



SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA ADVERTISING AUTHORITY
Minutes of SVAA Board Meeting
Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Called to Order: Betsy Baker – Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

Roll Call: Debbie Meihls – CEO, did roll call.

Members Present: Betsy Baker, Donna Ruby, Richard England, Rebecca Simmons, and Chad Truxall. Not present: Jamie Dudley and Tom Clapsaddle.

Staff Present: Debbie Meihls, Elizabeth Gifford, and Mia Legarda.

Other Guests: Laura Coleman – Asst. County Atty. present via Zoom. Roberto Schaps – Relebrand, Aline Gill – ITI, and Franci Edgerly – ITI via Zoom.

Public Participation: None.

Approval of Minutes: Donna Ruby made a motion to approve October 26, 2021, board minutes. Rebecca Simmons seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Zach Chalifour, CPA Partner James Moore – Review of FY20/21 SVAA Audit:

- Zach Chalifour discussed the most recent annual audit for the FY20/21.
- Reported that there were no disagreements.
- Stated that there were a couple of odd adjustments, based on the 2-month tax revenue accrual because they started the audit on the 1st-2nd week of November before the numbers were finalized.
- Highlighted that from the numbers they obtained, there are some small adjustments due to the timing difference.
- He had no comments or recommendations to identify or report.
- Stated that the audit reports for the last couple of years are clean reports.
- Stated they issued an unmodified opinion that says the numbers are accurate.
- Stated that it has been a huge year, as expected, partly due to the post-pandemic nosedive of revenues.
- The start of the pandemic the tax revenues of 2.8 million and almost a 40% increase from the prior year over budget over a million addition to reserves, which is a very healthy level of reserves.
- Stated that we can make heavy strategic investments as we move forward because of percentage of almost 100% reserves of revenues in the current year.
- Zach asked if there are questions, Betsy asked if the money draws interest. Debbie responded that it does, and at \$83.00 per month. Debbie asked if we are allowed to do investments, Zach



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answered that there are government investment pools which returns have fallen off. Richard stated that it would have to be narrowly tailored, Debbie and Betsy agreed.

- Debbie stated that at the end of FY21/22, we are putting another half a million into the reserve balance and that's what we told the council we would do. Debbie stated that we have a heavy agenda that ITI and Relebrand will help us to beat last year. The county shows that for October our final numbers are \$181,000.00 for revenue and at 49% over last October. The last 8 months have been the highest on record.
- Debbie asked the board if we can make an update to the policy and procedures that states \$1,000 capital items according to the IRS rules, which stated \$5,000 or more for capitol depreciation and classification.
- Zach explained that this is to have a consistent accounting policy, as per the state and county. There is no direct IRS impact.

Chad Truxall made a motion to approve moving from \$1,000 minimum to \$5,000 minimum. Richard England seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

- Zach stated that the move from \$1,000 to \$5,000 does not change anything from a purchasing or spending standpoint, it's just the accounting.

Paul Ouimet, President & CEO - Next Factor Master Plan & Strategic Plan:

- Paul Ouimet presented the 10-year Master Plan which is what needs to be done to improve the destination and allows a community to take a strategic approach to COVID-19 recovery and that 2022 is the perfect time to do this.
- Presented the 6 phases of destination master planning:
- Project Planning & Management is a familiarization trip to orient the team with the destination and discuss how the project will unfold. Finalize a steering committee, project objectives, approach, timelines, and key milestones.
- Destination Assessment is a detailed examination of the current and future state of visitor economy and a thorough analysis of consumer trends and opportunities. Data and trend analysis and DestinationNext assessment.
- Stakeholder Engagement is engaging a diverse set of stakeholders; 12 one-on-one interviews, 6 focus groups, 2 community town halls, and resident survey.
- Situational Analysis is to prepare a synthesis and analysis presentation of our key findings to be presented to the NSBVB team and Board of Directors and summarize the current state of the tourism ecosystem as well as potential stewardship opportunities.
- Visioning Workshop is identifying the type of destination residents want to live, work, and play in, as well as the one visitor's wanting to experience. Identify key issues and opportunities that should be prioritized. Develop strategies to leverage a destination's key strengths, improve weaknesses and address issues



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- Plan Development is preparing the Destination Master Plan, vision, and framework for tourism in the destination, drafting the Destination Master Plan reviewed & validated, and ratification of the Plan.
- Stated that Strategic Plan development is a 5-year strategic plan for the NSBVB which elements are the vision, mission, goals, initiatives, targets, and values of the Bureau.

Betsy asked Debbie if the community support is behind us in things and what is her take. Donna stated that the last time we had trouble when we didn't approach the residents, just the community leaders and there was still trouble with response. Debbie responded that things have really changed in that during the Chamber of Commerce Economic Development meeting, which she is a member of its committee for 2 years, Bob Williams made a motion that the committee should hitch their wagon to what the NSBVB is doing and be a part of our plan, looking to us to be a guide to bring in the businesses, visitation, and residential leads since we are an economic driver in the area. Betsy stated that it couldn't have been clearer how the visitors impacted the economy until it stopped due to the pandemic. Paul stated that right now the 2 things that are consistent in most destinations are a lot of governments, community leaderships and residents realize and appreciate the impact of tourism in the economy, but they are seeing dramatically higher expectations from sustainable. Dealing with major infrastructure issues, Master Planning will help to provide political pressure to get something done. Debbie stated that she talked to the mayor of Port Orange and Oak Hill and the mayors of Edgewater's staff, and they are on board for trying the Master Plan because they want the help. Debbie stated that the cost on DestinationNext is \$125,000 and we worked out that with the 8 trips, it's probably going to be \$10,000 and Paul is working with us knowing the budget can fluctuate and if we could not pay that this fiscal year, it would roll over the next fiscal year.

Chad Truxall made a motion to move forward with hiring DestinationNext Factor Master and Strategic Plan. Donna Ruby seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Chair Report: Betsy Baker

A. Deborah A. Meihls Review:

Betsy asked Debbie and the staff to step out as well as ITI and Relebrand. Laura Coleman – Asst. County Atty. stated that for clarity even though people were asked to leave, this was still an open meeting, and the record is still available upon completion. Betsy stated that Debbie did research on salary comparison of the CEO position throughout the state of Florida, and they had agreed that Debbie will get the standard 3% raise that the county does for everyone. Betsy stated she thought that they need to make sure they are staying competitive with Debbie's salary with her experience level. Betsy asked for everyone's thoughts. Chad asked where Debbie is at in comparison. Betsy responded that Debbie's annual salary for FY21/22 is \$125,364.00 and that the salary is comparable to the budget that they



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managed. Richard stated that he does not find much of a relationship based on that. Betsy stated that the average in the whole of Florida is \$157,000.00. Donna stated that when Debbie was hired, the county gave them a salary range where they need to stay. When Debbie was hired, she was given the median range because she had a lot of experience, she has stayed in that range. Betsy stated that she thinks Debbie was given the higher end of the range and that she was head and shoulders above the other candidates. Chad stated that Debbie has proven that. Betsy stated that Debbie started with 3 weeks' vacation and now she has 5 weeks, in lieu of giving her a higher salary. Donna stated that when she and Debbie went for the budget approval at the county council, that they were praised how good SVAA is doing, and the county was all in favor with all the projects and she attributes a lot of that to Debbie. Betsy stated that nothing is misused and misspent and that they are lucky to have someone in Debbie's caliber. Donna asked if they would consider a 10% increase, and Chad stated that the increase still puts Debbie below the average, and he thinks Debbie is holding the board to a higher standard. Betsy stated that Debbie's performance has outshined the other ad authorities. Chad stated that he is very happy working with Debbie, and he agrees on a 10% increase. Richard stated that Debbie is doing a good job, but 8% is a no-brainer and 10% is a bigger ask. Betsy stated that they can always ask. Richard asked for clarification on the numbers and the raise percentage. Betsy clarified that the 8% or 10% will be on top of the 3% increase that Debbie received in October. Chad stated that going in the next fiscal year, he is comfortable with the 10% increase. Laura stated that Debbie received 4% the same as the county upon the new fiscal year. Chad proposes an extra 10% increase on top of what Debbie is currently making, they would give her 5% now for FY21/22 and to approve an additional 5% for next fiscal year FY22/23.

Donna Ruby made a motion amending, for current FY21/22, Debbie Meihls' base salary increasing it 5% Incremental on top of existing salary that was granted per the county (4%), starting October 2021. Richard England seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Betsy reminded the dates of upcoming meetings.

B. Treasurers Report: Donna Ruby

Donna stated that the year ended well, we funded our reserves to the limit that we projected and put another million in. we started October with \$1,478,092.20 in the checking account which is over and above the reserves. Salaries are the only items under-budget because we are looking for a Digital Manager. Donna stated the financials will be filed for audit.

C. CEO Report: Debbie Meihls

Debbie stated that October was up 49% over last October and closed with \$181,000.00 which brought the new budget up, the county revised it, and we are at \$2.5 million for this year. Debbie stated that the hotels have less rooms in the inventory but have higher rates. Debbie stated that Gov. DeSantis put \$50



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million for the budget in VisitFlorida. DMAP accreditation, we have the annual review to fill out, and they opened our renewal. Debbie stated she will get it done and submitted before starting on the Master Plan. With the Visitors Guide, Debbie stated that we are working on the final revision stage and have one more left. We are printing on 100% FSC paper for sustainability. Debbie stated that Jamie cannot be here today and has asked to look for his replacement due to the new Hyatt breaking ground soon. Betsy stated that if anyone has a recommendation, to bring it up to Debbie. Debbie stated that Fabiola from Victoria Waterfront is being considered.

Roberto Schaps from Relebrand stated that we are working a lot for this quarter, and he thinks the challenge is how to use the resources in the right way to be able to do better. He stated that we must get creative for the economic success of the area. He stated that Zartico is already helping. Debbie stated that if things go south, we will back up on the advertising.

D. Old Business: None.

Public Participation: None.

Board Comments: None.

Meeting Adjourned: 12:15 pm.



Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority
Board Meeting at SVAA Office
2238 State Road 44, NSB, FL 32168
December 14, 2021 – 10:00 AM -12:00 PM

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order:** Betsy Baker, Chairwoman
Roll Call: Debbie Meihls

Public Participation: Public Participation is limited to three minutes, unless otherwise granted by the Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority members

- II. **Approval of the Minutes** from the October 26, 2021, Board Meeting
- III. **Zach Chalifour**, CPA Partner James Moore – Review of FY20/21 SVAA Audit
- IV. Discussion and Approval – To change the policy for Capital Investments, i.e., equipment or office related purchases for depreciation from current level of \$1,000 to \$5,000. This is in accordance with IRS Rules and Principles. Recommended by James Moore & Co.
- V. **Paul Ouimet**, President & CEO – NextFactor Master Plan & Strategic Plan.
Paul will present the proposal for discussion and approval for SVAA to proceed with Master and Strategic plan projects - \$125,000.
- VI. **Chair Report** – Betsy Baker
- A. Review Deborah A. Meihls – continuation from Old Business, September, and October board meetings.
- Reminder of the upcoming meetings
 - **February 22, 2022**
 - April 26, 2022
 - September 27, 2022
 - These meet the statutory quarterly requirement for board meeting.

- II. **Treasurers Report** – Donna Ruby will discuss and present the following financials for approval for audit.
 - September Finals per audit
 - October Financials
 - November Financials

- III. **CEO Report:** Debbie Meihls: Mrs. Meihls will present the topline from her report. Special reports from Roberto Schaps, Relebrands and Aline Gill, ITI Digital

- IV. **Old Business:** Salary of CEO's from across Florida and the Destination International Survey of Salary & Benefits are in your packets.

- V. **Public Participation:** Public Participation is limited to three minutes, unless otherwise granted by the Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority members.

- VI. **Board Comments:**

- VII. **Adjourn**

2021/2022 Fiscal Year Meetings:

~~October 26, 2021 – Research: Zartico, Research Data, Sunshine Law Review.~~

December 14, 2021- Audit Results & Master Plan and 3 year strategic plan approval.

February 22, 2022 – Research & Advertising updates

April 26, 2022 – Budget & Marketing Plan Approvals: Remaining FY21/22 and FY22/23

September 27, 2022 – Year End Review and Workshop for FY22/23 Mktg.

***These meet the Statutorily quarterly requirement for board meeting**