



ST. TAMMANY PARISH TOURIST & CONVENTION COMMISSION
REGULAR BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 13, 2016

Chairman Daniel Schaus called the **Regular Board of Commissioners** meeting to order on Tuesday, December 13, 2016, at 2:00 p.m. at the St. Tammany Parish Tourist and Convention Commission, 68099 Highway 59, Mandeville, Louisiana.

Prior to the first order of business, Susan Nuss, of the Southern Hotel, representing the St. Tammany Hotel/Motel Association, was sworn in as a new commissioner, having been appointed at the December 1st meeting of the Parish Council.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT

Connie Born
Sharon Lo Drucker
Bonnie Eades
Mark Myers
Susan Nuss
Daniel Schaus
T. J. Smith, Jr.

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT

A quorum was present

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A MOTION was made by Mark Myers, and seconded by T. J. Smith, to approve the October 25, 2016 Regular Board Meeting minutes. **The Motion** carried.

TREASURER’S REPORT

Mary Anne Harrison presented the Treasurer’s Report for October and November, 2016. T. J. Smith made **A MOTION** to file the Treasurer’s Report for audit as presented. Mark Myers seconded and **The Motion** passed.

STAFF REPORT

- Donna O’Daniels, CEO and President, Christina Cooper, Manager of Marketing and P.R., and Tanya Leader, Vice President of Sales, gave the staff activities report.

OLD BUSINESS

► **EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT OF PRESIDENT & CEO**

-T. J. Smith made **A MOTION** to enter into Executive Session for discussion of this matter. Mark Myers seconded and **The Motion** carried.

-T. J. Smith made **A MOTION** to reconvene; seconded by Sharon Lo Drucker and **The Motion** carried.

- Mark Myers made **A MOTION** to accept and execute the Second Addendum to Employment Agreement between the St. Tammany Parish Tourist Commission Board and the President and CEO, with one change to Term of Agreement that was agreed upon in the Executive Session. Connie Born seconded and **The Motion** carried.

► **REVIEW SPECIAL REVENUE FUNDS REQUESTS**

The parish was awarded \$25,000 in Special Revenue Funds from the Tourist Commission in 2011 for exterior grade lighting for the pavilion at Koop Drive. All bids came in over budget and the funds went unused. They asked to use the funds toward design of the Performing Arts Center and asked for a change of scope. A motion was passed at the August 30 meeting requesting the funds be returned and follow standard procedure to award the funds at the December meeting. The funds were returned, and a public notice and press release were published in the official journal. There were two requests. St. Tammany Parish Government has applied for \$25,000 for the Performing Arts Center Planning

and Design. The second request is for \$25,000 from Recreation District #1 for the replacement of worn cushioned chairs. After lengthy and thoughtful discussion, Sharon Lo Drucker made **A MOTION** to award \$25,000, plus interest, to Recreation District #1 to replace worn chairs. **The Motion** carried, with Mark Myers abstaining.

NEW BUSINESS

► **PRESENTATION OF PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

- Donna O'Daniels introduced Judy Randall of Randall Travel Marketing. Judy has been in St. Tammany several times this year conducting marketing research which includes intercept interviews of visitors at hotels, attractions, etc. Judy said the reason we have a tourism board is because you are dealing with visitors' money in hotel occupancy taxes and sales taxes, and it is imperative that the money be used wisely. RTM conducted a Performance Review of the organization. They looked at governance, and one thing she would like to see is to have more tourism-knowledgeable people on the board such as restaurateurs, hoteliers and attractions, as well as business leaders who understand solid business practices. One thing that has changed since the last report is that we had a reduction in budget. As a result we suspended operations in several locations. We had staff at both state welcome centers which was effective, and we have now lost that presence. The hotels do not do a good job of distributing our visitor guides. This past week, she spoke with eight people from Canada that were in St. Tammany for a getaway and staying at a hotel in Slidell. She handed them visitor guides and they were excited, expressing that they had no idea what to do in St. Tammany Parish. Our funds have not increased since 2012 and we are losing ground. We went from receiving 62% to 25%. Judy compared marketing dollars spent per room for Monroe, Tangipahoa, and Houma and they are well ahead of St. Tammany and have less room inventory. The average for the entire state is also ahead of St. Tammany. Regarding reserves, RTM recommends that the STPTCC adopt a Board policy of ensuring an emergency fund of \$3 million and soliciting understanding from local and state elected officials as to the intent of the reserve funds. She also spoke highly of staff and recommended the STPTCC consider merit raises at the next review period.

► **UPDATE ON FLSA**

- Changes to Fair Labor Standards Act was halted at the eleventh hour. With a new administration it is looking unlikely that it will happen at all. The Tourist Commission had everything in place to conform to the new regulations. We will be working with the Executive Committee on the Policies and Procedures handbook to present to the full board.

► **ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2017**

- Sharon Lo Drucker made **A MOTION** nominating Thomas J. (T.J.) Smith, Jr. for the position of Chairman. Connie Born seconded. **The Motion** carried.

- Connie Born made **A MOTION** nominating Sharon Lo Drucker for Vice Chair and T. J. Smith seconded. **The Motion** carried.

- T. J. Smith made **A MOTION** nominating Mark Myers for Treasurer and Sharon Lo Drucker seconded. **The Motion** Carried.

► **PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2017**

- Proposed Regular Meeting dates for calendar year 2017 are: *Tuesday, February 21, 2017, *Tuesday, April 25, 2017 (includes Budget Public Hearing), *Tuesday, June 27, 2017, *Tuesday, August 29, 2017, *Tuesday, October 31, 2017, and *Tuesday, December 12, 2017. Mark Myers made **A MOTION** to accept the dates. Sharon Lo Drucker seconded, and **The Motion** carried.

► **AUXILIARY AGENDA**

- None

► **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

- Susan Nuss thanked the board for bringing her in as a member and said she looks forward to serving.

► GUEST COMMENTS

- Kathy Lowry said the Northshore Harbor Center was named by Convention South as one of the best places to hold an event in the state of Louisiana
- Kathy Foley said they have sold out the upcoming Breakfast With Santa event and it is a free event. They are hosting a cat show and also have a Lacrosse tournament and two big basketball tournaments coming up as well.

NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Board of Commissioners meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, at 2:00 PM, at the Tourist Commission Office in Mandeville.

ADJOURNMENT

Sharon Lo Drucker made A MOTION to adjourn and Mark Myers seconded. The Motion carried and the meeting adjourned at 4:55 PM.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted,

S/ Rae Shipley

Rae Shipley
Recording Secretary

S/ Daniel Schaus

Daniel Schaus
Chairman