

**West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority
Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 24, 2017**

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Dave Wilson, Sara Patel, Bryn Rawlins, Pete Arney, Cindy Sullivan(by phone), Doug Little, Susan Elliott

Staff: Georgia Carter Turner, Executive Director; Dena Scroggins, Marketing & Projects Mgr; Kristine Spence, Marketing Coordinator

Also Present: Charles Hargrove, Volusia County Deputy Attorney; Rene Adams and Michael Benedict, Benedict Advertising & Marketing, Erica Group, Sandra Boone, Ashley Hawthorne

Call to Order: Mr. Little called the meeting to order at 9:01am.

Call for Public Participation: Sandra Boone, Ashley Hawthorne, and Erica Group introduced themselves.

April Minutes : Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the April 19, 2017 minutes, seconded by Ms. Elliott and approved unanimously.

April Financials: Ms. Turner presented the financials and stated that collections for March are up 65K and collections for the year are up 13.6% YOY. Ms. Turner passed out the latest report from Mid-Florida Marketing. Ms. Turner stated that there is a big line item variance for the Jacksonville ad buy; however all other items look good. Ms. Rawlins made a motion to approve the financials, seconded by Ms. Patel and approved unanimously.

Ratification of New Hire: Ms. Turner made a short introduction of Kristine Spence and asked the board to ratify the hire of Ms. Spence as the new Marketing Coordinator. Mr. Wilson made a motion to ratify the new hire, seconded by Ms. Rawlins and approved unanimously.

Update from Benedict Advertising: Ms. Adams gave a recent activity recap and stated that the May e-blast had an open rate just under 40% open rate as well as a 5.7% click rate; both were well above industry average. Facebook advertising has continued with the new ad model resulting in 67 signups for the newsletter. Ms. Adams stated that she was able to get a great deal on a 3-day front page ad placement in the Jacksonville newspaper. Ms. Adams also shared the ad copy that was placed in Bus Tours Magazine. The ad is a co-op featuring a number of attractions throughout West Volusia.

“The Best of Florida’s Great Outdoors” was sent out by Mr. Turcol and hit the Yahoo wire. Over 3000 views of that article took place with over 215 postings.

Mr. Benedict stated that they have been working with Erica Group to develop a new campaign focused on the “Wings of the West”. The new campaign was inspired by the success of the DeLand Wings that were created by Ms. Group. For example, Skydive DeLand could have airplane wings, the Pioneer Settlement could have peacock wings, Blue Spring State Park could have firefly wings, Lyonia Preserve could have scrub jay wings, and so forth. Mr. Benedict stated that they spoke with Erica about becoming the “artist in residence” for a fee of \$5,000 and this would allow her to be available for press, promotional videos and design and development of 5 interactive murals. For videos and promotional events, she would be paid \$250/event. Another initiative that was discussed was the idea of an adult coloring book that could be sold online at visitwestvolusia.com as well as in local shops. Franklin, Tennessee had used a company called Made South that could produce the books at a cost per piece of roughly \$8 and use Ms. Group as the artist for all illustrations.

Mr. Benedict stated that Ms. Turner has expressed an interest in promoting area wedding venues to drive wedding related business. Ms. Turner stated that this is the #1 tourism promotion that she has been asked about when meeting with area attractions, businesses and communities. Mr. Benedict stated that they are envisioning a wedding guide that would have its own media campaign to include public relations and advertising and could also be handed out at wedding shows.

Mr. Wilson made a motion to approve the use of Ms. Group as the “artist in residence” and to move forward on the “Wings of the West” initiative, coloring book and “What’s Happening in West Volusia” video program, seconded by Ms. Patel and approved unanimously.

Executive Directors Report: Ms. Turner stated that she is continuing to meet with accommodators and partners as much as she can. She recently toured the Evans Fish Farm in Pierson and had also been a guest on the Big John Radio Show as well as attended the TDC meeting at the Ocean Center. We recently hosted a UK Media Group brought in by Visit Florida that included lunch at Genuine Bistro and an eco boat tour. Ms. Turner stated that staff has been working with Sailforth and Jackrabbit on some style changes and design issues. She met with Evelyn Stetler at The Villages about future opportunities, hosted the I-75 Welcome Center employees on a 2-day FAM including DeLeon Springs State Park and Mainstreet DeLand, attended the County’s Q1 Economic Development meeting at the airport that was focused on tourism. She also attended the Tourism Week Rally and various other events around Volusia County in recognition of National Tourism Week. She got her 3rd year in at the STS Marketing College and will receive her TMP (Tourism Marketing Professional) designation in March 2018. She met with counterparts at Orlando North, Seminole County’s tourism office, about working together in the future. She also toured the Florida Black Bear Scenic Byway with FDOT.

She received a letter from the budget office stating that the 2017/2018 anticipated budget will be \$555,088. Meetings with the County Manager will be in early August and budget details and powerpoint will need to be received by July 25th.

General Discussion:

Mr. Little stated that there was almost a Sunshine Law issue, so he wanted to reiterate that one person can’t call another person on the board to discuss board issues. Mr. Hargrove stated that he will do a Sunshine Law class at the July meeting.

New Business: None

Adjourn: With no further business; Ms. Elliott made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Patel. The motion passed unanimously at 10:27am.