



Board of Directors  
Regular Meeting Minutes

Date: May 24, 2022

Recorded by Sally Westendorf

**Board Members Present:** Karen Bobe, David Bodenhamer, Susan Boggs, Bill Brett, Robert Craft (via Zoom; signed off at 9:25am), Penny Groux, Glen Kaiser, Mac McAleer, Frank Reed, Tony Kennon, Mark Stillings; (a quorum was met)

**Board Members Absent:** Bill Bennett

**GSOBT Staff Members Present:** Laura Beebe, Kim Chapman, Joanie Flynn, Beth Gendler, David Greene, Jo Phillips, Michelle Russ, Sally Westendorf

**Visitors:** Dustin Gontarski (Compass Media), Gary Ellis (State Park), Matt Young (State Park)

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Glen Kaiser called the meeting to order at 8:30am in the conference room at the Orange Beach Welcome Center in Orange Beach, AL and via Zoom.

### **Board Meeting Minutes**

Bill Brett made a motion to approve the April 26, 2022 Board of Director's meeting minutes, seconded by Mac McAleer. After no discussion, the motion passed.

### **Consent Agenda Items**

During the April Board meeting review of the Consent Agenda Items was tabled due to the length of the meeting. The following Year-to-Date Consent Agenda Items were reviewed and discussed:

Beth Gendler reviewed the Destination Growth Indicators report with a few specific notes: both hotel and vacation rental occupancy numbers are down from last year, however revenues remain up. As well, the data show trends aligning more closely with 2019 figures.

Joanie Flynn provided an overview of the Communications Report, with a focus on 2019 vs. 2022 website comparisons for April and March. Of note, blog sessions were a good place to acquire referrals and there was a lot of traffic for event searches. Joanie explained an emphasis was placed on promotions for events and campaigns such as NCAA Volleyball and BEach

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SAFE. According to the 2021 Year-end PR Press Clippings report we had a slight increase in the number of articles at year end, but our reach was three times that of 2020.

Kim Chapman gave a brief overview of the H&I Report, namely that 80% of interactions during the month of April were face-to-face and there were a lot of requests for mailed information about our destination. Kim provided a shoutout to Welcome Center employee, Regina Andteron, who received praise from a guest.

Michelle Russ reviewed the Sales & Sports Report. The FAM meeting planner tour in April in collaboration with Perdido Beach Resort and The Lodge has already generated leads translating to over 2000 room nights. As well, she reiterated that NAIA track Championships were occurring during the upcoming weekend. Michelle indicated that NCAA Beach Volleyball ticket sales were record breaking (over 10,000), and as a bonus, the event received an extra 2.5 hours of TV time.

David Greene reviewed the Financial Statements, particularly noting tax revenues compared to previous year. David also noted that the organization has now collected the last of money from EDA grant.

Beth Gendler reviewed a handout with data recently published from the State of Alabama Tourism Department: Economic Impact Data for 2021. The report can be found at the following link: <https://tourism.alabama.gov/app/uploads/2022-Economic-Impact-Report-FINAL.pdf>

Karen Bobe made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, seconded by Bill Brett. After no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

**Action Items**

Beth Gendler presented an update and initiated a discussion regarding the amendment to CR 8 Land Purchase Agreement. Beth outlined a few key details about the property: that July 5<sup>th</sup> is last day to close; that the appraisal came in at \$6.4M. Beth also relayed that the City of Gulf Shores and City of Foley are in the midst of discussions to collaborate to build a road on northeast corner of parcel 2.

At the conclusion of Beth's update, Bill Brett made a motion to approve the signing of the addendum, seconded by Penny Groux. After no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Beth reviewed the details of a Letter of Support for AL DOT MEGA Grant Application. The Board requested to receive regular updates once the grant is received, and project plans begin to

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be made. The staff will coordinate with staff from the Mobile Chamber to stay up-to-date on the details.

Susan Boggs made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Karen Bobe. After no discussion, the motion passed with a vote of dissent from Bill Brett.

**Discussion Items**

Beth Gendler presented information regarding a petition to reopen the National Naval Aviation Museum to the general public. The petition can be signed here: <https://openourmuseum.org>.

Beth Gendler informed the board of a coming paper shortage, which will impact Board Report Packet development. Beth asked the board to consider receiving only an electronic packet. Moving forward, staff will survey each board member to determine individual preferences for printing.

Gary Ellis spoke about his retirement from the State Park, which is set for 6/3, and introduced Matt Young as his replacement. Gary offered his thanks to this board for their support of park and in his position. Several board members returned the thanks from to Gary for his hard work in the role.

Mayor Kennon provided a short update about the City of Orange Beach school system, which will officially be in the hands of the city on July 1, before the fall semester.

Glen Kaiser announced that Mac McAleer has decided to retire from his position on the board, which is set to expire in June. There will be discussions coming soon about a new appointee.

Joanie Flynn commented about a recent trip to Wyoming with members of GSOBT staff, as well as Commissioner Chris Blankenship and other employees from the State's Tourism office. Our organization will be hosting the Outdoor Writers Association of America (OWAA) Board of Directors meeting in 1Q23 and then will welcome the Annual Conference in Gulf Shores at The Lodge at Gulf State Park September 9-11, 2023. We will be co-hosting with Visit Mobile. More details about area and in-state tours to come.

**Adjourned**

Chairman Kaiser adjourned the meeting at 9:32am.

**Next Regular Meeting Date:**  
**June 28, 2022**  
**Location: OBWC**