

# Louisville Tourism Commissioners January 2022 Meeting By videoconference

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January 27, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. hosted by videoconference for Louisville Tourism, 401 West Main Street, Suite 2300, Louisville, Kentucky.

## **Commissioners Present:**

Sarah Robbins, Chair  
David Greene, Vice Chair  
Chris Poynter, Treasurer/Secretary  
Kate Latts  
George Stinson  
Laura Douglas  
Ryan Bridgeman

## **CVB STAFF & GUESTS**

Cleo Battle, Doug Bennett, Chris Kipper, Stacey Yates, Nicole Twigg, Zack Davis, Sonia Fong, Mike Shull, Althea Jackson, and recording secretary, Stephanie Skinner.

## **CHAIR WELCOME AND REPORT**

**Chair Sarah Robbins** requested a roll call by the recording secretary on videoconference to confirm a quorum. Once quorum confirmed, **Chair Sarah Robbins** called to order the meeting of the Louisville Tourism Commissioners at 3:01 p.m. Upon asking for a motion to accept the November 18, 2021, minutes as written. **Laura Douglas** made the motion; **David Greene** seconded. **Motion carried.**

**Chair Robbins** asked Chris Poynter to report on the latest meeting of the Finance Committee held prior to the Commission meeting.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Chris Poynter**, **Chair** of the Finance Committee along with **Chris Kipper** explained the following recommendation/approval made by the Finance Committee.

- **21/22 Revised Budget - General Fund**

**Chris Kipper** reminded the Commission at our last meeting back in November we would come back in January and request the additional funds of \$303,000 left from the original \$1.196 Million in Q1 2022. Our plan for those funds includes \$253,300 (84 percent) for Marketing Digital Awareness Campaign taking advantage of a broader awareness to NOLA, Austin & LA markets. \$25,000 for Client Fam Tour that will include around 20-25 planners, and \$25,000 towards Workforce Hospitality Career Fair, that we are currently in the beginning stages of planning with a target date of March 15 or 16. **Chris Kipper** then asked **Doug Bennett** to share some additional details. After a brief discussion. **Chair Robbins**

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called for a motion to approve the 21/22 General Fund Revised Budget as presented. A motion was made by **David Greene**. Seconded by **George Stinson**. **All in Favor. Motion Carried**.

- **PPP 2 Loan Update**

**Chris Kipper** gave an update on the PPP 2 Loan. An official notice was received for full forgiveness to the second PPP loan. Which is great news and is already reflected in the budget. No action needed.

## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Cleo Battle** you have my completed report in the board book but I would like to share a couple highlights. In December, the state awarded \$5.3 million to the tourism industry in the state. We are starting to get some word on how that will be disseminated here in the spring. Louisville being the largest city in the state, we anticipate getting a nice sized chunk of that 5.3 million that we will certainly put into some of the markets that Doug was talking about earlier but certainly excited to see the state support tourism. Next week. I will be in Frankfort for a couple of days along with the rest of the state tourism industry to lobby tourism dollars in the budget for next fiscal year. We will be meeting with elected officials to further our case for funding going into 2223 budget. Most everyone on this zoom meeting are aware of our Destination Strategic Plan that we started back in 2019 and completed at the end of 2020. Cleo shared the 7 priorities of the strategic plan and made a brief comment on the (TID) Tourism Improvement District Project and stated that David Greene would share additional information about TID later in the meeting. Cleo also shared some highlights on landing the African American golf Expo Forum for 2023. It's estimated we're going to have 1000 African American golfers come into the community for this, which is very exciting, and we have Shawn Summerville that also serves on our BTAC to thank for working with us and the Sports Commission in making this happen. Additional tradeshow and event photos can be found in my report. Please reach out if you have any questions about my report.

## **EXECUTIVE VP REPORT**

**Doug Bennett** gave an intro to the Tourism Improvement District (TID) project that will be led by David Greene and the Louisville Hotel Association. We have assisted LHA by targeting all hotels in Jefferson County with 51 room inventory or larger. The purpose of the TID is designed to help provide a stable source of funding for marketing design efforts but also help increase hotel occupancy and average rate. Doug then turned it over to David Greene to share additional information about the project and how it will benefit hotels city wide. There will be a separate board formed that will oversee the management of these funds to help support out industry.

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## **FINANCE REPORT**

**Chris Kipper** provided a brief update of the financial status to the Commission. The report covered the months of October and November. For the month of October transient room tax was \$1.6 million which was slightly above the revised budget. Total revenue that month \$1.6 million also slightly above. November, transient room taxes was \$1.1 million, which was below the revised budget by \$215,000, or -16 percent. Total Revenue also \$1.1 million and below the revised budget by \$199,000, or -15 percent. I will say on a year over year basis, transient room tax is still strong through November at 195 percent through November on a fiscal year to date basis, compared to the prior year. We do seem to rebound from that perspective. We also had some expense savings in these months, as well. Total expenses for October were \$1.1 million, below budget by \$91,000, or about 7 percent. Total expenses for November were \$1 million, below budget by \$94,000, or about 8 percent. Net Revenue for October was \$514,000. That was \$123,000 favorable to budget and for the month of November Net Revenue was \$94,000, which was \$105,000 unfavorable the budget. A near offset between those two months on a net revenue basis. We are still on track with the overall plan and the revised budget for the year through those two months.

## **DESTINATION SERVICES**

**Zack Davis** reported a great last six months compared to years past especially with Utility Expo and GIE. We had 241 events in those six months and about 550,000 attendees in the city. So that was a strong six months and as we look into the next quarter, we're still seeing events somewhat shifted, but we have 38 events with over 1000 attendees each, coming in the next three months which is still very exciting. There are some other details throughout my report that you can review, but I want to focus more on looking ahead with the Mid America Truck Show. This is the first time in two years and they're finally going to be able to celebrate their 50th Anniversary in March. I think they're sitting at about 75 percent right now. Zack also shared additional information about the Leave a Legacy and local programs with the commission before ending his report.

## **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

**Nicole Twigg** reported that the Tourism Development Team started a leisure travel recovery from an attraction attendance perspective. We ended mid-year at 1.6 million in attraction attendance as December, (which is July through December). That brings us to an incredible 68 percent of our fiscal year with only six months behind us versus 758,009 for December of 2020. That is an amazing 53 percent increase year over year for our top twenty attractions. Also from an attraction operations perspective there is exciting news to keep an eye out for that will be

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announced on February 1<sup>st</sup> from the Louisville Slugger Museum and Factory that remains confidential for now, but keep an ear to the ground for that news. Nicole also shared a few highlights on a few significant initiatives that her team has been working on since the last meeting in November and lastly, looking ahead, her team will remain out on the road promoting Louisville to leisure travel visitors. We have activations and outreach planned in February and March. In February, we will be at the Southeast Tourism Society's Domestic Travel Trade Showcase in Virginia Beach. Then we'll head straight to Chicago for their Traveling Adventure Show. In March, we'll be in New Orleans at the National Bourbon Festival.

## **MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS**

**Stacey Yates** briefly expanded a little bit on what Doug said with additional expenditures. He mainly covered it, but I want to point out page 65 of your board book. That's a little bit of the creative that we're currently running. This is an expansion of those campaigns. This will be an example of something that you might see if you're searching for something on TripAdvisor or one of the Expedia brands like VRBO or hotels.com. We'll tweak that just a little as the time goes, but that's the basic look. We will also have some video elements to support that. We do two things at the end of the year, which is normally dead space between Christmas and New Year's. We find that a lot of outlets will completely run the press release as we've written it. One of those is the convention outlook and what the year 2022 looks like. That ran a couple of places and inspired an enterprise piece by the Courier Journal. It was several pages long, including several quotes from Cleo, that really positioned us well in the community as David, Doug and Cleo go around talking to hoteliers about the importance of tourism and what it means to the community. The other one is the annual accolades. This is the holiday list of all of the things that were talked about in Louisville for the year. Everything from who has the best french fries, new hotels, great hotels, attractions, and then the general accolades like Louisville was the on the best of list. Sometimes these come up very organically, or from PR outlets working for chains themselves, and sometimes they're coming from a lot of pitching from our press office in conjunction with our New York PR firm. One that our New York PR firm landed for us and I am very happy to report was probably the biggest one was the Travel and Leisure accolade. Louisville came in at number 28 on the top 50 places to visit according to the Travel and Leisure for 2022. Stacey also shared some additional highlights from her department report.

## **CONVENTION DEVELOPMENT**

**Sonia Fong** shared some good news that was finalized in late December. Allison Joyce secured the Episcopal Church group, which is city wide for June 2024, and close to 20,000 total room nights and using the convention center as well as the YUM! Center with most of the hotels being utilized and because of that group it attributed to our mid-year sales goal of 105 percent. The team is really working hard and everybody's so passionate. Last month, we were in nine different

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cities. We were in Atlanta, New York, New Jersey, Boston to name a few. Thank you 21c for joining the Northeast Sales Luncheon along with our regional director, Elizabeth Berry in DC. We were also at the launch of the direct flight from Louisville to Austin and we hosted some clients for lunch, giving us another opportunity to be in Dallas, which is another huge market for us. In December my team went out to Philadelphia for IAEE, which we will have the pleasure of hosting later in the year. This is a time for us to showcase our industry to meeting planners and industry colleagues about what Louisville has to offer. You will be getting an invitation as the date gets closer. Sonia shared some additional department highlights and events from her department report.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

**Cleo Battle** reminded everyone that the next board meeting will be the presentation of the Budget/Marketing Plan for 22/23FY and that will take place on March 24, 2022. Our plan is for that meeting to be back in-person.

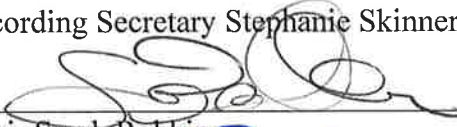
## **ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Robbins** with no other business can I get a motion to adjourn. **David Greene** made the motion; seconded by **Chris Poynter**. **Motion carried.** Meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes submitted by:

Recording Secretary Stephanie Skinner

Minutes approved by:

  
Chair Sarah Robbins

  
Secretary/Treasurer Chris Poynter