

TRI-COUNTY LODGING ASSOCIATION

Thursday, June 24, 2021

The Tri-County Lodging Association met at 10:30 a.m. at the TCLA/CVB Offices, 985 KK Drive, Osage Beach, Camden County, Missouri.

TCLA Board Members Present:

Russell Burdette
Don Neuharth
Kay Samuelson
Jen Morgan
Brian Nivert
Sue Pierce
Fred Dehner
Gena Aldrich

TCLA Board Members Absent:

Carmen Larison
Nicole Kever Torres

Non-Voting Advisors Absent

Presiding Commissioner Tony Stephens
Presiding Commissioner Tom Wright
Presiding Commissioner Greg Hasty

Also, present were Lagina Fitzpatrick, Eric Homan, Heather Brown, Tracy McKinney, Bruce Vanderveld, and Laura Salamun.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:58 a.m.

BOARD, STAFF & GUEST INTRODUCTIONS

Sue Pierce welcomed Tracy McKinney to TCLA, and introductions were made by the group.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Gena Aldrich made a motion to approve the June 24, 2021, Board meeting agenda. Brian Nivert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None were made at this time.

MINUTES

Brian Nivert made a motion to approve the April 22, 2021, TCLA Board meeting minutes. Fred Dehner seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Bruce Vanderveld stated that the lodging tax collection report was included in the packets for review. This reflects lodging tax collections through April 2021, the lodging tax is up 14% from last year. Bruce Vanderveld feels that if the trend continues there could be close to \$1.7 million in lodging tax collections for FY21.

Jen Morgan shared Quality Inn had closed their doors on June 1, 2021. Russell Burdette questioned how many hotels have been lost in the area recently, Lake Lighthouse Inn was bought by Gary Prewitt to house workers for the summer months and no longer doing nightly rentals. Scottish Inn has been sold and at this time is still doing nightly rentals, no one is sure if that will change.

BUSINESS DISTRICT REPORTS

Russell Burdette stated that at the Miller County Business District Meeting Dina Dunklee from Versailles Chamber of Commerce was present to discuss the Olde Tyme Apple Festival. Dina Dunklee had inquired about attending the TCLA meeting on a monthly basis. Jen Morgan reviewed the amounts decided upon with the funding requests that had been discussed at the Miller County Business District Meeting. Sue Pierce has reached out to the new Mayor of Lake Ozark, Dennis Newberry, he would like to know when the meetings are in advance to be able to attend. Russell Burdette stated that he would like to meet with the new Mayor after the season.

Sue Pierce shared that at the Camden County Business District Meeting, all the funding or sponsorship requests had been funded at some level.

Brian Nivert reported the Morgan County Business District met in May and approved funding the Olde Tyme Apple Festival and the Bicentennial Celebration for \$1000 each. Brian Nivert also reported that a letter has been sent out to Jacob's Cave for the lack of collecting lodging tax since they have an RV park and campground. There is also one new member to report, DJ's RV Park.

LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Brian Nivert, Legislative Chair; Missouri Legislation concluded their session in May, the new budget goes into effect July 1, 2021, for \$35 billion dollars, \$20.3 million is for tourism. Bill SB 51 establishes provisions relating to civil actions arising from COVID-19 pandemic is currently awaiting the governor to sign.

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS AND REPORTS

Group Sales – Lagina Fitzpatrick reported the group sales report was in the packet, the number of leads is still down, however an increase in group sales activity is being seen. Lagina Fitzpatrick added that Tracy McKinney is starting to handle small group leads in the system and that is a huge help.

Event Committee - Russell Burdette, Event Committee Chair; stated there were no new events at this time. Heather Brown mentioned that the Best Dam Birthday Bash has a number of events taking place. The En Plein Air Art Competition, an event that is part of the Birthday Bash, will take place August 9 – August 14, 2021. This is a lake wide event brought to the area by Dr. Paula Brown of the Lake Fine Art Academy & Galleria with hopes to make it an annual fall event. Gena Aldrich commented that she loves that the event is different from what the Lake Area normally does. The Gala, which is scheduled for Saturday, August 14, 2021, is hoping to bring in 200 people to attend with 30 art exhibits. Thanks were given to Kay Samuelson with The Lodge of the Four Seasons for a partial sponsor of the event.

Fishing Tournament Committee – Lagina Fitzpatrick reported that at this time the only item to report was that the Bass Pro event was hoping to flip their dates in April 2022, regatta permits are not posted until November, it has been difficult to obtain the information to find out who has already planned a tournament for that same time period.

Budget Committee – Fred Dehner, Budget Chair, reported that the budget for TCLA needs to be approved. The business districts have approved their budgets for FY22. The budget breakdown which is listed on the last page of the budget handouts shows; marketing/media relations – 51.2%, group sales – 10%, operations (admin) – 8%, fulfillment (CVB partnership) – 20.3%, and payroll – 10.5%. Sue Pierce confirmed that the mortgage payment is in operations, Fred Dehner agreed, listed on page 2 item H3. Lagina Fitzpatrick commented the marketing line items are those suggested by the TCLA Marketing Committee. The TCLA Budget Committee met to approve the marketing spend and the budgeted line item. Laura Salamun asked if notices were sent out for meetings, Lagina Fitzpatrick stated that yes, all notices have been sent out, the meeting mentioned had taken place a few months ago, and budget approval was on the agenda for May; unfortunately, there was no meeting due to lack for quorum.

Sue Pierce asked for information regarding the Municipalities & Business Marketing Partnerships. Lagina Fitzpatrick responded that she had reached out to the City of Osage Beach, Miller County Commission, and several businesses about FY22 marketing partnerships. Bridal Cave approved a \$5,000 partnership, and The Barrett's (Wobbly Boots, Dog Days, and Shorty Pants) will be a \$3,000 partner.

Lagina met with the Mayor and City Administrator of Osage Beach. The city did budget for the \$25,000 marketing partnership however, some of the Alderman wanted to discuss what marketing lines items the funds were being used for. Lagina met with the CVB team, Heather, Eric, and Evan, to discuss ideas and creative pieces for the city. Lagina is going to present ideas to the Board of Aldermen on July 1st. Lagina mentioned she plans to bring in additional marketing partners next fiscal year. The turnaround time from when COOP funding level was received and the due date for the application this year was very quick.

Gena Aldrich inquired about the TripAdvisor line item. Eric Homan addressed this; the bulk of the money spent is for banner ads that display when someone searches Lake of the Ozarks. We also have some control over the destination page, and TripAdvisor have also added a dashboard that will give metrics for people searching the Lake of the Ozarks. Gena Aldrich asked if there was a way to find out which advertising option is the most successful and just go with that. Heather Brown responded it is an important to go after the new visitors to the area and work on retargeting on past visitors, Eric Homan added that it would be like throwing all your money in one basket and only getting one type of visitor.

Laura Salamun inquired about the staff salary and benefit line under group sales. Lagina Fitzpatrick responded those dollar amounts were not included under the payroll and benefit line. Fred Dehner agreed, stated that group sales is all that person would do and that at this time it is still an unfilled position. No other questions. Russell Burdette motioned to approve the FY22 budget. Brian Nivert seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Employee Performance Review - No report at this time.

Marketing Committee - Jen Morgan, Marketing Committee Chair, stated that the committee would need to meet soon to review FY21 KPI's and review the reports from Pandora and YouTube TV to see if we wanted to move forward with those marketing produces for FY22.

Website Committee Report - Eric Homan gave a report on the website. The numbers for the Vacation Guide and Restaurant Guide were up over last year. Eric Homan also noted that the SEM clicks are very high compared to other destinations, Russell Burdette inquired as to why, Eric Homan stated that was due to the search word “Events”. Eric Homan also reported that the Visit Widget went live before Memorial Weekend. The data so far regarding Visit Widget; 760 users, 2.49-minute average, 1049 sessions, and 6000 page views. Brian Nivert understood that CVB members would get a slot on Visit Widget, Heather Brown explained that Visit Widget is truly a tourist industry tool, categories are dining, retail, lodging, and marine. There are also events listed, and a whole trip can be planned from Visit Widget, just like the website. Heather Brown explained that CVB members get one listing free, if an additional one is requested and able to do, for example a resort with a restaurant would be able to be in both lodging and dining with an additional cost. Brian Nivert asked if Heather Brown knew how many CVB members were in multiple categories, Heather Brown was not sure due to the high amount that do have a cross over.

INTERIM DIRECTOR/PUBLIC RELATIONS

Lagina Fitzpatrick stated that a majority of what was on the report has already been discussed. Midwest Living with the Missouri Division of Tourism had been in the area and met with Heather Brown and herself for the article “Missouri Road Rally”, in the newest issue. Also, in the Midwest Spotlight newsletter that goes out to 50,000 people, mentions the Lake. Marjorie Beenders with Beenders-Walker Group contacted Lagina regarding Lake Golf Council sponsoring Coleman Concierge for a Lake visit. They stayed at Old Kinderhook and TCLA helped with dining. With this being the last season of Ozark on Netflix, there is discussions taking place with the Missouri Film Office for a landing page on funlake.com to have a self-guided tour of the areas that has been in the show; where an actor from the show visited, or a place that is now named after the show. Lagina Fitzpatrick also gave an update on the Best Dam Birthday Bash. The boat parade that was held on June 12, 2021, did not break the record, however there were several positives to come out of it; the boat parade started as a fund raiser and was successful at bringing around \$20,000. Fourteen different states had boats registered in the parade, and the Guinness World Records Adjudicator is a travel writer, who had never been to the Lake and would like to make a trip back down. Update on the fireworks display on August 10, 2021, there will be 10 locations, some on land and on barges, due to the issue of not being able to get ahold of enough barges.

CVB UPDATE

Heather Brown gave an update on the CVB, their new fiscal year starts July 1. Evan Lampe and herself went on the first photoshoot for the 2022 Vacation Guide. Heather Brown also reported that LOREDC is working with the Green Street project, which is a plan for work force housing to be built in the area. One is ready to start in Lake Ozark, just waiting for permits. Lagina Fitzpatrick stated she would share the information and letter of intent with the board via email and include it in the next newsletter. Brian Nivert asked Heather Brown regarding Jacob’s Cave and their membership since they are not paying lodging taxes. Heather Brown informed Brian Nivert that since Jacob’s Cave is listed as an Attraction with the CVB, their by-laws state that it does not affect their membership.

NEW BUSINESS

None

OLD BUSINESS

TCLA Committee Chair Appointments - Sue Pierce announced that at this time the committees need to have new chairs appointed. Group Sales – at this time Kay Samuelson will co-chair with Nicole Kever Torres; Special Events – Russell Burdette; Fishing Tournament – Bill Morgan; Budget – Fred Dehner; Employee Performance Review – Don Neuharth; Website – Jen Morgan; Marketing – Jen Morgan; Legislative Affairs – Brian Nivert. Lagina Fitzpatrick stated the next newsletter would include a section about the committees and asking for anyone who would like to serve on a committee to contact the TCLA office.

Other old business – At 12:09 p.m. a motion was made by Sue Pierce to go into closed session. RSMo Section 610.021 (3) Hiring, firing, disciplining, or promoting of particular employees by a public governmental body when personal information about the employee is discussed or recorded, Russell Burdette seconded the motion, the following roll call was taken to close the meeting; Don Neuharth – yes, Gena Aldrich – yes, Fred Dehner – yes, Jen Morgan – yes, Russell Burdette – yes, Kay Samuelson – yes, Sue Pierce – yes, Brian Nivert – yes. Absent - Carmen Larison and Nicole Kever Torres. At 12:33 p.m. a motion was made by Sue Pierce to end the closed session. Don Neuharth seconded the motion, the following roll call was taken to come out of closed session, Don Neuharth – yes, Jen Morgan – yes, Gena Aldrich – yes, Russell Burdette – yes, Brian Nivert – yes, Kay Samuelson – yes, Fred Dehner – yes, Sue Pierce – yes. Absent – Carmen Larison and Nicole Kever Torres. The motion passed unanimously.

Future Meeting Dates – Upcoming TCLA and Business District meeting dates are as follows:

TCLA Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 26th approximately at 10:30 a.m.
TCLA Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 23rd approximately at 10:30 a.m.
TCLA Board Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 28th approximately at 10:30 a.m.

There being no further business to come before the Board, Jen Morgan made a motion to adjourn the TCLA board meeting. Russell Burdette seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. The TCLA board meeting adjourned at 12:34 p.m.