



VisitColumbusGA

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Commissioners Present: Lauren Becker, Chair; Jamie Waters, Vice Chair; Miles Greathouse, Secretary/Treasurer; Sherricka Day (Zoom), Dan Gilbert, Pace Halter, and Michelle Spivey,

Commissioners Absent: Amy Bryan, Peter Jones, and Mayor Skip Henderson

Special Invitees Present: Merri Sherman, Haley Tillery, and Ed Wolverton

Staff Present: Peter Bowden, Kim Gonzalez, Lacy Harden, Ashley Woitena

Call to Order.....Lauren Becker

- The May 2024 meeting was called to order by Lauren Becker at 4:01pm.
- Ms. Becker introduced special guests David Allred and Maghen Barranco with Stamp Advertising.

Secretary Treasurer Report.....Miles Greathouse

- Miles Greathouse presented the consent agenda -- minutes for the March and April 2024 meetings, as well as financials for March and April 2024. He asked if there were any questions or discussion. There being none, a motion was made by Dan Gilbert to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Jamie Waters. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

Chair Report.....Lauren Becker

- Ms. Becker asked the Board, that in anticipation of summer travel schedules, should the July 2024 meeting be moved or canceled. After a brief discussion, a motion was made by Miles Greathouse to forgo the July 2024 meeting, seconded by Michelle Spivey. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.
- The Board was informed that representative from Digital Edge would attend the June 20, 2024, meeting to provide an update and performance on the meetings and conventions campaign.
- Ms. Becker continued by explaining staff was aware of and watching the pending overtime legislative policy. If passed, it would not initially affect any of the employees, but may have to be addressed later in fiscal 2025.
- In celebration of National Travel & Tourism Week, the Board was invited to participate in the free lunches staff had planned. The meals are possible from a partnership with Frank’s Alley. The goals are two fold 1) to “lift up” the hospitality industry – hotel staff, attraction operators, etc. for their contributions and work

and 2) make the community aware of the importance of tourism as an economic development driver. The meals will be served May 22, 23, and 24.

President's Report.....Peter Bowden

- Ms. Becker then turned the meeting over to Peter Bowden. He began by providing a series of follow-ups from the April Board Meeting
 - o Great Wolfe Lodge Louisiana out of market attendance. Staff research suggested the Louisiana presence was possibly an anomaly due to a convention or sporting event. Staff asked if a reoccurrence was observed to report this and more data would be collected.
 - o Revenue vs. Expense. The report detailed 30-day, 60-day, 90-day, and 6-month operating budgets. After some discussion, a motion was made by Pace Halter to maintain a 90-day operating budget as reserve. The motion was seconded by Miles Greathouse. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.
 - o Photobank – staff continues its research to identify a platform suitable for sharing across various Columbus organization for the storage and use of photography and video assets. Once a platform is selected, VisitColumbus will license the platform and make it available to partners/stakeholders at no cost.
- Mr. Bowden then turned the meeting over to representatives from Stamp Advertising -- David Allred and Maghen Barranco, provided a case study of VisitColumbus' advertising investment over time, the results and how the organization continued to invest in advertising and promotion and its similarities with revenue; that as funds grew, so did the investment in advertising and promotion; with noticeable return on investment. The report included advertising spend to revenue for fiscal years 2019-current.

Adjournment.....Lauren Becker

With no further business, Ms. Becker adjourned the meeting at 4:50pm.