

MINUTES OF THE HATTIESBURG TOURISM COMMISSION BOARD MEMBERS & MANAGEMENT

Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center on:

February 22, 2017

Be it remembered that on the 22nd day of February, the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission met in a regular meeting at the Lake Terrace Convention Center, being a place fixed by law for such meetings. The meeting was called to order at **11:39 a.m.** by Frank James, Chairman of the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

PRESENT

Shelia Varnado
Cathie Price
Frank James
Marshall Bell
Bonnie Warren
Anthony Harris

ABSENT

ALSO PRESENT

Richard Taylor, Management
Bud Kirkpatrick, HCC Liaison
Jessica Cathey, Administration
Danielle Herrington, Administration
Doug King, Auditor

The meeting began with a special presentation honoring Dr. Cathie Price for over 20 years of service to the Hattiesburg Tourism Board. Dr. Price resigned from her position due to the fact that she is relocating to another state.

Minutes from Previous Board Meetings

Upon motion made by Shelia Varnado, duly seconded by Bonnie Warren and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes of the previous meeting.

Financial Report

Doug King presented the FYE 2016 Annual Audit. He stated that the audit showed the reporting of financial matters to be accurate. To ensure its continued accuracy he recommended the following:

1. The checking account for the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission be issued a debit card to be checked out by employees from the Accounting Department to decrease the need for reimbursements.
2. Removal of the Board Member signature stamp for checks.

3. Discontinue the acceptance of donations for Hattiesburg Convention Commission entities. (i.e. The Hattiesburg Zoo)

Rick Taylor informed the Board that donations are no longer being funneled through Hattiesburg Tourism accounts for donor tax exemption purposes. All donations are now going directly to the entity. After detailed discussion, a motion was made by Cathie Price, duly seconded by Marshall Bell to accept the Annual Audit as presented. All recommendations will be addressed under "New Business."

Rick Taylor presented a discussion of the FYE 2017 lodging tax receipts and presented the financial reports, including the current Claims Docket and budget. He reported that the year-to-date lodging tax revenue was running 4.8% below the same period of the prior year. He further explained that he has discovered that there is a need for someone to be employed to monitor restaurants' compliance with the sales tax. He has contacted the State Tourism Association in regards to the possibility of its funding this position. He added that all financial documents will be emailed to commissioners one week prior to the Board Meeting so that everyone has time to review the Claims Docket. Upon motion made by Bonnie Warren and duly seconded by Shelia Varnado, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote to approve the Claims Docket and Financial Reports as given.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss at this meeting.

New Business

Rick Taylor gave a brief history of the origin of the credit card for the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission. He explained that the card was originally issued in his name due to the fact that the Commission did not have a business line of credit in its inception. The credit card has since been cancelled. In following with the audit recommendations Rick Taylor requested that the Board approve a debit card be issued to be used for commission purchases and checked in/out from the Accounting Department Supervisor. He further requested that Frank James (Chairman), Danielle Herrington (Accounting Supervisor) and Salem Bunkheila (Director of Business Operations) be added as signatories for the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission associated accounts in an effort to eliminate the use of a Board Member signature stamp. He added that the Claims Docket will be sent regularly to the Board to be ratified prior to checks being cut. Lastly, he noted that any check written to an employee may not be signed by the same employee for added security. Upon motion made by Shelia Varnado and duly seconded by Anthony Harris, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote to approve the addition of a debit card for the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission associated accounts and the addition of Frank James, Danielle Herrington and Salem Bunkheila as signatories for the Hattiesburg Tourism checking account.

Rick Taylor requested that the Board authorize the sponsorship of the Camp Shelby Centennial Celebration Traveling Exhibition in the amount of \$10,000.00 to be applied towards brochures. Upon motion made by Bonnie Warren and duly seconded by Shelia Varnado, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote to approve the sponsorship of the Camp Shelby Centennial Celebration Traveling Exhibition.

Call for Other New Business

There was no call for other new business to discuss at this meeting.

With no other activities to report, upon a motion made by Cathie Price and duly seconded by Marshall Bell, and with unanimous approval of the members present, the meeting of the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission was adjourned.

Hattiesburg Tourism Commission

Frank James, Board Chair

Attested:

Richard Taylor, Executive Director