Klideris, Nikki Lopez, Treasurer Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Matt Schuffert, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

Nayes: None

Abstain: None

Motion carried 12-0-0.

President/CEO David Uran indicated that there will be a Gary Air Show on August 5-6, 2023 and the SSCVA was a partner.

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He also welcomed Member Nikki Lopez to the SSCVA staff, as she will begin her role of Director of Recruitment and Relations with the SSCVA on March 27, 2023. President/CEO Uran and fellow board members thanked Nikki for her board service.

The picnic area on the south end of the Indiana Welcome Center needs to be refreshed. President/CEO Uran asked for permission to solicit RFPs for this area to be updated. The board was supportive and asked President/CEO Uran to bring forward to a future board meeting those proposals and recommendations.

II. OLD BUSINESS

None to Present.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Addition of New Items to Agenda

Added under President/CEO report.

B. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meetings

1. Regular Meeting Minutes From February 17, 2023

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the regular meeting minutes held on February 17, 2023.

Motion was made by Member Matt Schuffert, and seconded by Member Terry Velligan.

Motion carried by voice vote 12-0-0.

C. Finance Report

1. Approval of Claims: APV #27304-#27394 in the Amount of \$586,421.66.

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Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve claims #27304-#27394 in the amount of \$586,421.66. Member Nikki Lopez made the motion, which was seconded by Member Sal Espino.

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

Ayes: John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Tom Dabertin, Sal Espino, Peter Klideris, Nikki Lopez, Treasurer Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Matt Schuffert, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

Nayes: None

Abstain: None

Motion carried 12-0-0.

D. Resolutions

1. Resolution 2023-03-05: Update to Resolution 2016-01-01 and 2022-09-13: A Resolution Amending Resolution 2005-10-06: A Resolution Authorizing Credit Card Usage

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-03-05. Member Matt Schuffert made the motion, which was seconded by Member Tom Dabertin.

Motion carried by voice vote 12-0-0.

2. Resolution 2023-03-06: Update: A Resolution Adopting Policies For Gift Shop Sales, Rental Fees, And Other Miscellaneous Fees For The Year 2023

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve Resolution 2023-03-06. Member Tom Dabertin made the motion, which was seconded by Member Terry Velligan.

Motion carried by voice vote 12-0-0.

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E. Other New Business

**1. Indiana Destination Development Corporation -
Spring/Summer Agreement - \$50,000**

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve this agreement for the spring/summer term. Member Christine Cash made the motion, and it was seconded by Member Sal Espino.

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

Ayes: John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Tom Dabertin, Sal Espino, Peter Klideris, Nikki Lopez, Treasurer Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Matt Schuffert, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

Nays: None

Abstain: None

Motion carried 12-0-0.

2. Computer Hardware Upgrades - \$68,411.00 - Multiple Vendors

Chief Operations Officer Greg Falkowski indicated 2022 Revenue Bond proceeds will be used to fund this computer hardware purchase, which will result in a significant cost savings over a five-year period.

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to proceed with these upgrades. Treasurer Matt Maloney made the motion, and it was seconded by Member Terry Velligan.

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

Ayes: John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Tom Dabertin, Sal Espino, Peter Klideris, Nikki Lopez, Treasurer Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Matt Schuffert, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

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Nayes: None

Abstain: None

Motion carried 12-0-0.

**3. Senate Bill 434 Convention Center – Professional Services
Engagement To Determine Costs For A Proposed Convention
Center in Lake County, Indiana**

President/CEO David Uran asked the board for permission to engage professional services to determine land, design, and operational costs for a proposed convention center in Lake County, Indiana. There are budgeted funds in the 2023 budget that would allow for this expenditure, which would be paid using 2022 Revenue Bond Proceeds.

Chairman Andy Qunell asked for a motion to approve this expenditure as outlined above. Member Tom Dabertin made the motion, and it was seconded by Member Sal Espino.

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

Ayes: John Bushemi, Christine Cash, Tom Dabertin, Sal Espino, Peter Klideris, Nikki Lopez, Treasurer Matt Maloney, Pat Reardon, Matt Schuffert, Terry Velligan, Secretary Chareice White and Chairman Andy Qunell.

Nayes: None

Abstain: None

Motion carried 12-0-0.

IV. PRESENTATIONS

1. None to Present

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V. MISCELLANEOUS MATTERS

- A. Public Comment - None
- B. Next Regular Meeting - Thursday, April 20, 2023
- C. Upcoming Events - Legislative Event - following today's board meeting from 6 P.M. to 8 P.M. at Culinary Misfits.

VI. FINANCIALS

Board report attachment.

VII. MISCELLANEOUS

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 Matt Schuffert, and seconded by Member Tom Dabertin. The meeting adjourned at 5:45 P.M. (CST).

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Approved:

Andy Qunell, Chairman

Date

Attest:

Chareice White, Secretary

Date

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President/CEO notes:

1. Good of the Order:

- a. Indiana Society of Chicago - March 8, 2023 meeting - planning is underway!
- b. Crown Point's nighttime St Patrick's Parade - SSCVA will have a float / March 17
- c. Senate Bill 434 Update - Lake County Convention Center - passed 48-0 now heads to the House
for Consideration
- d. HB 1599 Update - Tourism Improvement District

2. Facilities Update:

- a. SSCVA Welcome Center outdoor patio area - consideration for modification / update / will be creating an RFP for some design options for the board's consideration.

3. NITDC Report

- a. Meeting was held in February - Elections were held - Jon Hunsberger from Elkhart CVA is chairman - I was elected Vice Chairman

4. SSCVA Community Outreach:

a.

5. Indiana Welcome Center / Gift Shop

- a. Indiana Welcome Center Visitors
 - i. February 2022 (2,626)
 - ii. February 2023 (2,976)
- b. South Shore Gift Shop
 - i. February 2022 - \$2,806.53
 - ii. February 2023 - \$2,568.74
 - iii. We see the need to attract more visitors.
- c. Upcoming Events In-House
 - i. Law Enforcement Training (100+) on March 13 & 14
 - ii. Elite Athletics Wrestling Event on March 17-19
 - iii. Humane Indiana - Birds of Prey on March 25
 - iv. Presentation for PNW class on March 30

6. Sports & Leisure Board Report Update:

SPORTS/SPECIAL EVENTS

- a. The Group Tour Summit was a success!
 - i. 40 of our local partners, restaurants, hotels & attractions ventured to the Mascot Hall of Fame for an education and Q&A session about Group Tour and what is new in the industry.
- b. Recently sponsored the WJOB Boys Basketball Sectionals, Girls on the Run Sneaker Soiree,

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Unified Esports Gaming Fanfest at PNW, Elite Fight Night Live MMA event & Leon's Heroes.

c. The Indiana Welcome Center exhibit hall will transform into a youth wrestling venue this

weekend (March 17-19) hosted by the Elite Athletic Club.

i. Middle school and high school wrestlers will compete from Indiana, Michigan, Illinois &

North Carolina.

PARTNERSHIP

d. 30 new partners in 2023

e. 138 partner renewals

f. \$161,617.50 total sales to date

HOUSING / SERVICING

g. Rooms booked through meeting max 2023: 1,663 YTD

i. Region Cup College Showcase has 365 room nights booked this weekend in Crown Point

/ Merrillville.

h. Candace & Barb attended the Heartland Travel Showcase this past weekend in Cincinnati, Ohio.

i. They had 20 very successful appointments with prospective group tour operators!

ii. Candace will attend the Circle Wisconsin conference, in Greenbay, WI this weekend to

meet with prospective group tour operators.

7. Office of Marketing:

Data Reports/Research

a. Occupancy was down slightly but ADR was up for January compared to one year ago.

i. January 2023 Occupancy - 49.4%

ii. January 2022 Occupancy - 49.7%

iii. January 2023 ADR - \$91.34

iv. January 2022 ADR - \$89.10

b. Rockport Analytics, February 2023, 2021 Economic Contribution of Tourism in Lake County

Report

i. \$1.1 billion in tourism spending – Highest Level Ever!

ii. \$774 million in total economic impact.

iii. 15,338 total traveler spending supported jobs resulting in \$494 million in total wages.

iv. \$221 million in total federal, state and local tax revenues generated.

v. If tourism did not exist, each of the 190k+ households in Lake County would have to pay

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an additional \$633 per year in taxes to maintain current levels of state and local government services.

Website

c. Highlights for February

i. 108,144 pageviews in February, last year it was 60,143. Big increase due to the timing of

Savor of the South Shore.

ii. The site received 25,825 organic sessions in February which was up 5% compared to last year.

iii. Events page saw a 283% increase year over year with 917 sessions.

Communications/Social-Media

d. Visit Indiana Media Marketplace

i. SSCVA represented our area with a booth earlier this week. Nearly 60 travel writers/journalists were in attendance.

ii. We also hosted one of the travel writers for one night. He hiked at the Indiana Dunes

and visited Gabis Arboretum.

e. Social Media

i. Instagram page had an increase in 105 followers from last month with a 20.9% increase

in engagement and 105% increase in reach.

ii. Savor the South Shore Facebook page increased by 105 followers in the last two weeks

with a 391.4% spike in reach.

iii. Along the South Shore followers increased by 161 followers since last month.

Marketing Campaign Highlights

f. Savor the South Shore

i. Campaign ran for about 3 weeks beginning on February 20th. Reporting is only for the

first 8 days of the campaign.

ii. CTR on search ads was 19.44% (Quality search CTR is 1.00%).

iii. There were 221,554 impressions and 8,544 clicks between search, display and social

media resulting in 2,603 people spending more than 45 seconds on page, 2,659 people

visited more than 2 pages, 24 Visitor's Guides were requested and 19 people signed up

for our e-newsletter.

g. Spring Getaway Campaign

i. Campaign launched on March 1. No reporting yet.

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8. SSCVA Upcoming Speaking Engagements:

- a. Duneland Chamber March 23 at 10:30 am (Indiana Welcome Center)
- b. Cedar Lake Chamber March 29 at 6 am - Harry's O's
- c. Schererville Chamber April 5 at 11:30 am - Little Italy
- d. Munster Town Council Meeting on April 17 at 6 pm

This concludes my Executive Report!