

OCTVB Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 11, 2021 | 5:30 pm
Held via ZOOM

In attendance: Dean Bright, Casey Deming, Candice Meeler, Amber Deutsch, Stephanie VanDyck, and Deesha Hagwood

Absentees: Sarah Cumuze

Staff: Kristy Johnson, Joann Hubert

Dean Bright called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

Candice sent November Meeting Minutes via email. *Deesha Hagwood moved to approve; Dean Bright seconded—none opposed*

1. Financial Update – Kristy Johnson presented November financials, and mentioned we received the third quarter Hotel/Motel tax check from the County. December financials were still being finalized and will be voted on at the next board meeting. Everything is on track with budget.

Deesha Hagwood moved to approve November financials; Amber Deutsch seconded—none opposed

2. Directors Report

Kristy Johnson provided everyone with the overview for the months of November and December. She presented an opportunity to support the rebranding of the Antebellum Trail, which brings approximately 80% of our tourism in. Hardgrove International agreed to a \$60,000 project and surrounding counties are also contributing after two grants for the project fell through. The ask for Oconee would be \$5,000. Kristy said if we take out the ad for Southern Distinction (\$1,500) and forgo the money budgeted for Public Relations (\$3,000) we would almost be there. Dean Bright asked about the amount of say Oconee will have in the process should we contribute. Stephanie VanDyck asked if additional funding would be needed after the research process concludes. Staff said all counties represented would have equal say in the decision process, and grants would carry out the actual rebrand. Candice Meeler said that while she had not looked specifically at the financials for this, if we reallocated the marketing funding as proposed we should be within budget.

Casey Deming joined the ZOOM meeting

Deesha Hagwood moved to allot the \$5,000 in funding by reallocating those marketing expenses; Candice Meeler seconded—none opposed.

Numbers are continuing to rise –we were 60 people over 2019 numbers. Downtown haunted tours have completed their run and the Welcome Center participated in the December holiday festivities. Merchandise numbers for November (\$1,086) and December (\$2,051) exceeded 2020 numbers.

3. New Businesses

Status Market across from Oconee State Bank (Interior design) opened and Dominick's closed

Staff is working on a 2022 budget and plan of work. The goal is to present at the March board meeting. Staff is working on 2022 Visitors Guide. No redesign this year so it should be less expensive, and staff is working on ads to raise dollars. Kristy will attend the CVB conference at the end of January.

Candice asked about the UGA Public Relations project. Kristy said they did a great job, and one of the ideas she wanted to do was a “passport” for businesses. It would work like a punch card with some discount or prize once all participants had been visited. More information to come.

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, March 8 at 5:30 p.m.

Stephanie VanDyck moved to adjourn; Candice Meeler seconded – none opposed.

The meeting adjourned at 6:16 p.m.