



STAFF REPORT
City of Dripping Springs
PO Box 384
511 Mercer Street
Dripping Springs, TX 78620

Submitted By: Laura Mueller, City Attorney

Council Meeting Date: June 6, 2023

Agenda Item Wording: **Discuss and consider approval of an agreement for Transfer of Operations from the Dripping Springs Visitors Bureau to the City of Dripping Springs.** *Sponsor: Council Member Parks*

Agenda Item Requestor:

Summary/Background: The Dripping Springs Visitors Bureau is a valuable asset to the City of Dripping Springs. The recommended agreement would have the DSVB board vote to cease operations after Songwriters Festival and later vote to dissolve. The City will have absorbed DSVB operations and employees. All Visitors Bureau expenses will be reimbursed by the current DSVB funds until the funds are fully expended. The current DSVB board will be offered initial board membership.

BENEFITS OF CITY OPERATED VISITOR'S BUREAU

- Provides shared marketing resources to create design elements of banners, website, photography, social media, video, etc.
- The brand of the city complements the messaging and branding we use to attract visitors. The city would continue to use the Destination Dripping Springs brand.
- Tourism is an essential source of job creation and economic activity, an aspect of the city that is vitally important for the city to thrive.
- The city would continue to promote tourism and the VB would serve as ambassadors to connect visitors-guests and the community, which is the DSVB's mission.
- Synergy between events sponsored by city and VB that attract tourism, such as Founders Day, Christmas on Mercer, Songwriters Festival, Dripping With Taste Trail, and Brewers Festival. And we have the

added benefit of manpower to help support them (maintenance, emergency management, volunteering mechanisms, mapping, etc.).

- Consolidation of Film Friendly, Music Friendly, and Bird City information and activities.
- DSRP connection - events there draw tourists.
- Parks are an integral part of attracting visitors, we oversee them, so there's that connection.
- Tourism affects the quality of life for residents and businesses. One of our main goals as city government is to maintain and grow the quality of life for our citizens.
- City currently has marketing expertise in business to consumer marketing, research, and analytics, and more.
- City staff able to help with all aspects of operating VB. This will free up a significant amount of the VB Director's time that can then be focused on primary duties and functions of the VB.
- Increased training opportunities: VB staff will receive training given to City Staff.
- City has a People Department (human resources).
- City has in house legal counsel.
- City Finance Department will assist with budget, and oversee expenses, receivables, and payroll.
- Use of CivicRec software for event and program registrations, sponsorships, and fees.
- Use of Incode Accounting Software to track revenues and expenditures.
- VB financial audit will be conducted as part of city's overall audit.
- City IT Director will oversee IT and provide support services.
- City staff can assist with VB website content creation and maintenance, and social media posts.

- VB will not have to pay for liability insurance since it would be under city's coverage.
- VB will have a reduced liability risk being part of city because it will have liability protections given to cities by law that are not given to other entities.
- VB could have a board, bank account, budget, and operate similar to DSRP Board, Founders Day Commission, or Farmers Market.
- Eliminate duplication of costs for things such as Constant Contact, Survey Monkey, Sign Up Genius, IT services, virtual meeting fees, and Hootsuite.
- City would store items in city facilities that are being stored in paid for storage space.
- City facilities would be available for DSVB use, such as conference rooms, meetings rooms, and special event rooms (occasionally, DSVB asks to use City Council Chambers and conference rooms for meetings, and has rented space at DSRP for events in the past).
- All city benefits eligible to VB employees, see attached summary of benefits: includes medical, dental, vision, basic life and AD & D, workers comp, retirement, holidays, vacation, sick leave, civic leave, bereavement leave, and Tuition Reimbursement Program.
- Continued transparency to the public and additional transparency to the public through compliance with Texas Public Information Act and Texas Open Meetings Act, as applicable.

**Commission
Recommendations:**

N/A

**Recommended
Council Actions:**

Approve the Agreement.

Attachments:

Agreement. PSAs for Pam Owens and Bonnie Humphrey

Next Steps/Schedule: Continue transition process through Council action.