

**MINUTES OF THE  
HATTIESBURG CONVENTION COMMISSION  
&  
MANAGEMENT**

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Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center.

**July 23, 2020**

Be it remembered that on the 23rd day of July, the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission met. The meeting was called to order at **12:10 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chairman of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

**PRESENT**

Jennifer Payne  
Aubrey Lucas  
Charles Brown  
Andy Stetelman  
Traci Rouse  
Clyde Bryant (via ZOOM)

**ABSENT**

Charlie Jones

**ALSO PRESENT**

Carey Varnado, Legal Counsel  
Rick Taylor, Management  
Salem Bunkheila, Administration  
Jessica Cathey, Administration  
Danielle Herrington, Administration

**Minutes from Previous Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Andy Stetelman and, duly seconded by Aubrey Lucas, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting.

**Financial Report**

Rick Taylor presented the current Financial Report including the Claims Docket for the Operations and Maintenance, Revenue and Capital Expansion Funds for ratification. A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Charles Brown, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the financial reports and ratify the Claims Docket as presented.

Rick Taylor presented the FYE 2021 Budget Proposal. He indicated that for the upcoming fiscal year, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Commission had to curtail previously allocated funds for several projects and include staff reduction for this new budget period. A motion was made by Charles Brown, duly seconded by Aubrey Lucas, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the proposed FYE 2021 Budget.

**Legal Report**

Attorney Carey Varnado informed the Board that he received correspondence from the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission HTC Attorney indicating that the HTC would like to accept the HCC's offer of donated office spaces

through the end of the calendar year. The HTC plans to relocate to other office and vacate the Visitors Center by the end of 2020.

### **Old Business**

Rick Taylor gave the Board a pandemic update of all HCC facilities over the past month. The Hattiesburg Zoo remains operational and the construction of the North West Quadrant is still in progress. The Lake Terrace Convention Center will be a COVID-19 Testing Site for the MS Department of Human Services on Tuesday, July 28, 2020. The Convention Center remains closed with the possibility of some small group meetings and an outdoor event in the upcoming months. The Saenger Theater hosted the Miss Hospitality Pageant this month, but does not foresee re-opening in the near future. The Eureka School will be the site for a private training program through the months of August, September, October and November. The Smith Drug Company building has been stabilized and the Commission is continuing with its rehabilitation. He also discussed a possible tenant for this building upon completion.

### **New Business**

A motion was made by Traci Rouse to consider going into closed session for the purpose of discussing whether to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing real estate contract matters. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

During the closed session a motion was made by Aubrey Lucas to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a real estate matter. This motion was seconded by Traci Rouse and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

No action was taken during the executive session.

A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas to exit the Executive Session, duly seconded by Traci Rouse and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Executive Session was adjourned and the regular meeting resumed.

The Commission reviewed a request from the Area Development Partnership to amend the current office space lease agreement component which places the Saenger Theater as a Presenting Sponsors of HUBFEST, and change this component to alternative sponsorship options because the ADP cancelled HUBFEST in 2020 and is evaluating this event for future years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Upon motion by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Andy Stetelman, the Board unanimously approved a motion to offer the ADP an amendment to the current lease agreement to exchange the current Hubfest Presenting Sponsorship (\$15,000) in lieu of (a portion of) rent for the same sponsorship value with the ADP becoming an annual sponsor of the Hattiesburg Zoo's LADHA'S CANTINA OVERLOOK (at the Zoo's new Giraffe exhibit) in the amount of \$5,000 per year for the remaining three years of the current lease. Further, the Commission agreed to include the following additional incentives to this exchange including private access to the sponsored site, special tours of the exhibit, sponsorship recognition and other use discounts for this site.

Rick Taylor presented the proposed renewal Hattiesburg Zoo Agreement between the Hattiesburg Convention Commission and the City of Hattiesburg. He informed the Board Members that this renewal contract was modified to align with the terminology in use in the Saenger Theater Management Contract and the USO Management Contract to remove the sunset clause. This renewal contract will offer both parties stipulated mechanisms to discontinue the contract agreement at will, thus eliminating the need for a specific contract end date. The same mechanism is in place in all other City-Owned/Commission-Managed facilities.

A motion was made by Andy Stetelman and, duly seconded by Traci Rouse and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the members present to approve the proposed renewal Hattiesburg Zoo Agreement.

**Call for Other New Business**

There was no other new business to discuss at this meeting.

**Operational Report**


All operational matters were discussed in the previous portions of the meeting.

A motion was made by Andy Stetelman to adjourn the Commission meeting. This motion was seconded by Traci Rouse and received a unanimous favorable vote, the Commission Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Jennifer Payne Chair

Attest:

  
Richard Taylor, Executive Director

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Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center.

**June 25, 2020**

***Previously scheduled March 26, 2020 and May 28, 2020***

Be it remembered that on the 25th day of June, the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission met. The meeting was called to order at **12:08 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chairman of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

**PRESENT**

Jennifer Payne  
Aubrey Lucas  
Charles Brown  
Andy Stetelman  
Traci Rouse  
Charlie Jones

**ABSENT**

Clyde Bryant

**ALSO PRESENT**

Carey Varnado, Legal Counsel  
Rick Taylor, Management  
Salem Bunkheila, Administration  
Jessica Cathey, Administration  
Danielle Herrington, Administration

**Minutes from Previous Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Andy Stetelman and, duly seconded by Aubrey Lucas, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting.

**Financial Report**

The FYE 2019 Audit was presented by Jabe Mills and Jamie McGinty of Topp McWhorter Harvey, PLLC. Jabe acknowledged appreciation for the Administration Department for thoroughly monitoring spending last year. He further discussed the complete audit with the Commission and advised that it was an "unmodified" audit, meaning the financial reporting and accounting was in good shape for the past fiscal year.

A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Andy Stetelman, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to consider going into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing the FYE 2019 Audit. A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Charles Brown, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to enter Executive Session.

No action was taken during Executive Session and the meeting returned to its regular format.

A motion was then made by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Andy Stetelman, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to receive the audit as presented.

Rick Taylor presented the current Financial Report including the Claims Docket for the Operations and Maintenance, Revenue and Capital Expansion Funds for ratification. A motion was made by Charles Brown, duly seconded by Aubrey Lucas, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the financial reports and ratify the Claims Docket as presented.

*Jabe Mills and Jamie McGinty exited the meeting.*

### **Legal Report**

Attorney Carey Varnado informed the Board that he has provided guidance to the Hattiesburg Convention Commission staff throughout the coronavirus pandemic with the implementation of the Family First Coronavirus Response Act, and the reduction of workforce.

A motion was made by Traci Rouse to consider going into closed session for the purpose of discussing whether to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a real estate matter. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

During the closed session a motion was made by Charles Brown to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing a real estate matter. This motion was seconded by Aubrey Lucas and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

No action was taken during the executive session.

A motion was made by Charles Brown to exit the Executive Session, duly seconded by Traci Rouse and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Executive Session was adjourned.

Upon motion by Aubrey Lucas duly seconded by Charles Brown, the Commission unanimously approved a motion that the current month to month oral lease of the Visitors Center space to the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission at zero rent continue until December 31, 2020 and that a six month written lease, beginning January 1, 2121, to the Hattiesburg Tourism Commission for fair market rental value would be considered by the Commission if the Tourism Commission desires to continue occupying this space after December 31, 2020.

### **New Business**

Rick Taylor requested that the Board ratify the execution of a contract with an onsite contractor for the construction of the DeBrazza monkeys' exhibit roof due to the fact that the construction was needed immediately. A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas to ratify the emergency order for the DeBrazza roof. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that Latoya Norman, Director of Museums, contacted the Oprah Winfrey Show to obtain footage of Oseola McCarty when she was featured on the talk show. In response to her request Harpo, Inc. donated the footage to the Hattiesburg Convention Commission for use in the Oseola McCarty House Museum. The donation is valued at approximately \$60,000.00.

Rick Taylor gave the Board a status update on the staff reduction, general services and project work across all Hattiesburg Convention Commission (HCC) facilities. He also informed the Board of all the community service activities performed during the pandemic. Lastly, he notified the Board that the Hattiesburg Zoo reopened Friday, June 5, 2020 with plans to reopen the Lake Terrace Convention Center, Saenger Theater and Eureka School in late July. The African American Military History Museum and Smith Drug Company are targeted to reopen October 1 and the Oseola McCarty House Museum will open in Spring 2021.

### **Call for Other New Business**

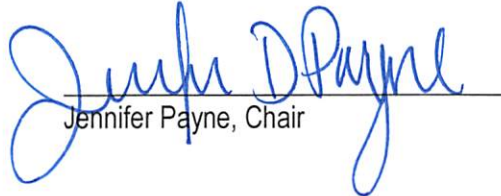
There was no other new business to discuss at this meeting.

## Operational Report

All operational matters were discussed in the previous portions of the meeting.

A motion was made by Jennifer Payne to adjourn the Commission meeting. This motion was seconded by Charlie Jones and received a unanimous favorable vote, the Commission Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:

  
Richard Taylor, Executive Director

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Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Lake Terrace Convention Center.

February 12, 2020  
*Previously scheduled January 23, 2020*

Be it remembered that on the 12th day of February, the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission met. The meeting was called to order at 12:10 p.m. by Jennifer Payne, Chairman of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

**PRESENT**

Jennifer Payne  
Aubrey Lucas  
Charles Brown  
Clyde Bryant  
Andy Stetelman  
Traci Rouse  
Charlie Jones

**ABSENT**

**ALSO PRESENT**

Rick Taylor, Management  
Carey Varnado, Legal Counsel  
Eduardo Baca, Facility Services  
Salem Bunkheila, Administration  
Jessica Cathey, Administration  
Danielle Herrington, Administration

**Minutes from Previous Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Andy Stetelman and, duly seconded by Charlie Jones, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting.

**Financial Report**

Rick Taylor presented the current Financial Report including the Claims Docket for the Operations and Maintenance, Revenue and Capital Expansion Funds for ratification. A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Clyde Bryant, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the financial reports and ratify the Claims Docket as presented.

**Legal Report**

Attorney Carey Varnado updated the Board on the ongoing correspondence between the Hattiesburg Convention Commission and the Department of Revenue (DOR) regarding Food and Beverage Tax receipts. He explained to the Board that a Freedom of Information Act Request was made and all documentation has been received. Attorney Varnado will respond to the DOR as requested by the Board.

A motion was made by Traci Rouse to consider going into Executive Session for the purposes of Real Estate matters. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

A subsequent motion was made by Andy Stetelman to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing Real Estate matters. This motion was seconded by Clyde Bryant and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

A motion was made by Traci Rouse to exit the Executive Session, duly seconded by Clyde Bryant and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Executive Session was adjourned.

The Commission requested its Attorney address an expiring lease of a Convention Commission building with the current tenants and the Commission's plans for future internal use of said property.

*Dr. Aubrey Lucas exited the meeting.*

### **Old Business**

Salem Bunkheila gave the Board an update on developments at the Hattiesburg Zoo and the surrounding areas. He explained the plans for the recently acquired properties along Camp Street. He explained that they have a cost saving value by being utilized as storage space for the Hattiesburg Convention Commission property. He explained that one of the properties has been offered as a courtesy to the United Daughters of Confederacy (UDC) as an alternate meeting location so that the new Kamper Park Playground project can go forward.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that the Hattiesburg Zoo has partnered with the City of Hattiesburg to revamp the Hattiesburg Zoo entrance through the Concart Street Sidewalk Partnership and the completion of the Zoo Bus Stop.

Rick Taylor gave the Board an update on the developments in the Sixth Street Museum District. He informed the Board that the City of Hattiesburg has acquired the Smith Drug building. He added that the renovation is in the planning stages and that he has met with the City of Hattiesburg Planning Department to outline the steps for this building's renewal.

The Eureka Interpretive Wall is underway. A request for proposals (RFP) is in the process being drafted. The Commission is now beginning the image design aspect of this project, while it is being bid.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that an Oseola McCarty Committee has met to finalize the plans for the home to begin renovation. He added that they are no updates on the Longleaf Trace spur; the land has been acquired by the City of Hattiesburg and they have been reimbursed. A ramp has been added to the USO outdoor Exhibit and Latoya Norman, Museums Manager, is following up on leads for military equipment.

Lastly, Rick Taylor informed the Board of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission has received interest in a sponsorship from Munn Signs for the Saenger Theater Alley Artwork Project. He explained that the project will begin after Spire Gas Company has completed work in the alley.

### **New Business**

Jennifer Payne announced to the Board that she has been in contact with Vision First about updating its staffing review for the Commission.

### **Call for Other New Business**

There was no other new business to discuss at this meeting.

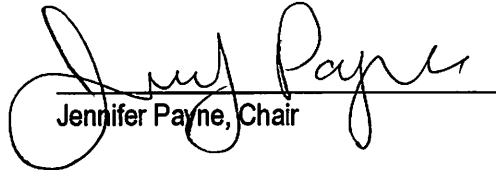


**Operational Report**

All operational matters were discussed in the previous portions of the meeting.

A motion was made by Andy Stetelman to adjourn the Commission meeting. This motion was seconded by Charles Brown and received a unanimous favorable vote, the Commission Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:

  
Richard Taylor, Executive Director

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Minutes of a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission of the City of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, held at the Asbury Discovery Center.

**December 5, 2019**

Be it remembered that on the 5th day of December, the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission met. The meeting was called to order at **12:18 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chairman of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

**PRESENT**

Jennifer Payne  
Aubrey Lucas  
Charles Brown  
Clyde Bryant  
Andy Stetelman

**ABSENT**

Traci Rouse  
Charlie Jones

**ALSO PRESENT**

Rick Taylor, Management  
Carey Varnado, Legal Counsel  
Eduardo Baca, Facility Services  
Salem Bunkheila, Administration  
Jessica Cathey, Administration  
Danielle Herrington, Administration

Jeremy Cumpston, Director of Conservation, Education and Wildlife introduced the Board to two new Hattiesburg Zoo staff members: Dr. David Hannon, Zoo Veterinarian and Matthew Fripp, Director of Animal Care.

**Minutes from Previous Board Meeting**

Upon motion made by Andy Stetelman and, duly seconded by Charles Brown, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to approve the Minutes from the previous meeting with a correction.

**Financial Report**

Rick Taylor presented the current Financial Reports including the Claims Docket for the Operations and Maintenance, Revenue and Capital Expansion Funds for ratification. During the discussion of the Food and Beverage Tax receipts Rick Taylor explained to the Board that the November tax check was down significantly from the prior years in the same period. A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas, duly seconded by Clyde Bryant, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to accept the financial reports and ratify the Claims Docket as presented.

A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas to consider going into Executive Session for the purposes of legal matters. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

A subsequent motion was made by Andy Stetelman to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing legal matters. This motion was seconded by Charles Brown and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

A motion was made by Charles Brown to exit the Executive Session, duly seconded by Clyde Bryant and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Executive Session was adjourned.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

### Legal Report

There were no additional legal matters to discuss at this meeting.

### Old Business

Rick Taylor informed the Board that the Oseola McCarty home has been moved and a porch for the home has been assembled. The Hattiesburg Convention Commission has committed to a ribbon-cutting event in October 2020 to celebrate 25 years since Ms. McCarty's donation.

Rick Taylor informed the Board of other proposed projects surrounding the Sixth Street Museum District.

A motion was made by Aubrey Lucas to consider going into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing real estate matters. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

A subsequent motion was made by Charles Brown to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing real estate matters. This motion was seconded by Clyde Bryant and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present.

A motion was made by Clyde Bryant to exit the Executive Session, duly seconded by Andy Stetelman and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Executive Session was adjourned.

No action was taken during Executive Session.

### New Business

There was no new business to discuss at this meeting.

### Call for Other New Business

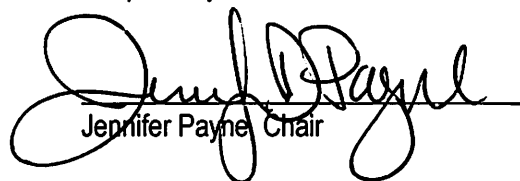
There was no other new business to discuss at this meeting.

### Operational Report

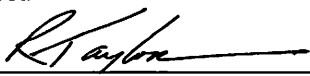
All operational matters were discussed in the *Financial* portions of the meeting.

A motion was made by Charles Brown to adjourn the Commission meeting. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote, the Commission Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

  
Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:

  
Richard Taylor, Executive Director