



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING  
Wednesday, March 15, 2023

**Commissioners Present:** Lauren Becker, Chair; Jamie Waters, Vice Chair; Amy Bryan; Sherricka Day; Pace Halter

**Commissioners Absent:** Miles Greathouse, Dan Gilbert, Peter Jones, Mayor Skip Henderson

**Special Invitees:** Norm Easterbrook, RiverCenter for the Performing Arts; Haley Tillery, Columbus GA Convention & Trade Center; Merri Sherman, Columbus Sports Council; Ed Wolverton, Uptown Columbus, Inc.

**Staff Present:** Peter Bowden, Shelby Guest, Kim Gonzalez, Joel Slocumb, and Ashley Waitena

**Call to Order ..... Lauren Becker**

- The February 2023 meeting was called to order by Lauren Becker at 3:33 pm.

**Approval of Minutes & Financials ..... Lauren Becker**

- Lauren Becker presented the consent agenda in Miles Greathouse’s absence -- minutes for the February 2023 meeting, as well as financials for February 2023. Ms. Becker asked if there were any questions or discussion. There being none, a motion was made by Jamie Waters to approve the consent agenda, seconded by Sherricka Day. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved.

**President’s Report.....Peter Bowden**

- Travel Writer Tour -- Shelby Guest reported on the upcoming Travel Writer Tour, explaining how Laurie Rowe Communication works with staff to vet writers that fit primary themes developed for the tours. Ms. Guest went on to outline the upcoming tours for March and May of this year as well as the October 2023 International Canoe Federation (ICF)World Championship.
- Legislation Impact -- Mr. Bowden introduced Norm Easterbrook, who reported on the legislation that would affect various arts organizations such as the Georgia Arts, Music, and Theater Production Acts, etc. Mr. Bowden explained pending legislation – SB 317 that would protect the use of hotel motel tax regarding local governments, destination marketing organizations, and the relationship with the GA Department of Community Affairs.
- Sales Monthly Recap -- Ashley Waitena reviewed the monthly sales infographic provided to the Board for review (see attached infographic)

- ICF Media Coverage -- Mr. Bowden updated the Board on the program of work to create awareness of the ICF. He explained that staff has worked with producers of the Great Family Adventure (GFA) reality television program -- a 30-minute episode of a family's experiences in Columbus, GA. This GFA episode will air on several media outlets for national coverage. Mr. Bowden also explained that the assets created will be available for VisitColumbusGA to use.
- GA Dept. Economic Development (GDEcD) Tourism Foundation Board Meeting -- Mr. Bowden gave a recap of Tourism Foundation Board Meeting that took place earlier in March. He articulated the importance that the meeting took place in Columbus, creating additional awareness of the destination and ties to GDEcD.
- Red Carpet Tour – The Board was made aware of the upcoming Red Carpet Tour and how staff was working with the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce on the event to develop an art and culture tour.

**Other Business.....Group**

- Sherricka Day discussed that the protagonist of the television series, The Bachelorette, is from Columbus, GA and how it could have a media impact for Columbus.
- Mr. Bowden offered that board member Dan Gilbert was absent because of his volunteer efforts in organizing relief efforts to the Ukraine.

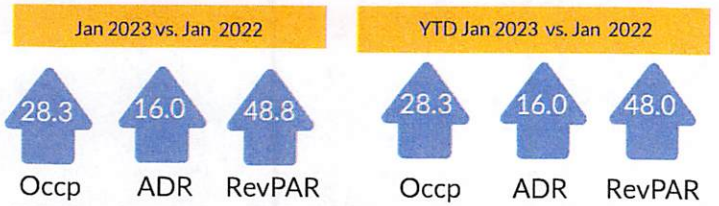
**Adjournment.....Lauren Becker**

With no further business, Ms. Becker adjourned the meeting at 4:21 p.m.

# Feb 2023 SALES TEAM RECAP

Goals YTD Meetings Held 152  
Leads Sent 40  
**Turned Definite 232**

## CITY-WIDE PERFORMANCE



## FEB 2023

Leads Sent **5**      Response Rate **35%**

REPRESENTING 2,571 ROOM NIGHTS



SITE VISITS = 3



ROOM NIGHTS = 1,246

ECONOMIC IMPACT = \$1.1 MILLION

## CLIENT SUPPORT



8 GROUP



7,156 - ROOM NIGHTS

ECONOMIC IMPACT = \$2.5 MILLION

## FT BENNING OUTREACH



196 PARTICIPANTS

## SALES



1,612 accounts  
submitted 14 proposals

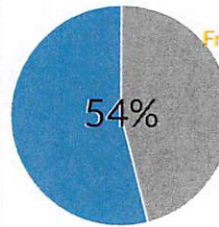
7,667 ROOM NIGHTS

THE RESULTS > over

# \$1.9 MILLION

ECONOMIC IMPACT

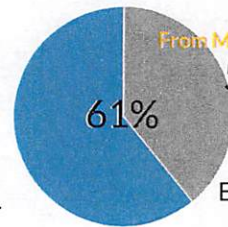
## TOTAL ROOM NIGHTS



From Leads Sent  
2,571

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$1.3 MILLION



From Meetings Held  
5,966

ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$2.7 MILLION

## POPUV VISITORS CENTER



320 TOUCHPOINTS



VisitColumbusGA