

Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting
July 27, 2016
8:30 a.m.

The Board of Directors of the Branson/Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau met Wednesday, July 27, 2016. Chairman William Mahoney called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. Dathan Atchison provided the opening prayer.

Review of Minutes

Ron Jett made a motion to approve the minutes of the June 22, 2016 meeting as presented. Brad Thomas seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

Financial Report

Treasurer Ron Jett provided a brief review of the current financials. Chris Hamon moved to approve the financial report as presented. Brad Thomas seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

Membership Update

Membership and Community Relations Manager Janet Akers reported we have 157 new members. 142 are from the membership drive. We currently have 1,037 members and are still receiving applications from the drive.

Ron Jett made a motion to approve the membership drop report as presented. Chris Hamon seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried.

Membership Drive Recap

President and CEO Jeff Seifried offered congratulations to Mary Kellogg and Mike Pitman for being named the "Godmother and Godfather" of the successful membership drive. We were able to educate many people of the chamber's mission, etc. There was a lot of energy in the room and we heard from several that they'd been a member for many years and this was the first time the chamber asked them to be involved in anything. We will do another drive in two years and then be on an every three or four-year rotation.

Our retention goal is 50%. The average is 45%. Our one to three year members are the most vulnerable. The out-of-area vendor members are very vulnerable, too. Janet will now focus more on retention as we have seen a steady decline. The staff team has goals of going out and visiting with members and we are getting a great response from it. Chairman Mahoney commended Jeff for exceeding the new member goal.

Social Media ROI 2015

Liz Mabe provided and reviewed a handout with the total visitor spending as a direct impact of our social media marketing. Facebook: \$1,640,896, Twitter: \$1,083,966, Instagram: \$1,259,753

Taney County Partnership/Workforce Focused Update

Jonas Arjes and Heather Hardinger provided the update. Unemployment for May 2016 was 5.3%. It was 6.9% at the same time last year.

TCP received good media coverage recently with a positive spin on new development adding pressure to labor supply. Two new projects were able to meet their staffing needs.

The TCP website (www.TaneyCountyPartnership.com) now has a page dedicated to workforce and another where employers can post jobs to the framework free of charge. The jobs can be shared easily via social share link. Job seekers can browse additional opportunities via an indeed.com feed, www.Taneycountyjobs.com.

Heather is producing and sending out a workforce collaborative newsletter each month. The talent attraction and retention video is in final stages.

OnPoint is the TCP branded workforce initiative targeting talent and opportunity. We all need to work together.

130 responded to the employer survey. Of those 130, they cumulatively have over 930 job openings, which is about the same as last year.

Our communication strategy related to workforce is key to making it work. We need to drive people to the website.

Website Usability Study Update

Committee Chair Shawn Pingleton and Liz Mabe provided a recap of the book-it button on ExploreBranson.com. Currently businesses are able to choose where the “book now” button takes the consumer. The committee recommends the following steps moving forward:

- Business owners decide where the ‘book now’ button and ‘website’ button are directed.
- All marketing materials shall reflect consumers may purchase tickets using ExploreBranson.com.
- Chamber/CVB will create an RFP for a ticket sales company for those business owners who would like to use our white label.
- Guidelines will be created for businesses who wish to advertise on ExploreBranson.com.

Guidelines:

- The ‘book now’ button must directly take you to an online booking option.
- The ‘website’ button must go to the business website and not a third party company.

Positive discussion followed the presentation. The committee will meet with various groups before they ask this board to vote on the recommendations made today, including the executive director of the theatre league, the Tourism Community Enhancement District board and Branson Board of Aldermen.

It was noted it’s important to structure the agreement so whoever is awarded the white label process will maintain the integrity of the data and cannot sell the customer info. The committee will handle the RFP, not staff. The board feels good about going through this process. Jeff believes we’ll hear about the

change in advertising on the shows page. The native ads will be moved down on the page and we'll likely lose revenue on this. Native ads have the highest click-through rate.

Chairman's Report

Nominating Committee Appointment – Chairman Mahoney read the list of proposed nominating committee members. Brad Thomas made a motion to approve the committee, but remove Rachel Wood from the list. Chris Hamon seconded the motion. All approved. Motion carried. The board will vote electronically to approve the final member of the committee. The FY2017 Nominating Committee is: Mike Pitman, Pam Druffel, Craig Wescott, Renee Johnson, Curtis Ramsey, Pam Critchfield and Charlie Gerken.

Mid-Year Update

Jeff reported changes are coming to the community guide. We are adding economic development to the traditional purpose of our community guide for a more quality product. In the past Tri-Lakes Newspaper sold ads and sent it to all subscribers in the county. 417 Magazine has a quality product that meets our needs and it won't cost us anything to produce it.

Staff and several other Branson partners just returned from Texas Bandmasters Conference in San Antonio. Jeff described how he believes we can increase the quality of Branson presence, including a Branson alley on the floor where we are all together and not spread out

Branson Arts Council – Jeff referenced a note in a recent memo to the board regarding the need for a muralist. An all call for artists will be issued.

We signed a contract with the DBBA this week for marketing. A simple agreement was reached with their board to create and execute a plan for the organization.

Staff is in the midst of the planning process.

A committee has been formed to look at sports facilities. Even with Ballparks of America there is a large gap to be able serve locals and visitors.

Jeff is proud of how we are telling our story. The \$300 million economic development story you've seen was done by staff. This helps bring more visitors, investors and opportunity.

Explore Branson Tourism has been created to meet the TCED requirement, but not federally complete yet. It will be soon.

New Business

Chairman Mahoney stated he and Jeff have been talking for a while about the number of events we have each month. This may not be the wisest use of resources and we may be asking our members to do too much. Jeff asked staff to put a plan together. Thoughts include holding quarterly events and combining First Friday Coffee with Good Morning Branson. Shawn Pingleton noted it would be nice if members could purchase a yearly or season pass for the events and have the ability to pay online. Staff will finalize the recommendation and bring to the board for consideration.

December 8 is the first time the Missouri Chamber of Commerce will hold their annual meeting in this area, at Big Cedar Lodge. We need a good presence at this meeting.

Present: Dathan Atchison, Jeff Bourk, Bob Cox, Pam Druffel, Chris Hamon, Ron Jett, Jamie Keys, William Mahoney, Patrick Parnell, Shawn Pingleton, Mike Pitman, Scott Skoglund, Jared Story, Brad Thomas and Bill Tirone

Absent: Randy Brashers, Mike Combs, Tim Connell, Clay Cooper, Cliff Davis, Angie Smith and Brad Swofford

Staff Present: Janet Akers, Jonas Arjes, Leah Chandler, Monica Evinger, Heather Hardinger, Liz Mabe, Aaron McCullough and Jeff Seifried