

River Parishes Tourist Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
November 7, 2011

Meeting Attendance

Present: Dolores Florent, Betty Haydel, Angie Matherne, Judy Songy, Nicolle Veillon

Absent: Paul Aucoin, Peter Jasper

Staff: Coy St. Pierre, Jay Tusa

Stakeholders/Guests: Sherry Constance, Jane Heltz (Quality Inn), Norman Marmillion (Laura Plantation), Cathy Matherne (Airboat Tours by Arthur), Rita Perriloux (Our Lady of Grace Church), Wynne Waltman (Graham Group)

I. Call to order

Vice-Chair Judy Songy asked that roll be taken; recognized a quorum and called the meeting to order.

II. Approval of October Minutes

- Judy asked for a motion to approve the October minutes
- Angie Matherne asked if the meeting minutes along with the agenda and any other documents could be sent prior to the meeting so that it can be reviewed ahead of time
- Jay stated that wouldn't be a problem and made note of it for next meeting

*A motion was made by Nicole Veillon and seconded by Dolores Florent to approve the October minutes. The motion was unanimously approved.*

III. Monthly Financial Reports

- Judy deferred the financials to Jay
- Jay reported that current assets were \$261,140 in cash and \$500,000 in a CD
- Total Assets for the month ending October 31, 2011 were \$767,805

RPTC Mtg. Minutes

Nov 7, 2011/pg 2

- Jay noted we had a \$20,000 increase from last month
- Actual for income was \$25,499 with \$28,211 budgeted
- Under *Expenses – Program Services* for 1 month ended, actual was \$2,546 with \$20,418 budgeted
- Jay explained the difference in the figures was due to payments not hitting in the months allocated such as printing and production and professional fees
- Under *Salaries and Benefits*, Jay explained we must have received the Blue Cross invoice late since actual is reflecting a zero amount therefore next month it could show double
- Under *General & Administrative* we were \$37.00 over budget

*A motion was made by Betty Haydel and seconded by Nicole Veillon to approve the October financials. The motion was unanimously approved.*

- Jay reviewed the charts for the three parishes showing the monthly income
- Jay reviewed the Hotel/Motel chart showing current year actual to budget and prior year actual
- Chart shows we're a little down from what we've projected but nothing to be concerned with

*A motion was made by Betty Haydel and seconded by Nicole Veillon to approve the hotel occupancy tax for October. The motion was unanimously approved.*

- Jay reviewed the bank statement ending October 31<sup>st</sup>
- There were 6 deposits totaling \$27,261.40
- Ending balance per bank was \$261,139.98 with the ending balance per book the same with zero outstanding checks

*A motion was made by Betty Haydel and seconded by Angie Matherne to approve the bank statement for October. The motion was unanimously approved.*

- Judy reviewed the invoices paid and transaction listing for the month

*A motion was made by Dolores Florent and seconded by Angie Matherne to approve the invoices paid for October. The motion was unanimously approved.*

- Judy asked for a motion to go into recess

*A motion was made by Nicole Veillon and seconded by Angie Matherne to go into recess. The motion was unanimously approved.*

Break 10:20 - 10:30

*A motion was made by Betty Haydel and seconded by Nicole Veillon to reconvene. The motion was unanimously approved.*

Roll was once again taken; a quorum was recognized and the meeting was called to order and opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

#### IV. Director's Report- Jay Tusa

##### Advertising & PR Update

- Wynne Waltman reported that a few ads such as the Tour Guide ad are starting to hit publications and the website is doing very well
- Wynne mentioned that the search engine is doing well and site traffic is up

##### Website – October

- Site visits were 6,574
- Page views were 26,073
- Unique visitors were 5,802
- Search Engine Paid Impressions were 537,375
- Click thru rate was .39%
- Nearly 50% of traffic came from Search Engines
- Top page viewed was *Weddings-Wedding Venues, Sweepstakes*
- Top referring site was Google, Facebook
- Brochure requests was 160 with a download savings of \$83.16
- Top visitation city was New Orleans, Houston, Baton Rouge, Metairie

##### Facebook Update

- Jay mentioned that Sherry Constance has been helping us post on Facebook while we've been doing the promotion and has been doing a great job
- Jay asked Sherry to talk a little about what she's been doing
- Sherry reported that it's been almost a month since she started and have posted about 80 posts with about 10 interactions from the posts
- During the month of October she posted a lot of hauntings and ghosts stories
- Sherry mentioned she started a 'What is it?' trivia where she posted an object used long ago and people had to guess what it was used for

## RPTC Mtg. Minutes

Nov 7, 2011/pg 4

- She also started a 'Where is it?' trivia where she posted random images from around Plantation Country and people had to guess the location
- Sherry noted that both of these trivia games were a big hit
- Sherry mentioned that she has been posting upcoming events and since there is a lot to talk about she has been posting 3-4 times a day
- Jay noted he is really pleased with the promotion and our likes are up 280% from when we started this contest a month ago
- Jay mentioned our numbers are really strong and when looking at other CVBs we're right behind New Orleans and Shreveport and Baton Rouge and far ahead of the smaller CVBs our size
- Jay stated that Sherry has been doing a really good job in engaging people and getting them to talk on Facebook which is the whole idea of the campaign
- Jay mentioned that he and Sherry have been talking about hiring her on a permanent basis to continue to do some of this work for us and hopefully he'll have something to present at the next meeting

### Community Center Report – Coy St. Pierre

- Coy reported there were two soundstage inquiries and two private event inquiries for the second half of October
- One private event inquiry booked their annual Christmas celebration for December 16<sup>th</sup> in the center's atrium
- For the first half of November there were no inquiries for soundstage, private events or locations
- Coy noted there were no ad placements for this reporting period

### New Server

- Jay mentioned that we are in need of a new server and are looking at some options at this time
- Jay stated that our server has recently reached it's storage capacity
- We are looking into the pros and cons of possibly going with cloud computing
- Jay stated he should have something at the next meeting

### Phone System

- Jay explained that we have been having issues with the parish's phone system for about a year and a half now

- Jay mentioned that he and Paul decided to give one last effort to get with the parish to see if we can communicate directly with Black Box in order to work out these issues
- Jay stated that if we can't work out these issues then we do have some options to purchase our own phone system that are relatively affordable

#### Upcoming Schedule for RPTC

- **November 4-11: World Travel Market – London, England**
- Kimmie is currently in London for this show
- **November 8:** Election Day – Office Closed
- **November 8-10:** Southeast Tourism Society Fall Meeting – New Orleans, LA
- Jay will be attending this meeting in New Orleans
- Jay announced that he received word last week that STS asked him to serve on their board which they will be voting on in their meeting
- Jay stated he thought it was really good for the Tourist Commission to have representation with a regional organization like STS
- Jay mentioned that we sponsored the tour section of STS where tourist coming in can get a plantation tour
- Jay showed the packets that were put together for their registration packets
- **November 11:** Veterans Day – Office Closed
- **November 12-16:** Toronto Sales Mission w/LOT – Toronto, Canada
- **November 14-16:** Destination Marketing Association International, CDME class – Charlotte, NC
- **November 17-21:** Culinary Consumer Show, Toronto, Canada. Participating with LOT and Louisiana Seafood Marketing and Promotion Board
- There will be 40,000 attendees and will have Louisiana cooking demonstrations
- **November 24-25:** Thanksgiving Holiday – Office Closed
- **December 5-9:** National Tour Association – Las Vegas, NV

#### V. Chairman's Monthly Report- Judy Songy

##### Board Elections

- Judy notified everyone, according to our by-laws to give a one month's notice, for the election of officers
- The election of officers will be taking place at our next meeting

##### Adoption of La Compliance Questionnaire for audit

RPTC Mtg. Minutes

Nov 7, 2011/pg 6

- Judy Songy gave notification that we need to obtain board authorization to adopt the LA Compliance Questionnaire at our next regularly scheduled meeting on December 13th.

*A motion was made by Nicole Veillon and seconded by Angie Matherne to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.*

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.