



The **Regular Board of Commissioners Meeting** was on Tuesday, April 28, 2020 via Zoom. Chairman Mark Myers called the meeting to order at 2:30 PM. The roll call then took place.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

- Alex Carollo
- Katie Diemont
- Bonnie Eades
- Patti Elish
- Mark Myers
- Marlaine Peachey
- T. J. Smith, Jr.

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

A quorum was present

Introduction of Guests

OTHERS PRESENT

- Donna O’Daniels, CEO and President
- Devan Richoux, CPA, V.P., Finance & Administration
- Rae Shipley, Assistant to CEO
- Tanya Leader, Vice President, Sales
- Christina Cooper, V.P., Marketing and P.R
- Kathy Lowrey, Harbor Center

- Roberta Carrow-Jackson, Digital Media Specialist
- Stephanie O’Rourke, Sleep Inn Slidell
- Ben Roberts, Southern Hotel
- Bill McHugh, St. Tammany Farmer/Advocate
- Valerie Waeltz, Harbor Center
- Lacey Osborne, St. Tammany Chamber

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Alex Carollo made **A MOTION** to approve the December 17, 2019 Regular Board Meeting minutes and the February 26, 2020 Regular Board Meeting minutes. Marlaine Peachey seconded, and, the **The Motion** carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Devan Richoux presented the treasurer’s report for December 2019 and January 2020 and then moved on to the February 2020 and March 2020 report. Patti Elish made **A MOTION** to file the Treasurer’s Reports for audit as presented. Bonnie Eades seconded, and **The Motion** carried.

STAFF REPORT

Donna O’Daniels said that since we had a number of items on the agenda, she would give an abbreviated version of the staff report. She said the staff has been working from home and keeping busy since the first week of March. Tanya and Zondra are rescheduling booked business and checking in with hotel properties. We are in collaboration in efforts to assist the community with the St. Tammany Chamber of Commerce and St. Tammany Corp. Christina and her team are producing some incredible content, and making weekly calls to partners and businesses to check on how they are doing and if there are any changes in hours of operation, etc., so that the information can be posted to our website and other social media.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAWS TO AMEND BY-LAWS ARTICLE VI CHANGING FISCAL YEAR TO A CALENDAR YEAR

Donna O’Daniels said most CVBs are on a calendar year annual budget and we are hoping to do the same. It is easier to plan the budget for a calendar year as most advertising and marketing opportunities arise in the fall. **A Resolution** was presented. Following discussion, **A MOTION** to amend the By-Laws to redirect the Tourist Commission to align our fiscal year to a calendar year was made by Bonnie Eades, and was seconded by Marlaine Peachey. **The Motion** passed unanimously. Tom Huval said that this would be memorialized in document form (Resolution) at a later date.

AMENDMENT OF THE BY-LAWS TO AMEND BY-LAWS ARTICLE XI, "BUDGET"

This amendment will provide that the annual budget of the Commission is to be prepared and submitted to the Commissioners for approval no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the end of the fiscal year. This is a change from the 45 day requirement. Following discussion, T. J. Smith made **A MOTION** to accept the change to the By-Laws regarding budget submittal and it was seconded by Bonnie Eades. **The Motion** carried unanimously. **A Resolution** was presented.

ADOPTION OF BUDGET FOR THE SEVEN CALENDAR MONTHS OF JUNE 1, 2020 THROUGH DECEMBER 31, 2020

Having held a Budget Public Hearing prior to this Regular Meeting, Chairman Mark Myers presented and read a **Resolution** to adopt the budget for the seven (7) calendar months of June 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Marlaine Peachey made **A MOTION** to adopt the budget for June 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020. Katie Diemont seconded and following a roll call vote, **The Motion** carried unanimously with six yeas, no nays, no absences and no abstentions.

RESOLUTION TO AUTHORIZE ST. TAMMANY PARISH SHERIFF TO DEFER COLLECTION FROM HOTELS/MOTELS

Tom Huval read a **Resolution** authorizing the St. Tammany Parish Sheriff, acting as tax collector on behalf of the Tourist Commission, to defer the collection for hotel/motel operators, all hotel/motel taxes for April 2020 and May 2020. This is something we wanted to do on behalf of our hotels which are experiencing some significant cash flow issues. Occupancy has been very low since about the second week in March. On July 20, occupancy taxes for April, May and June come due. Patti Elish made **A MOTION** to adopt the **Resolution**. T. J. Smith seconded, and following a roll call vote, **The Motion** carried unanimously with six yeas, no nays, no absences and no abstentions. .

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF REVENUE NOTES, IN ONE OR MORE SERIES, OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH TOURIST AND CONVENTION COMMISSION AND PROVIDING FOR OTHER MATTERS IN CONNECTION THEREWITH

The purpose of this is to seek approval from the Bond Commission, so that if, as part of the Federal relief packages, they offer loans that we would be qualified to seek, and since we have no idea how long this is going to last, we at least have permission from the Bond Commission to apply for certain loans. We have been consulting with a bond attorney, Meredith Hathorn. This gives us the ability to apply for a loan not exceeding one million dollars of revenue notes, but does not necessarily mean we intend to do so. This simply puts us in a position to be able to apply should it become necessary. Tom Huval read the **Resolution**. Alex Carollo made **A MOTION** to adopt the **Resolution** and Bonnie Eades seconded. Following a roll call vote, **The Motion** carried unanimously with six yeas, no nays, no absences and no abstentions. .

AUXILIARY AGENDA

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

--Bonnie Eades said she wanted to congratulate the staff and the work they started doing when COVID-19 set in and businesses started closing, in creating a new campaign. It is going to "take a village" to get our businesses up and running again, and she feels staff is doing an appropriate and excellent job. She reiterated something Mark said earlier in the meeting; that staff did an excellent job with Inside Northside.

--Marlaine Peachey said the City of Mandeville will distribute face masks, on Lisa Lane on a drive through basis, on Friday at 9 am in the area behind City Hall, until supplies are depleted. Face masks can also be found at any fire station in Fire District 4. The City Council will hold its next meeting on May 9 via Zoom at 6 pm and if you want to request participation, please submit your request to the Council Clerk. Mayor's Court will be May 18.

--Mark Myers said he learned a short while ago that New Orleans Mayor LaToya Cantrell just gave an interview to the Washington Post and said that whether or not to have Mardi Gras 2021 will be under discussion.

--T. J. Smith congratulated Mark Myers on conducting a very efficient virtual meeting, which is the first time for the Tourist Commission.

GUEST COMMENTS

--Stephanie O'Rourke of Sleep Inn Slidell said she had just heard the same report as Mark, and that the idea of a cancelled New Orleans Mardi Gras is "scary."

--Kathy Lowrey gave an update on the Harbor Center and said that their maintenance crew is doing essential work that would normally take place in the summer. They are working closely with clients and so far, they have had only one cancel and move to 2021 but have been successful working with other clients and continue to push their events back.

--Devin Richoux said that if anyone is aware of suppliers that are providing items such as hand sanitizer, Clorox Wipes and other disinfecting items, to please pass the information on to her. Alex Carollo said he would check for her. Stephanie O'Rourke said that Exxon Mobil in Baton Rouge is making hand sanitizers, and Valerie Waeltz suggested checking with NOLA Brewing Co., which is also making hand sanitizer.

--Lacey Toledano thanked Donna and her team, Mark Myers, and Bonnie Eades in helping their group, the Northshore Collaborative. The Chamber is stable financially, and they plan to open an office in Slidell on May 16. Their small-scale grand opening will take place on May 20. The Expo has been postponed once again and they have cancelled two other fundraisers. They are calling on every one of their members and they will be promoting every business that is PPEs available for sale.

NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Commission Meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 30, 2020 at 2:00 PM at the Tourist Commission office in Mandeville. Due to the pandemic, that is subject to change.

ADJOURN

Patti Elish made **A MOTION** to adjourn and T. J. Smith seconded. **The Motion** carried and the meeting adjourned at 3:25 PM.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

Rae Shipley
Recording Secretary

Mark A. Myers
Chairman