

West Volusia Tourism Advertising Authority

Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 19, 2022

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Dave Wilson, Sara Patel, Sue Elliott, Bryn Adams

Remote: Pete Arney, Doug Little

Absent: Cindy Sullivan

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

Also Present: Laura Coleman, Volusia County Assistant County Attorney; Greg Otte, Brenda Sidoti, and Jamie Alexander, Benedict Advertising; Hunter Thames and Candace Battle, Holiday Inn Express DeLand South; Nicole Hogeland, Hampton Inn DeLand

Call to Order: Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Ms. Patel made a motion to approve that both Mr. Little and Mr. Arney have concerns and the Board agrees that they are exceptional circumstances and that they both be allowed to participate and vote remotely today. Seconded by Ms. Adams and approved unanimously.

Call for Public Participation: none

August 2022 and September 2022 Board Minutes:

Ms. Elliott made a motion to approve both sets as presented, seconded by Ms. Adams and approved unanimously.

September 2022 Financials:

Ms. Patel gave the financial report. Ms. Adams made a motion to approve as presented, seconded by Ms. Elliott and approved unanimously.

WVTAA Voting Policy: Ms. Coleman explained the reasons according to the State Ethics Board when board members should recuse themselves when voting on WVTAA funding requests. First being if a board member is a member or otherwise involved in an organization that is requesting funds; and second being a board member could personally benefit financially from the funded request.

Discussion & Approval: Event Marketing Funding

Florida Wine & Grape Growers Annual Conference, January 12-15, 2023

Ms. Elliott recused herself from voting on this request and presented on behalf of the Florida Wine & Graper Growers Association requesting \$1,000 to support advertising, and publicity. Mr. Arney made a motion to approve \$1,000 for the Florida Wine & Grape Growers Annual Conference with consideration of increasing funding to \$1,500 the following year based on event performance, seconded by Ms. Patel and approved unanimously.

Benedict Advertising & Marketing Report

Ms. Alexander presented an update on digital campaigns, public relations and upcoming projects. Ms. Alexander gave an overview of the Google Search and display ads for September as well as video ads on YouTube. Facebook continues to be the leading social source to drive traffic to the website, followed by Instagram and Pinterest. Website traffic totaled 6,647 visits. Top locations for website visitors out of the West Volusia area in Florida are consistently Orlando, Miami, Tampa and Jacksonville. Outside of Florida, Atlanta remained at the top of the list for website visitors in September.

Ms. Alexander showed examples of recent Facebook ads and campaign results. The campaign for newsletter generation captured 333 leads for September. Total page likes for Facebook is 19,104. The open rate for the October consumer newsletter was 24.34% consistent with the prior month. Top clicks were Halloween celebrations, Micro Marathon Pub Crawl, Latin Arts Music Festival and Lake Helen City Wide Yard Sale.

Ms. Alexander gave an update on the progress of the Bandwango CoolCraft Beverage Trail mobile pass which includes 326 lifetime signups. Top check-in locations for September included Trilogy Coffee, Hyderhead Brewery, The Lounge, Central 28 Brewing and Blue Springs Brewing & Riverwalk Pizzeria.

Public Relations included coverage for DeLeon Springs State Park, multiple articles on Cassadaga Spiritualist Camp and the CoolCraft Trail Summer Beverage competition, and announcement of Volusia Speedway Park Partnership with WVTAA.

Ms. Alexander displayed new ad campaigns for Pinterest, and she stated website development continues.

Executive Director's Report: October 2022

Ms. Turner mentioned a lot of time was spent preparing for the 2021-22 AUDIT which is scheduled for the week of October 31 as well as corresponding with partners after Hurricane Ian.

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

MEETINGS: MainStreet DeLand Board and promotions committee meetings; West Volusia Historical Society Board Meetings; Volusia Business Resources; DeLand Chamber's Women Empowered Dinner and Office Octane at Sanborn Center (new location); ECHO and Historical Preservation Board Joint Meeting; VISIT FLORIDA Post-Recovery call; Barb Shepherd talk at West Volusia Historical Society; Miles Partnership's "State of Travel" webinar; SATW webinar on SEO; spoke to DeBary Citizens Academy.

EVENTS: Attended the Crappie Masters National Championship in Grenada, MS, promoting January tournaments; DeLand Craft Show; Ship & Shore Travel Expo in the Villages; West Volusia Historical Society Annual Oakdale Cemetery Walk; DeLand Pride/Support Volusia ribbon cutting at new office; Taco Tuesday; "Young Frankenstein" at Athens Theatre; DeLeon Springs State Park 40th Anniversary Celebration; Drag Turnabout.

OTHER: Mr. Swanberg took the West Volusia Historical Society's Lake Helen/Cassadaga bus tour; he is also working on a CoolCraft Christmas promotion. WVTAA hosted 20 tour operators from TUI with Daytona Beach CVB. Staff also dropped off WVTAA and River of Lakes new brochures at Yulee and Pensacola Welcome Centers.

General Discussion:

Mr. Little reported that his business St. John Rivers Eco Tours will most likely be suspended through the end of November due to the high-water levels of the St. Johns River from Hurricane Ian, along with other boat tour operators in the area. Ms. Turner will send out information Volusia County resources.

Ms. Elliott shared that Pierson residents are having a scare crow contest with great response and are displaying them outside at the Town Hall. They also hope to have a Christmas Tree Walk in December.

Adjourn: With no further business; Mr. Little made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Ms. Elliott. The motion passed unanimously at 9:45 a.m.