

**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...

April 28, 2022

Be it remembered that on the 28th of April the Board Members of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission met. The meeting was called to order at **12:15 p.m.** by Jennifer Payne, Chair of the Hattiesburg Convention Commission. The following Members of the Board were found to be present:

PRESENT

Jennifer Payne
Charles Brown
Andy Stetelman
Charles Brown
Traci Rouse

ABSENT

Aubrey Lucas
Clyde Bryant
Charlie Jones

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 Charles Brown, 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 Andy Stetelman, duly seconded by Traci Rouse, 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.

The FYE 2021 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 Traci Rouse, 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.

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 City of Hattiesburg has filed a summary judgement to dismiss the case. He reminded the Board that the outcome of the trial should not make any impact to Zoo operations. He added that he has met with Banking and Finance Division of Butler Snow LLP. A summary of that meeting was discussed later in the meeting.

Old Business

Rick Taylor gave Commission project updates to the Board. He informed the Board that an RFP has not been released for the Moeller Military Vehicle Museum. He is waiting on a quote from a metal company to use as a comparison for future RFPs. He added that the immobilized bike that was stolen from Smith Drug Company has been recovered. The Mississippi Historical Society met at Eureka this month and had a great response to the Sixth Street Museum District.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that the metal work at the Lake Terrace Convention Center is being repainted. The new chillers have been ordered and the air conditioning has been patched with hopes of it remaining stable until the new chillers arrive near the end of 2022.

Salem Bunkheila gave the Board an update on developments of The Lawn Amphitheater. He informed the Board that the construction is scheduled to start in the spring 2023.

Salem Bunkheila informed the Board about upcoming projects for the Hattiesburg Zoo Expansion. A design is being completed to be given to contractors for the development of a new alligator and flamingo exhibit. Rick Taylor added that funds have been budgeted to build a bridge over Gordon's Creek to create a future pathway to the Science Center.

Salem Bunkheila reported that he continues to meet with the waterpark consultants to select the name of the waterpark, signage, etc. He added that the HCC has hit all production milestones on time and the project remains on schedule.

Rick Taylor informed the Board that the air conditioning unit at the Saenger Theater has been delayed, but steps are being taken to patch the current system for use over the summer. He also noted that the City of Hattiesburg assist with the renovation of the 2nd floor are of the Saenger Annex, which is owned by the City.

Rick Taylor gave the Board a financing update and requested that the Commission authorize its management and legal counsel to solicit bids for an equipment lease of up to \$5.7 million. This mechanism for equipment leasing is authorized in state law and under the enabling documentation of the Commission. A motion was made by Andy Stetelman, duly seconded by Charles Brown and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Board authorized the HCC's Management to solicit an equipment lease purchase up to \$5.7 million for projects as discussed in the approved 2022 Budget and award such lease upon consultation with the Commission's Legal Counsel once bids are received.

A motion was made by Charles Brown, duly seconded by Traci Rouse and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Board recognized that through the lease equipment agreement the HCC would seek reimbursement for all eligible projects listed on the approved 2022 Budget.

A motion was made by Traci Rouse, duly seconded by Andy Stetelman and after receiving a unanimous favorable vote of the members present, the Board ratified the Capital Expansion wire transfer to Whitewater West, Inc. in the amount of \$1,046,805.90 and in accordance with the approved budget.

New Business


There was no New Business to discuss during the meeting.

Operational Report

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

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

Respectfully submitted:


Jennifer Payne, Chair

Attest:


Richard Taylor, Executive Director