

# Louisville Tourism Commissioners July 2022 Meeting

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July 28, 2022, at 3:00 p.m. hosted at Louisville Tourism, 401 West Main Street, Suite 2300, Louisville, Kentucky.

## **Commissioners Present:**

Sarah Robbins, Chair  
David Greene, Vice Chair  
Kate Latts  
Ryan Bridgeman  
Guy Genoud  
Laura Douglas

## **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** after confirmation of a quorum the July meeting was called to order at 3:00pm. Upon asking for a motion to accept the May 26, 2022, minutes as written. **Guy Genoud** made the motion; **Laura Douglas** seconded. **Motion carried.**

**Chair Robbins** announced that we would not be following the agenda order. We will begin with the Finance Committee Report, and we will circle back to the Executive Committee Report at the end of the meeting, then directed the members to the first item on the agenda and turned it over to David Greene to report on the Finance Committee Meeting in Chris Poynter's absence.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

**David Greene** introduced the KICC Capital Improvement Fund (CIF) item and asked Chris Kipper to give an overview. **Chris Kipper** explained as an organization, we set aside a 1 million dollars every year towards the KICC Capital Improvement Fund. Those improvements are submitted to the Finance Committee for consideration. The Commission approved a KICC CIF request for FY 21/22 of \$304K. The items in that request did not get completed by the end of the fiscal year. They recently sent an update on those repairs with a new amount of \$285K, which is less than the original request. Today, we need to approve the change in the amount requested for repairs as an FY 22/23 budget amendment. **David Greene** called for a motion to approve an FY 22/23 budget amendment for the new amount in repairs of \$285K. **Guy Genoud** made a motion to approve. **Kate Latt** seconded. **Motion Carried.**

**David Greene**, that completes my report from the finance committee meeting.

**Chair Robbins** continued down the agenda and requested Cleo Battle to share his President's Report.

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## **PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

**Cleo Battle** shared a few highlights in his President's Report. We booked the National Baptist Convention, which was very exciting considering the idea grew out of our Black Tourism Advisory Council. I cannot remember the last time we have had a total African American convention. There was a lot of influence from BTAC group to get this across the finish line. This group will create 13K room nights for Louisville. As you can also see in my report, we were at the American Airlines Boston Activation. Stacey's team lead that effort. We want to continue to support the airport as they can continue to solicit new direct flights into the market.

## **EVP REPORT**

**Doug Bennett** shared some data from the Evidenz Research Group. We conducted a client perception study back in November, then we did it again in January. The survey was completed in early March and then two weeks ago we were given the results. The entire 55 slide deck from this study is available, but I am only going to cover 15 of those slides today. These 459 clients ranked Louisville against a stout list of 40 other cities. Louisville scored the 10th highest of the 41 destinations evaluated. We earned a rating of excellence in 6 of the 13 factors that drive the destination score. We're still perceived as a safer than average city. Doug continued with some additional highlights from survey.

## **FINANCE REPORT**

**Chris Kipper** reported on the months of April and May 2022. April was a very strong month for us. Transient room tax for April was 2.3 million which was up budget by 712,000 or 46%. That's the highest transient room tax for an April. Total Revenue for April was 2.9 million and that was up budget of 745,000 or 34%. If you look at May transient room tax for the month was 3.2 million and that was above budget by 989,000 or 45%. That was the largest single month we've ever had for transient tax of any month, which is our Derby month so you would expect some of our biggest months, but it was our largest May in history. Chris shared some additional highlights of April & May's expenses and revenue before ending his report.

## **CONVENTION DEVELOPMENT REPORT**

**Sonia Fong** was very happy to report that convention sales team and our CVB exceeded our room night goal by 114%. I want to thank everyone around the table for all your help and assistance because we can't do it alone without everyone's support and help. Our lead goals we accomplished 125% of our goal and site inspections were back to normal and our rate went up 201%. Sonia continued her report mentioning several events and groups including the recently confirmed group National Baptist Convention that will take place in June 2023 that will bring 16,000 people and 13,000 room nights. She also announced new staff members recently hired,

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Janel Thielen, National Sales Manager, Luz Orbaiz, Director of Southeast Sales, and Fatima Thompson, National Sales Manager.

## **MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**

**Stacey Yates**, we had a strong May in AVR. Everything from Billboard Magazine, Rolling Stone, USA and today celebrating the Boston Globe positioning the mint juleps, hot browns and anything Derby related that we normally take 3-6 months beforehand pitching- we cannot take any credit for Billboard Magazine and Rolling Stone. Those two fell in our lap as a city due to Jack Harlow. Stacey continued her report highlighting marketing campaigns, press releases, journalist visits, and pitch conversions for the month of May and June.

## **TOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

**Nicole Twigg** was excited to share a few quick updates from your tourism development team. I'll start with where we ended the 2122 fiscal year. Tracking July of 2021 through June of 2022. We ended the year at 3.4 million in attraction attendance versus just 2.2 million in the year prior which is 149% of our annual goal and a 50% increase year over year in attraction attendance. I think that speaks volumes of our attractions and distilleries servicing those guests. When you think about a 50% increase year over year with attractions and distilleries that are still rebuilding their own teams and their own capacities prior to what was in place before COVID, those are incredible numbers. At the VIC we were at 53,000 in Visitor Center traffic which is incredible considering the prior year we were at 12,800. We are at 121% of our annual goal for visitor center traffic. That is a 310% increase in just one year and the traffic we saw at the Visitor Center. Some of the most significant initiatives that your tourism development team has been working on since the last time we met include a lot of time in grassroots sales and outreach initiatives in our niche and affinity markets specifically in those that hold so much untapped potential. As we look to grow our LGBTQ and our African American visitation. Nicole continued with a few other highlights for the month of May and June before ending her report.

## **DESTINATION SERVICES UPDATE**

**Zack Davis** started off by saying we had a great year and we basically moved from having about 150 groups in our prior fiscal year to over 550 groups this year. One of our metrics is post-convention evaluations. This is where we get evaluated from the meeting planner on several things about our city and our staff. We received a 6.97 average rating on a scale of one to seven for the year which is almost a perfect score. Zack also shared stats on housing reservations numbers prior to Covid to present, a summary on market segments and community engagement.

**Chair Robbins** that concludes the main portion of the meeting. We are now going to move to the Executive Committee Report. We would like to excuse all staff except, Chris Kipper, Cleo Battle, and Stephanie Skinner.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

**Chair Robbins** started off by saying the Executive Committee reviewed and approved the President & CEO annual performance incentive, including extra effort incentive, during the Executive Committee meeting earlier this week consistent with the provisions in the contract.

Mr. Battle achieved 98% of the goals and objectives identified. The Executive Committee will review the President & CEO goals and objectives for the FY 22/23 fiscal year at its next meeting in September.

## OTHER BUSINESS

**Chair Robbins** we do have another item of discussion that was brought to the Finance Committee Meeting for consideration to restore a portion of the 21/22 Performance Incentive potential. After reviewing some additional data from Chris Kipper, we have agreed to present the topic to the Commission. I am going to let **David Greene** explain.

**David Greene** stated that performance incentives are split between two payments during the year. The first half of the fiscal year (Jul-Dec) is paid in January and the second half (Jan-Jun) is paid in July. The Commission approved performance incentives at 50% of potential for the Jul-Dec 2021 period and 100% of potential for the Jan-Jun 2022 period. Tourism has rebounded strongly in 2022, particularly during the last quarter of the fiscal year.


We want to have a discussion on whether to restore the 50% of potential during the Jul-Dec 2021 period to 100%. The cost to do this would be \$192,000. After some discussion, **Laura Douglas** made a motion to approve a budget amendment to restore incentive potential to 100% for the Jul-Dec 2021 period at a total cost of \$192,000 as presented. **Chair Robbins** then called for majority vote. **All In Favor. Motion Carried**

## ADJOURNMENT

**Chair Robbins** with no other business, I move to adjourn. **All In Favor. Motion carried.**  
Meeting adjourned at 4:15 p.m.

Minutes submitted by: Recording Secretary Stephanie Skinner

Minutes approved by:

✍   
Chair Sarah Robbins

✍   
Secretary/Treasurer Chris Poynter