



GCVB Board of Directors Minutes

August 26, 2020

Paul Duke Room/ Conference Call-in

Attendance: Members in attendance were Richard Tucker, Bert Nasuti, Tom Martin, Commissioner Jace Brooks, Commissioner Marlene Fosque, and Beth Hilscher. Members attending via conference call were Tommy Hughes, Laura Grams, Marcy Adams, Brett DeLoach, Dr. Mark Newton and Norberto Sanchez.

Also present were Preston Williams, Lisa Anders, Stan Hall, Robyn Ali, Jennifer Silas, Monte Ortel, Sondra Thomas-Moore and Katie Brejda.

Board Member Nick Masino was absent.

Call to Order:

Chairman Richard Tucker welcomed the group and called the meeting to order at 4:02 pm.

Adoption of Minutes:

Minutes of the May 27, 2020 meeting of the board of directors were previously forwarded to all board members for their review. Upon motion duly made properly seconded, minutes for the May 27, 2020 board meeting were unanimously approved.

Financial Report IEC/ GCVB:

The May, June and July revenue to GCVB has been heavily from the cities and a payment from the County was reflected in July. Expenses for these three months are less than half of the budgeted amount. The Payment Protection Program loan will be carried each month until it is repaid or forgiven, and reserves continue to be adequately funded.

Jennifer Silas provided the Board with a hard or electronic copy of the 2019 audit. Ms. Silas states that the financials are in line with generally accepted accounting principles. Additionally, based on forecasting and cost saving measures, we will be able to maintain reserves through the end of the year.

Preston Williams also updated the Board that in from a business perspective as it relates to public assembly venues and tourism, our organization has continued to find cost savings initiatives which include budget cuts, a staff pay cut, and staff furloughs. However, Mr. Williams did state that business will continue to pick up as it has in the Theater and Forum.

Chairman Tucker told the Board that the staff leadership has started their process for a conservative 2021 budget, and they have already included the County in the conversations for the budget.

GCVB Update:

Lisa Anders reported collections reports from the past few months have continued to go up, even though it is a significant drop from previous years. Ms. Anders reported a June Occupancy rate of 51% and July Occupancy Rate of 58%, both of which are higher than the regional comp set. Also, in this time there were 1,866 Definite Group Room Nights representing 25 pieces of business.

Ms. Anders stated that the Gwinnett Creativity Fund had their first Operation Grants and was able to successfully fund 100% of the eligible grant requests, \$51,000. Ms. Anders stated that the first round of Project Grants is currently underway with 9 project grant applications received. The process for these grants is very thorough which include site visits.

In Marketing Communications, Ms. Anders provided the Board with the most recent “Explore Gwinnett” visitor magazine. Ms. Anders stated that this issue is unique since it was completed while all staff members were having to work remotely. The first socially distanced “Seoul of the South” food tour will be held in September.

Ms. Anders state that Film/TV have begun to pick up with 8 productions in the past two months. Additionally, there have been 10-12 location requests weekly and 5 major productions will be moving to Gwinnett studios this fall to begin production.

GSC Update:

Monte Ortel reported that the sports industry is still trying to come back but is faced with inconsistency amongst leagues and facilities. Mr. Ortel stated that there are sports teams that are wanting to come to Gwinnett, but majority of the facilities are closed to outside groups or are limiting group numbers to under 50 people.

Mr. Ortel informed the Board that there are a few events in the next few months that will occur as a result of working with the IEC staff to create spaces for sports related events.

Mr. Ortel stated that in the time when there has not been a lot of sporting events, the Sports Commission has been able to focus on larger bids for prospected events in 2022 and 2023 to include USA Pickleball Regional and ACC Baseball.

IEC Update:

Stan Hall introduced Robyn Ali, Executive Director of Marketing and Business Development for IEC, to the Board. He stated that he hopes to introduce all of the IEC Executive Director’s to the Board and that they will give portions of the IEC Update.

Jennifer Silas gave an update on event income and expenses.

Year-to-date event attendance was 202,677 from 124 events.

Robyn Ali reports that while the facility had to remain closed for May and June it allowed for the facility to redo the policies and plans based upon the Governor's mandates. Ms. Ali updated the Board with IEC's new and extensive health and safety protocols.

Stan Hall reported that he challenged the Senior Leadership of the organization to identify those that could be the future leaders and has developed a leadership program called Project ATLS (Advancing Team Leaders Strategically). The first meeting was held last week, and the group heard from two speakers including Chairman Charlotte Nash that provided the group with a historical summary of the Center.

Mr. Hall gave a brief timeline for when the construction projects will be starting and/or completed. He stated that during the time the facility was closed, it allowed for the contractors to work without disrupting business and that there is a tentative date for Phase 1 of the Forum Expansion to be done in October 2021. Phase 2 of the Forum Renovation will begin in November 2021 and should be completed in December 2022.

Old Business:

Preston Williams updated on the projects stating that the Expansion and Renovation is moving along, and work is almost complete with the Central Energy Plant that will be an energy saver for the entire center. Mr. Williams also noted that there still have been good conversations regarding the Mixed-Use development and are waiting to get additional clarity from COVID-19's ramifications on entertainment districts.

Chairman Tucker reminded the Board of the unanimous vote regarding the CARES Act funding. Jennifer Silas stated that this reimbursement program is going to help with all COVID-19 related expenses and with the application submission a full list of expenses was sent in that helped grant funding.

New Business:

Chairman Tucker appointed a Nominating Committee to explore potentially renewing terms for expiring members and nominate the Executive Committee. The committee will consist of Tommy Hughes, Laura Grams, and Nick Masino.

Chairman Tucker also appointed a Budget Committee to include Marcy Adams, Bert Nasuti and Dr. Mark Newton.

Adjournment:

It was agreed that the next meeting of the GCVB Board of Directors will be held Wednesday, October 28, 2020 at 4pm in the GCVB Paul Duke Room.

There being no further business, Chairman Richard Tucker adjourned the meeting at 5:14 pm.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "P. Williams". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "P" and a stylized "Williams".

Preston Williams, Chief Executive Officer
Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau/Infinite Energy Center