



Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority  
NSB City Hall Chambers – 210 Sams Ave.  
New Smyrna Beach, FL 32168  
October 18, 2017 – 11:00 a.m.

### **WORKSHOP BOARD MEETING AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order: Betsy Baker, Chairwoman  
Roll Call: Debbie Meihls
- II. Executive Director's Annual Review
- III. Board of Directors' Annual Review
- IV. Discussion of Co-op Ad Fair
- V. Discussion of National Tourism Week and Annual Marketing Meeting
- VI. Discussion Special Events Grant
- VII. Vision: 3 Year Strategic Plan, Vision for Visitor Center, SVAA, Board
- VIII. Old Business/Public Comment:

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

- IX. Adjourn



## **SOUTHEAST VOLUSIA ADVERTISING AUTHORITY**

Atlantic Center for the Arts, Minutes of Workshop Meeting  
Wednesday, October 18, 2017

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**Members Present:** Betsy Baker, Mike Arman (arrived at 11:00am), Donna Ruby, Chad Truxall, Tom Clapsaddle, Erik Lumbert

**Members Absent:** Jamie Dudley

Betsy Baker, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Debbie Meihls called roll.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REVIEW**

Betsy Baker gave a summary of the reviews that all the board members submitted. She thanked the board for submitting them on a timely manner. From what she gathered, they are glowing reviews for Debbie Meihls. All the reviews are very positive, she is doing a great job with vision, staff and leadership. She is getting the 3% increase established by the county.

Donna Ruby requested the salary range they are using for the executive director's position. She would like to know if the salary is still in range. If the salary need to be adjusted, it will need to be done before the budget approval in April. It will be the time to review for the following fiscal year. Tom Clapsaddle requested to wait to discuss this until April of next year.

Chad Truxall asked if the 3% is the standard that the county approves. Donna Ruby said is the adjustment for the cost of living and sometimes they withheld it when the economy has not increased. Chad Truxall said that they have to look into having a range to adjust depending to performance review and adjust. Donna Ruby said it will not be the same every year.

### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS' ANNUAL REVIEW**

Betsy Baker indicated that most of board members are happy to be part of the SVAA board. Some of the feedback was that they all feel they have a good relationship between members. They want to express opinions and encourage other members to express their opinion. They want to be able to speak more freely. Betsy Baker said because they have to follow the Robert's rules of order and they have to pass motions, there is no time to express the ideas into depth. Some suggested to have more meetings, right

now they have 6 meetings a year. Special event grants meeting, trolley meeting or any other item brought to their attention, and workshop meeting. Six meetings at minimum and any other special meetings is a good number.

There was discussion regarding changing time of the meetings because it runs into lunch time, so maybe moving to 10:00am instead of 11:00 am. Have 30 minutes maximum per presenter/presentation. If there is going to be an ad campaign that needs to be presented, they should advise the board of the time is going to be schedule and it might need to be reschedule as a special meeting. All times on the agenda should have a start and ending time.

Debbie Meihls said that she came on board and many things had to be redirected. Things are falling into to place and everything should be better from now on. Now they have a full year of research, went out for RSQs for all the services they needed so everything should be running smoothly. The board requested 2 hours maximum per meeting starting at 10 am.

Tom Clapsaddle asked if for any reason the meeting needs to be extended for more than 2 hours, if the board member can be dismissed without counting against them. Giff Chumley said that as long as there is quorum the board member can be dismissed. Betsy Baker recommended public participation to be included at the beginning and at the end. Debbie Meihls requested to inform her or Vivian Swartz if any board member needs to be dismissed early, so they can tailor the agenda to accommodate any items that need to be voted on.

Roberto Schaps recommended to review materials before the meeting. Have an annual presentation with all the research and present it at a workshop.

Debbie Meihls said that they are having the marketing overview during November 2, and they will present all the numbers as part of being transparent and sharing with the industry.

Chad Truxall requested to add a glossary of terms in the portal such as direct expenditures.

Debbie Meihls suggested to move the workshop meeting to September or even August instead of October.

Donna Ruby express that she was not sure if they should evaluate themselves. Debbie and staff should be evaluating them as well and give them feedback. Tom Clapsaddle said that they still need to evaluate themselves, but staff could tell them what to improve as a board member.

**DISCUSSION OF CO-OP AD FAIR, NATIONAL TOURISM WEEK AND ANNUAL MARKETING MEETING**

The first Advertising Fair co-op took place during the National Tourism Luncheon in May. They had different media representatives present, it was for educational purpose. Many partners signed up for

advertising co-op worth \$10,000. They also sold ads on the visitor guide worth \$15,000 to offset the cost of the printing. Ocean Properties is giving out area guides with their logo. Half Wall wanted to do something similar, but they were not able to distribute it at their restaurants. Visitor guide opportunities will be offered. Soon this process will have automated features on the website.

Debbie Meihls asked the members to save the date of May 10<sup>th</sup> for National Tourism Luncheon, that falls on a Thursday, so it will not interfere with Bob Davis's breakfast. The theme will be sustainable tourism. They are part of the North American consortium through the UN World Tourism Office through the USF College of Global of Sustainability. Any practices they can submit to the UN will be shared with other countries. She would like to invite Sarbuland Khan to speak at the Tourism Lunch. City manager has invited her to be at their retreat for plans and marketing. She has invited Louis from USF to look at the plans and help have more sustainability.

Chad Truxall shared that they have secured a speaker, Wallace James Nichols, from the Blue Mind in case they were interested in having him at the luncheon. Individually they could do their part. It takes community level. Reduction is the best way to minimize waste stream. Chad Truxall suggested to invite to National Tourism Luncheon companies that offer greening programs to sign up and sell their services.

There was discussion regarding the creation of grants to support some sustainable programs. Regarding the special events grants they should be required to be green events with zero impact.

Debbie Meihls said that is why is so important the Ambassador program, creating a different program to get into the corporate mentality and become an important partner and leader in the industry.

There is a strong movement of people that are renting their places and using Airbnb. SVAA is taking the stands, working closely with cities, checking for permits on the DBRP licenses and removing the properties from the website that don't have a license. The Alliance group complains about traffic blaming the visitor out. Debbie Meihls said she is more concern about the 7,000 homes that are coming up.

Giffin Chumley gave an update regarding West Palm Beach and Airbnb, they were supposed to go to trial in July and was postponed to December. He added that they cannot be audited, they want to keep confidential the identity of the renter. Debbie Meihls said that 39 out of 67 DMOs in the state are already working with Airbnb. She also showed concern that Airbnb is acting as a DMO and coming out with a visitor, walking tours and co-op marketing.

Roberto Schaps gave some number according to Skift Airbnb is here to stay. The research shows that at least 50% of travelers are willing to stay at an Airbnb. High income travelers enjoy luxury hotels. According to next trip preferences, sun and beach trip was at 38%, and the urban culture and food trip was at 25%. This shows that they have the right product to offer.

## **DISCUSSION SPECIAL EVENTS GRANT**

Debbie Meihls said that when all the new properties are on board she would like to see a healthier event grant program.

It seems like the trolley project will be coming out of next years budget. FDOT grant was approved. Tony Otte is getting ready to send letters to the businesses in the community to ask for their monetarily help. He already had a few town hall meetings with some of the businesses, and so far, no one has said that they will take part on the project. The City will not take the grant unless there is a business match.

Debbie Meihls said that the current amount allotted for special event grants is \$125,000. She also suggested to maybe split the funds between signature event grant and regular events 60-40% each category. Signature events would be FishStock, Images and a Foodie and Wine events.

FishStock was moved to September as it was requested. Unfortunately, hurricane Irma came and the event had to be moved to a different weekend. They were able to have only a few of the programed vents. They had to postpone the Striker tournament due to unfavorable conditions and probably will be taking place in April or June. Donna Ruby said FishStock is owned by SVAA. She thinks it could be a weeklong event because the entire community is a fishing community.

Betsy Baker recommended to shop for event promoters. Debbie Meihls asked if staff could get more involved in those events. FishStock would be a good one to make it a weeklong long celebration and tied it with other events. It could involve all the other cities.

Roberto Schaps ask the question of what would it take for a signature publication to promote the events. He gave the example on how the food and wine festival started in Miami. Now they have Latin food festival, Miami Spice it used to be a month long and now is 2 months long. Restaurants pay \$1,000 to participate, in addition to marketing.

Donna Ruby made a motion to take over FishStock event, Mike Arman seconded. All members in favor.

Erik Lumbert recommended to leave money for outside ideas and events.

Debbie Meihls stated that all events should be generating hotel rooms stays and the media should be bringing attention to the destination. If it doesn't provide rooms they cannot be provided the funds because that is how they get the funding via heads in beds.

Tom has an issue with events like Jazz Festival that is not willing to promote other hotels in the area. Tom Clapsaddle made a motion to keep \$125,000 to fund events, Erik Lumbert seconded. All board members in favor.

All board member agreed to call Signature events those events owned by SVAA and allocate \$75,000 towards them. The only one at the moment is FishStock, the other events will be TBD (To be discussed) will be funded the rest of the funds allocated \$50,000.

All board members agreed that if proper documentation is not provided at the time of reimbursement, the event organizer or organization will not get paid. Accountability should be very important. If the invoice is submitted after 90 days they will not get paid.

Debbie Meihls stated that this is the problem with some events planners such as Flagler Avenue Business Associations and Southern Stone Communications, they don't submit the invoices on time and if they submit the invoice the backup is not available. Letters were sent to them letting them know that they are not complying with the requirements.

Donna Ruby wanted to know how the process will be when they are evaluating next year's events. Staff will be recommending the amount to be approved. Giffin Chumley explained that the recommendation is just a recommendation. The board makes the final decision.

Chad Truxall had recommended that if the application doesn't include all the technical requirements it will not be presented to the board.

There was discussion regarding requiring events to be green. Instead of requesting 10 copies, the application will be accepted as a PDF format that can be sent by email to staff, 1 paper copy and a digital copy on a flash drive. With this effort, the office is trying to minimize the use of paper. Events should avoid the use of plastics, have recycling bins available, give out canvas bags instead of plastic bags. NSB VB will provide a list of at least 10 opportunities on how events can be sustainable. The event should include at least 3 out of 10 opportunities to reduce the footprints and show they are taking the steps of becoming eco-green events.

**VISION: 3YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN, VISION FOR VISITOR CENTER, SVAA, BOARD**

Debbie Meihls said that they are going to compile all the research they have so far and have it available such as occupancy, ADR and RevPAR. It shows the Airbnb effect, as monthly margins have decreased, they know they are here.

Roberto Schaps said that the most important part was setting goals in the marketing plans, attacking and reaching them. Developing the overall strategies that will allow them to look at them in 3 years term. Long term tactics and goals are important as well as where they want the organization to move forward. Establish specific goals for the events.

Debbie Meihls explained about the sustainable tourism page to include partners that are working towards sustainable efforts. Partners will share what they are doing and highlight them in a special way.

Regarding the vision for visitor center they have different partners such as ACA, Marine Discovery, Ring Gallery, SpringHill Suites by Marriott, that have offered space to have a mobile/remote visitor center. They are also trying to minimize the amount of paper that is taken by visitor center and go digital. By having remote locations, they are trying to maximize visitors' stays because some of them don't even have reservations. Grace Realty has a small building on Flagler, she would like to check how much they want to rent it.

Roberto Schaps gave ideas of what some of his clients are doing. Miami has 20 visitor centers and the community wanted to be inclusive. Perhaps the city of Oak Hill would like to have a visitor center or City Hall. Create a pop-up visitor center on Canal and Flagler avenue. It is an opportunity to be closer to the industry. It could be close to hotels, stores, attractions, etc. This is so important because visitors are mini focus groups and they can ask how they got there.

Board Members agreed to create a popup visitor center to create an opportunity to be closer to the visitors. Perhaps a small trailer with awning. Giffin Chumley will look into options to see what they can do. He thinks that should not be a problem because is a mobile office.

Debbie Meihls informed that the lease agreement was sent to Giffin Chumley to be revised. The rent will remain the same. She is glad she did because the way the document was worded made her and Betsy Baker personally liable.

Roberto Schaps shared that they are working on a series of eBooks that go from weddings, sustainable, pet friendly, ecofriendly and sports.

#### **OLD BUSINESS**

Debbie Meihls mentioned that they have been monitoring their Facebook page. They had to block and hide the comments of some people because they were severely criticizing the SpringHill and SVAA.

Roberto Schaps asked if there was a way to get traffic numbers under Volusia County. Mike Arman said that yes, it is available on their website.

Debbie Meihls shared that Publix is having a \$20 million expansion.

#### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None.

#### **ADJOURN**

Meeting adjourned at 1:51 PM.