

**West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, March 15, 2023**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Cindy Sullivan, Pete Arney, Dave Wilson, Sara Patel, Bryn Adams, Sue Elliott

**Staff:** Georgia Carter Turner, Executive Director; Kristine Spence, Marketing Manager; David Swanberg, Marketing Coordinator

**Also Present:** Laura Coleman, Volusia County Assistant County Attorney; Brenda Sidoti, Jamie Alexander, and Greg Otte, Benedict Advertising; Jen Armstrong, Holly Bluff Marina

**Call to Order:** Ms. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

**Call for Public Participation:** None

**February 2023 Board Minutes:** Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Ms. Patel and approved unanimously.

**February 2023 Financials:** Ms. Patel gave the financial report. Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Ms. Elliott and approved unanimously.

**Benedict Advertising & Marketing Report**

Ms. Alexander presented an update on digital campaigns, public relations for February 2023 and upcoming projects.

Ms. Alexander gave an overview of Google Search & Display campaigns with nearly 1.5 million impressions and .48% click through rate. Video Ad campaigns resulted in an average of 85% full viewing rate. Facebook continues to be the leading social source to drive traffic to the website. 77.08% of website traffic came from mobile devices with an average page session of 2.87. Top pages visited include Attractions, Home Page and Family Activities. Top locations for website visitors out of the West Volusia area in Florida are consistently Orlando, Miami, Tampa and Jacksonville. Outside of Florida, Atlanta remains at the top of the list.

Ms. Alexander reported on Facebook and Pinterest ads and campaign results. Leads from Facebook ads for newsletter sign ups remain strong with 339 leads, increasing newsletter recipients to 10,535. The open rate for the newsletter continues to produce above industry standards.

Ms. Alexander gave an update on the progress of the Bandwango CoolCraft Beverage Trail mobile pass. In February top check-in locations were Centro Tea Co. and NEST.

Public Relations included press on the CoolCraft Beverage Trail, Cassadaga Spiritualist Camp, Stetson Mansion, DeLand Mural Walk and "Thin Man" Watts Jazz Fest.

Ms. Alexander mentioned website development and Zartico setup are in process.

**Executive Director's Report: March 2023**

Ms. Turner presented an overview of recent meetings, events, staff travel and other activities.

MEETINGS: Bandwango update; Florida Public Relations Association; Zartico webinars; DeLand Black Heritage Trail; Bob Davis speech at West Volusia Chamber AM Connection; Southeast Tourism Society webinar on Destination Marketing vs. Destination Management; HAT Marketing re: new international Savings Card; Jon Hansen, new Assistant Athletic Director

of Sponsorship & Community Outreach at Stetson; toured Alexander Island with *Orlando Sentinel*; Murder Mystery dinner at The Table; DeLand School of Government; State of the County at Ocean Center; MainStreet DeLand Board, promotions committee and Ice Cream Walk meetings; DeLand Woman of the Year luncheon; Team Volusia Annual Meeting; Leadership West Volusia speech and tour; Volusia Vibe at Twisted Chopsticks; FATN (Florida Adventure Travel Network) meeting.

**EVENTS:** Mardi Gras Dog Parade; Enterprise Chili Cookoff; DirtCar Nationals; DeLand Bike Rally; Field to Vase dinner at Registers in Seville; Off the Beaten Path Studio Tour; World of Outlaws Showdown at VSP; Amazing Shake at Deltona Middle School; Central 28 Beer and Pretzel Pairing.

**TRAVEL:** WedPros open house at Riverside Pavilion in Port Orange. Destinations Florida legislative update meeting in Tampa. Legislative session started March 7. We are keeping a close eye on a bill that is trying to expand the use of the TDT tax. There is another bill that is up to eliminate Enterprise Florida. Because of timing, Ms. Turner will attend Volusia Days in Tallahassee this year instead of the state Tourism Day.

**OTHER:** Hosted the Florida Motor Maids in conjunction with MainStreet DeLand. Also travel writer Blake Guthrie who writes for Atlanta Journal-Constitution and other publications. Provided rooms for BrushPile Fishing TV show filming on St. Johns. March 21 is the date for the County Council where board appointments will be made. Meeting starts at 4 pm. Marketing Coordinator David Swanberg will attend the Atlanta Travel Show at the end of March with the Daytona Beach CVB, and he will attend Sun N' Fun in Lakeland March 28-April 2.

**General Discussion:** Ms. Elliott reported that there is now a Pierson Community Association.

Ms. Turner said she will keep the Board posted on what will be done to honor Doug Little, possibly a display at DeBary Hall. Mr. Wilson suggested adopting a manatee and naming it "Dougie." Ms. Turner also mentioned giving a photography scholarship in his honor.

**Adjourn:** With no further business; Mr. Wilson made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Patel. The motion passed unanimously at 9:49 a.m.