

**Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
**Board of Directors**  
**February 24, 2016**  
**8:30 a.m.**

The Board of Directors of the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau met Wednesday, February 24, 2016, with Chairman of the Board William Mahoney presiding. The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. Mike Combs said the opening prayer.

**Review of Minutes** – Ron Jett made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 27, 2016 meeting as presented. Mike Combs seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

**Financial Report** – Treasurer Ron Jett briefly reviewed the financials included in the meeting packet. Shawn Pingleton made a motion to approve the financial report as presented. Chris Hamon seconded the motion. President/CEO Jeff Seifried stated the organization has traditionally placed excess administration funds from the TCED in a deferred revenue account. That is no longer the case. Any excess in administrative funds will go to the bottom line to reflect the year-end number. All approved. Motion carried.

**Membership Report** – Membership Development & Retention Manager Janet Akers provided an overview of the report included in the packet. We usually see more drops in the first quarter, but make up for it later in the year as businesses come back online.

Chairman Mahoney set a goal for the board and staff to meet with 100% of our membership this year. He will meet with 100 members and the remaining board members get 25 each. During these visits 80% of the time should be spent listening and 20% talking. Ask the members about their experience with the chamber and verify contacts at the businesses. Staff will send you talking points and questions to ask. If any issues come up please email staff so we keep track and follow up.

Ron Jett moved to approve the drop list as presented. Mike Combs seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

**American Bus Association (ABA) Update** – Chief Marketing Officer Leah Chandler provided an overview of the Branson show presented at the conference in Louisville. This was the 11<sup>th</sup> year of Branson sponsoring and the second year to host a breakfast show, which is more cost effective than the luncheons in the past. 31 community partners helped sponsor the breakfast attended by approximately 450 tour operators. The Haygoods and SIX performed this year and were very well received. A brief video of the show was presented in the meeting.

Lenni Neimeyer, Director of Leisure Group Sales talked about the sales effort and the notes she takes, which are on the portal for our industry partners to access.

**Articles of Incorporation Change** – While going through the loan process with the USDA, we realized a change needed to be made to the organization's Articles of Incorporation. Page 1, section III, reads,

“...and so that all men of good standing...” We need to strike “men” and add “people” in its place. Brad Thomas made a motion approving the change. Chris Hamon seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried. It should be noted that April 2016 will mark the 70<sup>th</sup> year of being in business.

**Legislative Affairs Recommendation** – The Legislative Affairs Committee recommends to the BLACC/CVB Board of Directors that a letter be sent to the Missouri Speaker of the House encouraging Rose O’Neill be named to the Hall of Famous Missourians. Brad Thomas made a motion to approve sending the letter. Chris Hamon seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

**Chairman’s Report** – Chairman Mahoney reported he and Jeff worked with the Downtown Branson Betterment Association to help develop their strategic plan. Downtown merchants want to see what our organization can do to help their businesses.

Chairman Mahoney encouraged board members to try to attend one Chamber event a month.

**President/CEO Report** – Members of staff will join other destinations to celebrate Tourism Days at the Capitol today and tomorrow. \$4.5 million was added to the state’s tourism budget, but it was taken out by the budget committee. A portion of the \$4.5 was to be dedicated to the MO Division of Tourism’s cooperative marketing fund. We are talking with legislators about it.

School start date bill discussion – This organization has not taken a formal position on the school start date in several years. We have been asked why we didn’t testify in support of a later start date in a committee hearing. Some board members expressed concern over school start dates moving up in August. Staff is talking with our schools and they are in favor of local control. Our lobbyists said the bill will not get through this year. Following discussion, Chris Hamon made a motion for staff to conduct research and present a white paper on it at the March meeting. Ron Jett seconded the motion.

Staff Update – Congratulations to Jennifer Langford with the Taney County Partnership who has been hired as the City of Branson’s new Communications Director. We are actively pursuing candidates to fill the position.

Congratulations to Liz Mabe who has been promoted to the Director of Digital Marketing for the CVB. ;

The next board meeting will be held at Big Cedar Lodge and will conclude with a tour. Big Cedar needs a head count for this meeting. We can stay for lunch if any board members are interested.

The Executive Committee discussed a membership drive this morning. We have a goal of obtaining net 100 new members. Our options are to have a ground game with staff or to bring in a third party. There are a couple of national companies who do this. They train volunteers and form working groups to go out and make calls. A proposal is forthcoming.

Jeff stated staff would like another 30 days for the proposal regarding establishing a task force for ticket sales on the ExploreBranson.com website.

H2B Visas – Staff is monitoring the current challenges with H2Bs. Senator Blunt is in a powerful position when it comes to the Department of Labor (DOL) and he’s working on it. We’ve been told the DOL is backed up due to lack of staff.

Workforce – A standing committee with the Taney County Partnership focusing on workforce will be reinvigorated March 8. Let us know if you’re interested in being involved.

This meeting of the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Present: Dathan Atchison, Mike Combs, Tim Connell, Clay Cooper, Chris Hamon, Ron Jett, Jamie Keys, William Mahoney, Patrick Parnell, Shawn Pingleton, Scott Skoglund, Angie Smith, Jared Story, Brad Thomas and Bill Tirone

Absent: Jeff Bourk, Randy Brashers, Bob Cox, Cliff Davis, Pam Druffel, Mike Pitman and Brad Swofford

Staff present: Janet Akers, Jonas Arjes, Leah Chandler, Monica Evinger, Cathy Hubert, Aaron McCullough and Jeff Seifried