



May 18, 2022
11:30 a.m.
MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Board of Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB) of Montgomery County, Texas held their Board Meeting on May 18, 2022 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
Fred Domenick, Secretary/Treasurer
Cameron Klepac, Director
Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, Director
Monique Sharp, Director
Jenny Taylor, Director

Staff Present: Nick Wolda, President; Bret Strong, TWCVB Legal Counsel; Elizabeth Eddins, TWCVB Assistant Director; Ashley White, TWCVB Brand Development Manager; Josie Lewis, TWCVB Convention Development Manager; Amber George, TWCVB Marketing Specialist; Ashley Fenner, TWCVB Convention Development Specialist; Gabby Pena, TWCVB Administrative Analyst

Attendees: Ana Cosio, Resident;; Miguel Marrero, Alpha & Omega Operations Manager;; Jill Kutka, The Woodlands Waterway Marriott

1. Pledge of Allegiance;

Led by Chairman Bruce Rieser.

2. Call to order and adoption of Agenda;

Chairman Bruce Rieser called the meeting to order at 11:35 a.m.

Motion by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown, seconded by Secretary/Treasurer Fred Domenick to adopt the agenda. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Agenda adopted.

Vote: 5 - 0 Passed

Other: Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs (ABSENT)
Director Jenny Taylor (ABSENT)

Other: Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs took her seat the Board dais following the adoption of the agenda.

3. Public Comment;

Chairman Bruce Rieser called upon Jenny Carattini-Wright, Executive Director of The Woodlands Arts Council. She thanked Visit The Woodlands and the Board of Directors for their continued support and mentioned this year's festival had a new record of attendance at 14,000 out-of-area visitors. In total, more than 22,000 people attended the event over two days. Chairman Rieser congratulated The Woodlands Arts Council on their turnout and event layout. Ms. Carattini-Wright said that The Woodlands Arts Council Board will be considering returning to a 3-day festival as long as there is sufficient parking available.

4. Receive, consider and act upon the Minutes from April 20, 2022 Regular Board Meeting;
Due to technical difficulties, the April 2022 minutes will be considered and approved at the next Visit The Woodlands Board meeting.
Chairman Rieser deferred approval of the minutes to the next meeting.

5. Receive, consider and act upon the Financial Report through March 2022;

Chairman Bruce Rieser announced that Director Jenny Taylor arrived to the meeting and took her seat at the Board Dais. Director Monique Sharp delivered the Financial Report on behalf of Kellan Shaw, Township Director of Finance. At the end of the first quarter, actual revenues totaled to \$474,488, compared to a \$497,176 budget, resulting in an unfavorable variance of \$22,688. This was due to the Township transferring less funds than anticipated due to supplemental hotel tax revenue being higher than budgeted by \$22,767, as well as, favorable variances in operating expenses totaling \$21,040. The Actual Expenditures for Q1 totaled \$474,488, compared to budgeted expenditures of \$495,528. The favorable variance of \$21,040 is attributable primarily due to timing differences of line items within the budget. As of March 31, 2022, the undesignated fund balance for Visit The Woodlands was \$1,405,194.

Motion by Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor to adopt the Financial Report. Motion carried by unanimous vote. Financial Report adopted.

Vote: 6 - 0 Passed

Other: Director Monique Sharp (ABSENT)

Director Monique Sharp presented this item and did not place a vote.

6. Receive, consider and act upon an update from the Visit The Woodlands Marketing Committee;

Ashley White reported on the second Marketing Committee meeting of 2022. She brought forth data collected by Madden Voyage, a data analysis tool. Data findings noted that road trips and lodging are up and very close to 2019 levels. The Woodlands Township has also seen HOT Tax collections rebounding. Mrs. White went over the Madden Voyage data from Q1, which indicates the length of stay for visitors in The Woodlands. Louisiana, Oklahoma, Florida, California, and Colorado make up 11,000 of the total visitors in this report. Madden Voyage uses opt-in phone data to measure visitor count and behavior. In-state visitors average 1.0 days in The Woodlands. Mrs. White reported that Visit The Woodlands has put geo fences around The Woodlands' most popular visitor stops. Director Klepac asked if Houston residents are considered as visitors. It was confirmed that, since marketing efforts take place to reach visitors in the Greater Houston area, Visit The Woodlands does consider them to be visitors. Chairmen Rieser mentioned that it was encouraging to see the data so high from Q1 despite the Cynthia Woods Pavilion season had yet to begin. Chairman Rieser said that from March 15 to June 30, travel to and from Florida is completely booked. Travel to Arizona, Florida, and Texas have recovered and is back up to 2019 levels. International travel is still ramping up; not quite at pre-COVID levels, but getting close. Mrs. White updated the Board on the upcoming photo shoot. Visit The Woodlands will be filming at multiple locations with morning and evening shoots for a full week.

Motion by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor

Vote: 7 - 0 Passed

7. Receive consider and act upon the 2023 Budget Proposal of Visit The Woodlands;

Executive Director Elizabeth Eddins reported budget actuals in 2020-2021 were under \$2M. The projected 2022 Visit The Woodlands budget should be around \$2.7M. The projected 2023 Visit The Woodlands budget is anticipated to return to the pre-covid budget of \$3.1M. She reported that Visit The Woodlands has increased its sales budget to \$307,500, which includes Site and FAM Tours, Incentives, and Sales Missions. The marketing budget is at \$1.2M and will include expansions of the website and advertising. The Strategic Partnership budget is at \$492,000 and includes Visitor Services, Special Events, and Tourism Initiatives. Staff is recommending an increased travel budget to accommodate the newly created sales position. Chairman Rieser said that he would like to see more information on the risk factors due to the increase in travel prices going up by 30 percent. Ms. Eddins said that the increase in costs will change the travel budget, however, when it comes time to finalize the budget, she will be using language that would allow for flexibility. Director Sekula-Gibbs asked if we would be able to see where The Township's sales tax is being collected from with our partner initiatives from Madden Voyage. Ms. Eddins will add them in the next report. Director Klepac and Chairman Rieser wanted to point out how the department has grown and the recognition that Visit The Woodlands has nationwide.

Motion by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor

Vote: 7 - 0 Passed

8. Receive, consider and act upon the Staff Initiative Reports;

Executive Director Elizabeth Eddins informed the Board of Directors that Visit The Woodlands will be transitioning to a quarterly update that lines up with the updates given to The Woodlands Township Board of Directors.

No action taken.

9. Recess to Executive Session at 12:15 p.m. 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;

Motion by Director Dr. Shelley Sekula-Gibbs, seconded by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown Chairman Bruce Reiser call to recess at 12:15 p.m.

Vote: 7 - 0 Passed

10. Reconvene in public session;

Reconvened in public session at 12:52 p.m.

11. President's Report;

President Nick Wolda congratulated Executive Director Elizabeth Eddins on graduating from Leadership Montgomery County program on May 19, 2022 as well as The Woodlands Township Deputy Director of Community Services, Ruthanne Haut. President Wolda congratulated Marketing Specialist Amber George for 10 years of service at Visit The Woodlands/The Woodlands Township. He also recognized Elizabeth Eddins and Ashley White on their 5 years of service at The Township. Director Sekula-Gibbs congratulated Director Monique Sharp on 30 years of service with The Woodlands Township.

12. Board Announcements;

Director Fred Domenick mentioned that construction on The Woodlands Waterway Marriott's sleeping room and bathrooms begins on June 6, 2022, and should be complete in September 2022. Director Cameron Klepac said that the Pavilion's season is off to a great start and will host CISD and WISD graduations throughout this month, as well as wrapping up May with BuzzFest over the Memorial Day Weekend. Next month, the Pavilion will be kicking off the Performing Arts Series with The Little Mermaid. Chairman Bruce Rieser mentioned that the Pavilion's bag policy is being strongly enforced and is in line with policies similar to the NFL and college sports. Director Klepac mentioned that the Pavilion follows LiveNation policies regarding mask regulations and that masks are no longer mandated within the Pavilion. Director Jenny Taylor said the Hyatt Centric at Market Street checks bags for concert goers to aid the Pavilion in enforcing the bag policy. She also mentioned that Market Street has rented out and transitioned around 100,000 square feet. The Market Street live music season ends on May 19, 2022, with the Fab Five concert. Director Sekula-Gibbs mentioned the Memorial Day Township celebration in Town Green Park on May 29, 2022, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m., to honor the men and women who have given the ultimate sacrifice for the freedoms Americans enjoy. The event will conclude with music and fireworks. There will also be a swearing-in ceremony for local high school students who have chosen to join the Armed Forces after graduation.

13. Agenda items for next meeting;

None.

14. Adjournment.

Motion by Vice Chairman John Anthony Brown, seconded by Director Jenny Taylor to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:00 p.m.

Vote: 7 - 0 Passed

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

Date