



September 15, 2021

11:30 a.m.

MINUTES OF MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR BOARD MEETING

THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Board of Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB) of Montgomery County, Texas held their Regular Board Meeting on September 15, 2021, at The Woodlands Township located at 2801 Technology Forest Boulevard, The Woodlands, Montgomery County, Texas, 77381 at 11:30 a.m. The roll was called and those in attendance were:

Present: Bruce Rieser, Chairman; John Anthony Brown, Vice Chairman; Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, Director; J. J. Hollie, Director; Jeff Jones, Director; Jenny Taylor, Director; Ted Harris, Director and Cameron Klepac, Director.

Absent: Fred Domenick, Secretary/Treasurer.

Staff Present: Nick Wolda, TWCVB President; Bret Strong, TWCVB Legal Counsel; Elizabeth Eddins, TWCVB Executive Director; Josie Lewis, TWCVB Director of Sales; Ashley White, TWCVB Marketing Director; Amber George, TWCVB Marketing Specialist; Sonia Guerrero, TWCVB Administrative Analyst; Laura Haces, Tourism Specialist; Ashley Fenner, TWCVB Sales & Servicing Specialist; Monique Sharp, The Woodlands Township Assistant General Manager Finance & Administration; Tuan Nguyen, The Woodlands Township Help Desk Analyst.

Attendees: Ana Cosio, The Woodlands resident.

1. Pledge of Allegiance;
 - Led by Bruce Rieser, Chairman.
2. Call to order and adoption of Agenda;
 - The meeting was called to order at 11:37 a.m. and a motion to adopt the meeting Agenda passed unanimously.

Motion by Director Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, seconded by Director Ted Harris to approve the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

3. Public Comment;
 - None.

4. Receive, consider and approve Minutes from August 20, 2021 Regular Board Meeting;
 - Motion by Director Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor to approve the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

5. Receive, consider and act upon the Financial Report through July 2021;

J. J. Hollie, Director, arrived to the meeting during this item at 11:41 a.m.

- Motion by Director Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, seconded by Director Ted Harris to approve the Financial Report. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

6. Receive, consider and act upon a Service Agreement between The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau, known as Visit The Woodlands, and The Woodlands Township;
 - Nick Wolda, President explained that reviewing this agreement is an annual requirement. The agreement outlines the services to be provided by each party and defines the funding requirements for the 2022 budget year at \$2.5 million.
 - Staff recommends changing the organization's mission designation from Destination Marketing Organization to Destination Management Organization, since Visit The Woodlands continually offers to The Woodlands not only marketing but also training to hotels and partners, transportation services, sponsorships, film initiatives, and others.
 - Jenny Taylor, Director, agrees with Mr. Wolda's sentiment and requested an amended to the agreement to show Visit The Woodlands as the official Destination Marketing and Management Organization for The Woodlands, Texas.
 - Motion to approve the Service Agreement between The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau, known as Visit The Woodlands, and The Woodlands Township with amendment requested by Director Jenny Taylor, seconded by Director Ted Harris. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

7. Receive, consider and act upon the request to negotiate a contract for Destination Marketing Media Buying & Creative Services;
 - Elizabeth Eddins, Executive Director, provided a presentation to explain the RFP process from the creation of the new brand campaign in 2018, launch in 2019, launch of new website in 2020 and the Covid impact in Hotel Tax collections creating an advertising halt for the organization. Also, Ms. Eddins presented a timeline deadline and review for RFP submission; the overview and the goals of the Destination Marketing RFP which included media buying & management, and creative services. All of these with the goal to re-allocate staff efforts and be able to support the organization's local partners as an extension of their team.
 - Staff recommends Madden Media as the Destination Marketing Media Buying & Creative Services partner. Besides bringing fresh ideas to the organization, Madden Media brings extensive experience, having partnerships with over 200 travel and tourism organizations nationally each year. They bring a media-buying plan that includes TV & Video, earned media, digital & print advertising, email marketing, website landing pages and more. Madden's strong buying power and relationships with key vendor such as Google, Facebook, TripAdvisor, iHeart Media, regional broadcast affiliates and more, enables them to negotiate better rates for the organization. Finally, madden will provide a key

differentiator metrics through the company's destination intelligence platform. This will enable the organization to receive information strategies, measure impact, and fulfill the fiduciary duty.

- Motion to approve the Board Chairman and TWCVB President to negotiate a contract for Destination Marketing Media Buying & Creative not to exceed the approved budget allocation set in the 2022 was made by Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs and seconded by Jenny Taylor and passed unanimously.

John Anthony Brown, Vice Chairman, arrived to the meeting during this item at 11:53 a.m.

8. Staff Initiative Reports;

- The Sales Department is currently working on 19 leads and 12 Cvent leads, in-person Sales Advisory Committee meeting, and Texas Electric Cooperative Site Tour, from which The Woodlands booked two events. The department continues preparations for a HelmsBriscoe FAM event on September 28th, a hospitality hotel program, the annual All Hotel Partner meeting, and an end of year FAM event. Upcoming tradeshow include TSAE "New Ideas Conference" in September, TACVB "Sales Blitz" in October, "Connect Texas" in October, "IMEX America" in November and "Destination Texas" in December.
- The Marketing Department continued to push advertising with co-op placements with Around Houston and The Woodlands Waterway Marriott. International placements (in Spanish) includes "City Magazine" and "Food & Travel Mexico." Website updates include new content to partner's information, new tracking to features such as "buy tickets," "book you climb," and others. The department continues updates to the "Emergency" microsite on the Visit The Woodlands website. This microsite includes weather alerts, hotel availability, Township news, COVID-19 information and related to help residents and visitor during emergency situations. Lastly, the department updated the Hotel Map collateral, photography for the Embassy Suites, area restaurants and public art.
- The Tourism Department staff assisted and attended the TACVB "2021 Annual Conference" in Conroe, Texas. The department continues to work in partnership with Visit Houston with the "Around Houston" program and "Houston's Marketplace." Upcoming tradeshow include "2021 IPW" in Las Vegas.
- Congratulations to Amber George, Marketing Specialist, for receiving the coveted TDM Certification. Visit The Woodlands received several following awards at "2021 Texas Association of Convention and Visitors Bureau Annual Conference" to include Judges Choice for Convention Promotion, first place for Convention Promotion, first place for Video. Partner awards include "Travel + Leisure:" Top 10 Resorts in Texas for The Woodlands Resort.
- Jenny Taylor, Director, congratulated the Marketing Department for the outstanding effort rolling out emergency information to partners.
- Motion to approve the Staff Initiative Reports was made by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown and seconded by Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs and unanimously.

9. Recess to Executive Session to discuss matters relating to real property pursuant to §551.072, Texas Government Code; deliberation of economic development negotiations pursuant to §551.087, Texas Government Code; discuss personnel matters pursuant to §551.074, Texas Government Code; and to consult with the Corporation's attorney pursuant to §551.071, Texas Government Code;

- Chairman Rieser shared that it would not be necessary to recess to Executive Session.

10. Reconvene in Public Session;

- It was not necessary to reconvene in Public Session.

11. President's Report;

- Nick Wolda, President, expressed the importance of staying relevant as a destination and thanked the Board for allowing The Woodlands brand to grow stronger every year.

12. Board Announcements;

- Bruce Rieser, Chairman, corresponded with President Wolda's sentiment and shared that The City of Conroe is using a financing tool that is only available to incorporated cities in Texas, and that is an Economic Development Zone. With the implementation of an Economic Development Zone, the State of Texas allows the local entity to keep the State's portion of the Sales and Hotel Taxes for a period of 10 years. The total amount that Conroe is expected to collect is \$15 million. If The Woodlands were to keep the Sales and Hotel Taxes the rebate would be for about \$30 to \$35 million. Discussion followed regarding this statement.
- Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, Director, also mentioned that The Woodlands community is unable to collect a beverage tax rebate due to The Woodlands' current special designation. Discussion followed regarding this statement.
- John A. Brown, Vice Chairman, agrees with the sentiment to continue to look at the future and where we want to be situated in 5-10 years. The "Big Idea Group" Vice Chairman Brown formed before the pandemic started was an advocate for future economic growth.
- J. J. Hollie, Director, invited everyone to The Woodlands Area Chamber of Commerce to the "4 o'Clock Series on Incorporation" taking place September 15, 2021.
- Cameron Klepac, Director, updated the Board regarding The Cynthia Woods Mitchell Pavilion. The Pavilion continues to see attendance growth. Director Klepac also noted that just as her hospitality colleagues, The Pavilion is in need of staff and invited interested candidates to apply.
- Jenny Taylor, Director, updated the Board regarding Market Street The Woodlands. Openings in September include Peloton and Press Juicery. Future openings include El Tiempo, Design Within Reach, Chanel Beauty, Mastro's Ocean Club and Lululemon. Lastly, Director Taylor invited everyone to Thursday's "Concert in The Park" at 6 pm during the fall season.
- Ted Harris, Director, updated the Board regarding The Woodlands Mall. Future openings include Miss A, Bigotes Street Tacos and Ta'bleyah Mediterranean Cuisine.

13. Agenda items for next meeting;

- None.

14. Adjournment at 12:55 p.m.

- Motion to adjourn was made by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown and seconded by Chairman Bruce Rieser and passed unanimously.

DocuSigned by:
Fred Domenick

Fred Domenick, Secretary/Treasurer
The Woodlands CVB Board of Directors

1/13/2022

Date