

Louisiana Travel Association

Board of Directors Meeting

Double Tree by Hilton Lafayette
1521 W Pinhook Rd | Lafayette, LA 70503
June 30, 2021 | 8:30 AM

MINUTES

Present:

Dickie Brennan
Kyle Edmiston
Alana Cooper
Ben Berthelot
Stacy Brown
Carla Tate
Walt Leger
Paul Arrigo
Sondra Corbitt
Donna O'Daniels
Mike Buckley
Jeremy Cooker
Kevin Dolliole
Brandy Evans
Joanna Folse-Alexander
Arlene Gould
Chris Landry
Morgan Moss
Jady Regard
Jay Sharplin
Stephen Watson
Nimesh Zaver

Rebecca Blankenbaker
Nelson Gumm

Absent:

Ralph Ney
John Crook

LOT Present:

Jeff Harlan
Lynne Coxwell

LTA Staff Present:

Jill Kidder
Laine Garner
Laura Cating

CFO by Design

Julie Hart

I. Call to Order/Announcements

- a. Chair Dickie Brennan called the meeting to order and thanked everyone for joining either in person or via UberConference.
- b. He thanked Ben and Lafayette CVC for hosting the meeting and Madden Media for sponsoring the Board Meeting. Laura spoke a few minutes about Madden and mentioned that "LTA members placed \$102,000 worth of digital advertising through our marketing plan in Madden programs".

II. Approval of Minutes

- a. Chair Dickie Brennan presented the minutes from the March 2021 board meeting in Ralph's absence. (Minutes in packet pgs. 1-3).

ACTION #1: Ben Berthelot moved to accept the minutes from the March 2021 LTA Board Meeting. Jay Sharplin seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

III. Financial Report

- a. Treasurer Alana Cooper referred to the May 2021 financials that were sent to everyone in their packets.
- b. Julie from CFO Design covered the highlights from the May 2021 Financials. These can be found on p. 4-8 in the packet.

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ACTION #2: Alana Cooper moved to accept the May 2021 Financials. **Brandy Evans** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

- c. Alana Cooper- gives current financial Update.
 - i. The Executive Committee voted to move \$35,000 cash into reserves. With this transfer all money is back into reserves from building sale.
 - ii. Alana stated she and Jill met with the LPL Adviser, Lee Nugent. The Investment committee will meet with LPL advisor to finalize investment guidelines. She conveyed we need to be investing money to be making the most money.
 - iii. Bank Resolution signature is needed for the bank credit card Capital One checking account. The signatures on the account are old. The resolution adds Jill Kidder, Ralph Ney, and Paul Arrigo.

ACTION #3: Alana Cooper moved to change the bank signatures to Jill, Ralph, and Paul for the credit card account and remove the old signatures. **Joanna Folsie Alexander** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

- d. Julie gave update on PPP loan. We were approved for \$134,000 and have 8-24 weeks to extend those funds. We are tracking to receive full loan forgiveness.

IV. Chairman's Report

- a. Dickie called on Deputy Assistant Secretary Jeff Harlan and Director of Research, Lynne Coxwell for a tourism update.
 - i. Jeff stated standstill budget compared to 2020-2021. Also, the 10% in-state spending cap has been suspended by legislature for FY '22.
 - ii. LOT was successful in fielding \$17.5M for tourism recovery in American Rescue Plan Funds. They have been reaching out to DOA for allowable/profitable spends.
 - iii. Lynne discussed two grant programs. A competitive grant program to support marketing initiatives for tourism events that attract and retain visitors to the state and have positive impact on Louisiana's economy. Completed applications are accepted 90-days prior to event.
 - iv. Lynne discussed Cooperative Grant Program (CMP). Cooperative marketing program provides matching funds to Louisiana-based convention & visitors bureaus, tourist commissions and other eligible entities for the placement of qualifying advertisements in eligible media outlets. It is designed to help fund marketing initiatives throughout the state. All CVBs receive \$20,000 for the CMP FY22. Total = \$828,031. FY 21 Total = \$625,182.97.
 - v. Lynne stated that Occupancy is down 4.9% from May 2019. ADR is down 13.5% from May 2019. Excluding New Orleans, Louisiana's lodging is up 9.3% over May 2019. Short term lodging increased 20% over May 2019. Louisiana's short term lodging ADR increased 10% over May 2019. Louisiana's leisure and hospitality jobs increased by 31% over May 2020. Gain of 46,400 jobs. Gaming revenue increased by 12.4% from May 2019.
- b. Dickie asked Ben Berthelot to begin the nominations process.
 - i. Ben, as current Past-Chair of the board, serves as chairman of the Governance committee and will begin the nomination process in July.
- c. Dickie asks Brandy Evans for an update on the DEI task force.
 - i. Brandy gives update on DEI committee and offers information about Travel Unity, Rockford Area CVB, Louisville CVB, and Center for Creative Leadership asks for volunteers to join the task force. Dickie suggests including a note to ask for volunteers to join the task force in follow up email to the board.

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- d. Dickie asks Jill and Kyle to discuss the support letter for Southwest Louisiana disaster relief.
 - i. Kyle discusses the damage in Lake Charles and states it has been over 300 days since the hurricane with no federal supplemental bill. Lake Charles started a mass letter writing press campaign to send letters to each elected congressman and the US President. Kyle asks that Louisiana Travel association participate in the letter writing campaign.

ACTION #4: Stacy Brown moved approve the support letter for Southwest Louisiana disaster relief. **Ben Berthelot** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried. LTA will process the letters.

V. LTA Staff Report

- a. Jill discussed LTA staff retreat and stated working from home is going well but the staff would like to get together a few more times during the month. The Executive staff met to discuss all LTA programming and work based on the Strategic Plan the board approved in 2020. The direction was to increase advocacy and educational activities/programming and to reduce the marketing efforts. Jill discussed the need to continue the marketing plan programs that support the advocacy and education initiatives. This is critical in light of the funding deficit left by the cancellation of the visitor guide program. Jill also announced that Tiffany Schultz-Swett will be starting a new job with LSU July 12th.
- b. Development & Membership Update – Laine
 - i. LTA has renewed 80% of the 2020 membership.
 - ii. 26 Premium Partners; 9 Chairman Circle members
 - iii. Renewed 5 Hotel Management Company members –tracking to secure a total 8 in the next few months.
 - iv. Laine announced a new membership program with LA Main Street. She and Charlie Waltman are working with Ray Scriber, LA Main Street Director to tailor this new initiative.
- c. Education update – Laine
 - i. Laine gave LTLA update about their Advocacy and Product Development classes.
 - ii. Next marketing Webinars are July 14; Sept 22; Nov 10.
- d. Travel and Tour Update
 - i. Laine will be attending ABA, SYTA, and Going on Faith.
- e. Marketing & Communications update – Laura
 - i. Culinary Trails is close to closing and going well.
 - ii. 2022/2023 Marketing Plan – is being finalized now.
 - iii. Kelli West discusses TikTok targeted ads, Geo fencing digital campaign, Group Travel Leader digital programs, small meetings digital campaign, and a Premier Travel Media package as part of the new programs for 2022-23. Most media partners want to keep the same programs in this year’s marketing plan for 2022-23. They are working well.

ACTION #5: Joanna Folse-Alexander moved approve 2022/2023 marketing plan. **Jeremy Cooker** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

- f. LTA Advocacy update
 - i. The video from tourism day at the capital is played.
 - ii. Jill mentions the success of the legislative session and refers to her legislative session recap for more details of the session. (Letter can be found on pgs. 24-25 of the packet)

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VI. Unfinished Business | New Business

- a. Stacy Brown invites board to Shreveport Bossier Lodging Association event with STR.
- b. Laura discusses Summit at The Roosevelt Hotel, New Orleans August 24-26.
- c. Next meeting: October 5-6, (Ascension Parish).
- d. Paul asked about participation in LMA convention. Jill responded LACVB will have a booth and to contact Josie if anyone is interested in manning the booth.

VII. Adjourn

- a. Dickie asks for motion to adjourn meeting.

ACTION #6: Stacy Brown moved to adjourn. **Paul Arrigo** seconded the motion.

ACTION ITEMS:

ACTION #1: Ben Berthelot moved to accept the minutes from the March 2021 LTA Board Meeting. **Jay Sharplin** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

ACTION #2: Alana Cooper moved to accept the May 2021 Financials. **Brandy Evans** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

ACTION #3: Alana Cooper moved to change the bank signatures to Jill, Ralph, and Paul for the credit card account and remove the old signatures. **Joanna Folse Alexander** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

ACTION #4: Kyle Edmiston moved approve the support letter for Southwest Louisiana disaster relief. **Stacy Brown** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

ACTION #5: Joanna Folse-Alexander moved approve 2022/2023 marketing plan. **Jeremy Cooker** seconded the motion. No discussion. Motion carried.

ACTION #6: Stacy Brown moved to adjourn. **Paul Arrigo** seconded the motion.