

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

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 on...

March 24, 2022

Be it remembered that on the 24th of March the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission met. The meeting was called to order at **12:10 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chair of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

PRESENT

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

ABSENT

Clyde Bryant

ALSO PRESENT

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

Minutes from Previous Board Meeting

Upon motion made by Andy Stetelman and, duly seconded by Traci Rouse, 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 informed the board that Big Mokey Trains, Inc. is the owner of the red diesel train currently being used at the zoo and is a sole source provider. 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 ratify the purchase of the red diesel train (engine, one ADA accessible car, three passenger cars and one flatbed car) from Big Mokey Trains, Inc. in the amount of \$98,000.00.

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 Andy Stetelman, 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.

Jessica Cathey, Director of Human Resources, informed the Board of a new recruitment incentive that was announced to the staff on March 21, 2022. Beginning immediately any present employee of the Hattiesburg

Convention Commission who refers another individual to the Commission to apply for any job, will receive an incentive payment in the amount of \$500.00, if the person referred is hired by the Commission and works continuously for a period of six months following the date of employment. Carey Varnado further explained the parameters of the recruitment incentive and his review and approval of the legality of both the program and the personnel policy documentation.

Legal Report

Carey Varnado gave the Board an update on the status of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) house at Kamper Park. He informed the Board that the UDC spoke favorably of the Hattiesburg Zoo in its deposition. He added that most likely the case would go to trial on April 12, 2022.

Old Business

Rick Taylor gave Commission project updates to the Board. He announced that due to the overwhelming public response, Smith Drug will be open to the general public every Saturday from 1:00 – 4:00pm. He added that RFPs are being prepared for construction of the Moeller Military Vehicle Museum to include an outdoor movie theater and courtyard. This project is scheduled to be completed this fiscal year. The HVAC repair for the Lake Terrace Convention Center is underway. The installation of the membrane roof is scheduled to be installed this summer.

Salem Bunkheila gave the Board an update on developments of The Lawn Amphitheater. He informed the Board that the construction completion date would be delayed due to the extended lead-time on materials. During this time, he continues to work on completing renderings and is pursuing potential sponsorships for spring 2024.

Salem Bunkheila informed the Board that the Hattiesburg Zoo waterpark is underway with a proposed completion of early summer of 2023. He added that the first payment to Whitewater West, Inc. has been paid.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that the Saenger Theater received a quote from a plasterer in Madison, MS for repairs to the ceiling of the theater and is now pursuing banner replacement professionals to complete the project taskforce.

Salem Bunkheila gave the Board a financing update. He explained that he was referred to the Banking and Finance Division of Butler Snow LLP to find the most economical financing solution. A motion was made by Andy Stetelman, duly seconded by Traci Rouse, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to authorize a financial advertisement up to 15 million dollars for future expansions under the guidance of Butler Snow.

New Business

A motion was made by Andy Stetelman duly seconded by Traci Rouse, and after a full discussion, there was a unanimous favorable vote of the Board to increase to 10 meetings per year according to the schedule proposed.

A motion was made by Traci Rouse to consider going into Executive Session for the purposes of personnel matters. This motion was seconded by Andy Stetelman and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present. A subsequent motion was made by Traci Rouse to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing personnel matters. This motion was seconded by Aubrey Lucas and received a unanimous favorable vote of the members present. The Commissioners present entered into Executive Session. Actions taken during Executive Session are found in the personnel files of Commission staff members. A motion was made by Traci Rouse 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.

The regular meeting reconvened.

Operational Report

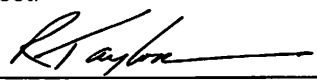
All operational matters were discussed in the previous portions of the meeting.

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

Respectfully submitted:


Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:


Richard Taylor, Executive Director