

Jefferson County Board of Tourism  
7.25.22 6:30 pm  
Jefferson County Commissioners Office

Present: Dave Bramer, Jim Bartlett, Ron Bateman, Curtis Chatham, Trevor Crafton, Wendy Lawson (via phone)

Absent: Victoria Perry

Public: Bob Demaree, Lucy Dattilo, Sarah Prasil, Ellie Troutman, Taylor Rhinehart, Jess Spicer,

Dave opened with The Pledge of Allegiance. Jim motioned to approve last month's minutes, Ron 2nd the motion, all members approved, June minutes passed.

Treasurers Report: Curtis reported June Innkeepers tax collection of \$ 60,693.24, 1/2-year collection @\$258,138.89, still trending higher (25%) than record year of 2021. Curtis stated the balance 768,213.37, 2 claims, first is \$25,000.00 for Rodeo, & second is VMI marketing claim of \$5210.23. Jim motioned to accept claims as presented, Trevor 2nd the motion, all approved, claims passed. Jim motioned to accept the Treasurers Report, Trevor 2nd the motion, all approved, Treasurers Report passed.

Directors Report: Lucy reported that Andrew Forrester will be starting on 9.2.22, as the VMI Director, working remotely for a week, then on site on 9.8.22. Stated coming up, Ribberfest on the 19th, Neavills Grove Aug. 26, 27.

Marketing Report: Sarah reported on the Alliance, VMI hosted the meeting, good attendance, each organization spoke of what they were doing, reported good comradery, Dave & Michael attended as well as 3 members of JCBT. Stated that they will be working on collaborating ideas & bringing them to JCBT. Sarah stated that Todd Boone came back & provided some leadership. Ron stated that it was impressive to see the groups working together, Wendy emphasized the constructive work the group is doing. Trevor added that there were 18 groups represented. Taylor added that there were 2 new groups, one is the Cemetery, as well as the Lanier Mansion.

Sarah stated the highlight was the newsletter, 50.5% of open rate, click rate was 3.8%, both were above the average, proving the subject line is crucial.

Sarah discussed the Visitors Guide, which 2nd round of printing is happening, stated she is making notes of what is working for 2023. Stated she signed up for digital campaign, with Compass Media, added Crowdriff, as working on the budget, it is a 5% increase for next year & keeping it in the marketing plan & possibly doing a longer contract, which would save approx. \$1800.

STR report, comparing us to surrounding counties, occupancy rate is 67%, which we ranked 3rd, ADR is \$123.38 which is \$.01 behind Columbus rate, Sarah stated she will get with Andrew to familiarize him with this tool, she also said she has reached out to

them to see if they could be of assistance for the committee to increase the innkeepers tax, they have a onetime trend report that has helped other counties, stated she will round up the innkeepers to get their information, to have as many people reporting as possible.

Talked about a roundtable that discussed increasing innkeepers' tax, has the case study, and video that she has sent to JCBT members.

EIC report for the May car show, the number was \$700,000, also had a request from JPG for a rifle event, that event came back at \$85,000, still looking at how the impact works.

Stated that VMI is up 357% on page engagements.

Partner Proposal: Jim stated he is a sponsor of the Chataqua request, of \$50,000, projected budget is \$100,000-150,000, included the economic impact of \$6 million, factored in beds, with a projection of approx. \$350,000, additional in food & shopping, stated that they have not come to the board previously for funding. Curtis asked where the \$25,000. in marketing will go, Jim reported marketing has already begun with the vendors & the "ask" is for the consumers. Chataqua rep. stated that when Covid hit, that the marketing part of the budget was cut out, continued with explaining that the money they do have in their budget went to expenses necessary to physically make the event happen, that what they need now is the marketing to the public, but the budget has been depleted. Continued with that they don't have a specific plan for marketing but is in touch with Sarah to see what the best plan of action. Lucy stated that this is similar to what happened with Regatta in 2021 & would be carried out in a similar action. Chataqua stated that the budget this year is \$8500, which has been used. Normal pre-covid years, budget was approx. \$25000. Wendy asked what the revenue is for the event, they responded approx. \$35,000 last year, the deadline is the coming week for booth rentals, normal revenue is \$60,000. Trevor asked what JCBT has in the budget, Curtis responded with \$34,000, Wendy asked if there was a opportunity for any matching funds from other organizations, they responded that they will have \$15,000 in sponsorships. Trevor stated that there is \$34,000 in budget with a projected increase in innkeepers' tax, Ron asked how next year will be different, they responded that the artist number is increased & they are targeting different groups of artists from all over the US, with more variety. Curtis stated he has a hard time seeing how they can spend that amount in a 6-week period, Sarah said that is a lot of money for that amount of time, but they are also securing marketing for the next year festival. Sarah asked if it would be better to break up this year & next year to make a better determination on what needs to be spent for this year, then they could commit to those for next year & come back to ask for the next years commitments, Jim asked with this discussion, if JCBT would be comfortable with funding \$15000 for marketing, Curtis stated he would be comfortable with matching the \$8500 budgeted. Trevor made a motion to approve the Chataqua request of \$40,000, Ron 2nd the motion, Wendy, Jim, Trevor, Ron favored the motion, Dave & Curtis disapproved, motion passed. Dave asked that in the future to give the Board more time to look over the partnerships.

Ribberfest representative stated that they were not able to receive any monetary support from the City, has come to ask for additional funding, stating that without changing the budget, they will be approx \$70000 short. Curtis asked how the pre-sale is going, they stated that they are still in process, Sarah stated there was approx. 1400 online orders. Curtis asked what the \$17000 would go for, they responded with that will go towards the music portion, also added a new kick-off event, with a pub crawl, encouraging more participation. Trevor asked for them to come earlier in the year, with requests & budget, creating a better environment for the Board to be educated on the info. Lucy stated that these organizations are used to being self-sufficient, but with the last couple of years with Covid, the environment has been changed. They stated with this being the 20th anniversary, they wanted to do some extra things. Curtis stated that it was disappointing that the City didn't approve any funding, Ron motioned to approve the partnership proposal of \$17000, Trevor 2nd the motion, Curtis stated that it looks like he is against festivals, but that is not the case but felt there are funds out there, Wendy, Dave, Curtis disapproved the motion, Jim abstained for conflict of interest, motion failed. Dave asked for more information, with some numbers, after the event.

Ellie Troutman stated that the Rodeo is up and going, receiving some sponsorships, working on getting internet access at the fairgrounds, with the Rodeo going live on the Rodeo network, stating that will benefit the fairgrounds, also will donate to the Saddletree Factory. Ellie stated that they have gone outside the County for this event, the alcohol was approved by the fairgrounds, working with the excise to do this right, will have 60 camping sites for public, & 20 for the cowboys & cowgirls. Many of the food vendors that are at the fairgrounds have agreed to open for the Rodeo. Taylor added that on the Rodeo website, it links to VMI for patrons to see whats available in the County.

Public Comments: None

Curtis motioned to close, Trevor 2nd the motion, all approved, motion passed.

Wendy Lawson, Secretary