

**West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority  
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, August 16, 2023**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Present:** Bryn Adams, Sara Patel, Dave Wilson, Jen Armstrong, Karen Haught, Nicole Thims

**Absent:** Sue Elliott

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

**Also Present:** Laura Coleman, Volusia County Assistant County Attorney; Brenda Sidoti, Jamie Browder and Greg Otte, Benedict Advertising; Susan Shephard, West Volusia Kennel Club

**Call to Order:** Ms. Adams called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

**Call for Public Participation:** Ms. Turner announced that Nichole Thims from Hampton Inn & Suites - DeLand was appointed to our board; and welcomed and introduced Susan Shephard with the West Volusia Kennel Club.

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

**July 2023 Financials:** Ms. Patel gave the financial report. Ms. Haught made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Ms. Armstrong and approved unanimously.

**Discussion & Approval: Event Marketing Fund**

- West Volusia Kennel Club AKC Dog Show, September 22-24, 2023

Ms. Shephard presented an overview of the 49<sup>th</sup> West Volusia Kennel Dog Show to be held at the Volusia County Fairgrounds. Mr. Wilson made a motion to fund \$2,500 for the event, seconded by Ms. Patel and approved unanimously.

**Benedict Advertising & Marketing Report**

Ms. Browder presented an update on digital campaigns, website analytics, social media results and public relations for June-July 2023. Ms. Browder provided an overview of the what the different terms mean for the new GA4 website metrics. Total website users were 18,149, and mobile use continues to increase at 79.6%. Top users are from Miami, Orlando, Tampa, and Atlanta.

Ms. Browder reported on Facebook and Pinterest insights. Facebook lead generation for newsletter sign ups remain consistently high at 593 in June and 547 in July. The monthly newsletter database has reached over 13k.

Public Relations included coverage on Stetson Mansion, Blue Spring State Park, and the CoolCraft Trail Summer Beverage Competition.

**Executive Director's Report: July-August 2023**

Ms. Turner stated that the WVTAA 2023-24 budget passed at the Volusia County Council meeting on August 15, 2023.

Ms. Turner provided a recap of her diverse travel schedule in July and August to include:

- **ICAST (International Convention of Allied Sportfishing Trades)**, the largest fish and tackle show in the world and is being held at the Orlando Convention Center
- **POMS (Preservation on Main Street)**, Mainstreeters from all over Florida and Florida Trust for Preservation members, in Ocala.

- **FLOCC (Florida Out Coast Conference)**, the first and only conference focused on Florida LGBTQ tourism industry, in Tampa.

Ms. Turner presented an overview of recent events and meetings:

**EVENTS:** Desert Sage Grand Opening; Escape to Margaritaville at Athens Theatre; Tropical Nights in DeLand; U Pick at Spring Garden Vineyards; MainStreet DeLand Ice Cream Walk.

**MEETINGS:** Met with the intern for Central Florida Legends, Jayda Precil from Stetson; PIN call; Toni Hunt, a local economist from The American Way; Ashley Honshel from Rent.fun that operates kayak kiosks, including one in Lake Monroe park; Volusia Hispanic Chamber Board Installation where they announced their new brand: Hispanic Chamber of Central Florida; League of Cities meeting in DeBary; DeLand Chamber's Empower Women event; as well as their Business Market & Innovation Convention and Investor breakfast; Zartico Florida Partners Zoom and ZDOS training; VISIT FLORIDA Marketing Council; River of Lakes monthly meeting; Lodging & Hospitality Association meeting; Miles Partnership Webinar on RoadTrip and EV Travel; Lunch with Daytona Beach CVB new tour & travel sales manager; WedPros meeting and show; meetings with County Councilmen on budget.

**CoolCraft Trail Summer Beverage Promotion.** More than 350 people have voted for the People's Choice awards. Jamie Rich and Megan Zebouni from *Flamingo Magazine* visited the last week in July to judge both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks and made their choices. Staff is working with the Athens Theatre to have a press conference to announce the Summer contest winners and to also announce plans for CoolCraft Christmas, since the Athens holiday show is "White Christmas."

**General Discussion:**

None

**Adjourn:** With no further business; Ms. Patel made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Haught. The motion passed unanimously at 9:48 a.m.