

State of Texas
County of Tarrant
City of Grapevine

MINUTES

The Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors met in Regular Session on Thursday, May 26, 2022 at 8:00 a.m. at the Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau, 636 S. Main Street, Grapevine, Texas with the following persons in attendance:

Joe Szymaszek	Board Chair
Mark Terpening	Board Vice Chair
Dan Weinberger	Board Member
Iain Scouller	Board Member
Chuck Pacioni	Board Member
Cindy Blankenship	Board Member
Debi Meek	Alternate Board Member
Sharron Rogers	Council Liaison

Constituting a quorum, with the following liaisons and staff members present:

Paul W. McCallum	Executive Director
Brady Closson	Deputy Executive Director
Becky Roberson	Interim Assistant to the Executive Director
Absent:	Corinna Wenks, Board Member

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairman, Joe Szymaszek called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Mark Terpening and seconded by Iain Scouller, the minutes from the April 21, 2022 meeting were approved.

NEW EMPLOYEE INTRODUCTIONS

Mr. McCallum introduced Janice Williams.

SALES AND MARKETING REPORT

Mr. Closson reported on data from the month of April. The Convention and Sales team sourced over 100 leads which was slightly down from 2019, whereas conversions which are leads

converting to definite status, were up. Destination Services has seen a resurgence in hotel guests and 2022 compared to 2019 were quite comparable. Stakeholder hotels had roughly 13,500 to 14,000 hotel attendees.

There were multiple missions during April. Globaux Source held their Annual Partner Meeting at the Gaylord Rockies with 48 attendees, consisting of clients, DMOs and hoteliers. Our team had 14 appointments with one RFP for a 2026 program. Women in Cyber Security held a gathering and Candance Holden, from the Gaylord Texan partnered with the CVB to move this program forward.

Sports ETA was held at the Ft. Worth Convention Center and Tanja Nichols had 26 one on one appointments over the course of three days which yielded two RFPs. Grapevine CVB co-sponsored a closing reception with some of our neighboring CVBs, Arlington, Irving, Dallas and Frisco.

HelmsBriscoe which is the single largest meeting planning company, had their Annual Business Conference with approximately 850 attendees. Connie had 44 appointments, Tanja had 35 appointments. We, along with some neighboring cities, co-hosted two events for 46 HelmsBriscoe clients. These one on one appointments and events represent more than just 125 contacts simply because each HelmsBriscoe contact represent more than one single company or individual. Together the team walked away with three RFPs.

Heather Egan was in San Antonio for Travel Texas Reverse US and Canada Marketplace event where she had 13 one on one appointments in just one day. There was a focus on travel over the week of Christmas 2022 which would be welcome news for our local hotel partners.

Staff also met with Hotel Beds, a third party online travel agency, and they report an 89% increase in individual room nights over 2019. The trend continues to move upward.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Mr. McCallum shared that during the course of the 38th Annual Main Street Fest weekend, there were 48,000 unique online inquiries, which set a new record. These numbers surpassed the 42,000 inquiries of 2016. The overall coupon count was just shy of 2017 numbers. Both the Craft Brew Experience and Food Vendors had the second highest numbers in the past five years. The addition of seltzer was a popular addition. He also spoke to the broad demographics that made up the Craft Brew Experience; men, women, young, older and so on.

He highlighted that the streets felt more open. This he attributed to the change from double stacked booths to single booths. This change allowed for an additional 50,000 feet for patrons to freely walk. This was seen as such a positive move that he doesn't see it going back to

double stacked booths. There are two blocks that may benefit from double stacked booths but for the most part, the plan is to keep the streets open by only allowing for single booths.

For the first time, we hosted ten vendors at Peace Plaza. We received both positive and negative feedback but after much consideration, that is likely not to return. The goal is to support the individual vendors that participate but also our local businesses.

He went on to share that fifteen civic and service organizations, collectively received \$85,000. This was down a bit because there are some organizations that have not fully reemerged since the pandemic. It wasn't uncommon in years past to have thirty civic and service clubs represented.

The estimated attendance is 98,000, based on reports from Placer, a data firm. The other interesting piece is that dwell time was calculated at 148 minutes, whereas the national average is just 95 minutes. This is attributed to the street performers themselves but also to the addition of more tables placed along the sidewalks. Patrons were more likely to stop and eat rather than walk and eat. And the street performances fully engaged and entertained festival guests.

TEXRail ridership was over 5000 in just the three day window.

The Midway reported positive revenue, even taking into account the reduced physical space and the reduced timeframe of the festival.

GAP, Grapevine Art Project, reported that they experienced a successful festival, in both visitors and sales.

It was explained that there were some issues with some of the stages. Mr. McCallum informed the board that the team recognized that the primary stage, Center Stage, didn't work well and that the issues had already been resolved for future festivals. The question was presented about the lack of "big" musical acts. Mr. McCallum explained that the decision not to hire big names was intentional. One goal is to differentiate Main Street Fest from GrapeFest. He also shared that the research continues to show patrons report the street performers as the highlight of the festival and that is where the emphasis will continue to stay. Although, there will always be music, the big acts will be reserved for GrapeFest. He went on to assure them that GrapeFest will look just as it always has with great musical performances and double stacked vendors in their traditional locations

Sharron Rogers asked about the policy on only allowing service animals within the festival grounds. Mr. McCallum informed the board members that while that has historically been our policy that recent changes made by the federal government doesn't allow us the right to ask

the status of any animal. This has naturally led to more animals being permitted onto festival grounds.

The Board then discussed the number of sponsors and the feeling that patrons may have felt “sold to” instead of the intended goal of entertained. Staff assured them that they too had heard similar sentiments and that we would not host that large of a number of sponsors moving forward.

Circling back to the entertainment stages, Mr. McCallum stated that Center Stage will return to its original location.

Cynthia Blankenship inquired about the number of volunteers and specifically asked if getting volunteers was an issue. Mr. McCallum explained that many dedicated long-time volunteers pre-pandemic haven’t returned and likely won’t. He also attributed the fewer number of volunteers being that our local population has changed with the influx of younger families. The vast majority of our volunteer base is empty nesters. He reassured the board members that staff was already looking at different avenues to engage and recruit future volunteers. He further explained that a promising idea was to recruit within the business sector, meaning encouraging industry leaders to encourage their employees to volunteer in groups. Mrs. Blankenship liked the idea and stated that she would support exchanging half of a business day for an employee or giving gift cards for those that volunteered and said that she thought that many employers would do something similar. Board Chairman, Joe Szymaszek, recognized that many of the civic organizations were using the same pool of volunteers, which further explained the challenge. Mr. McCallum informed the board that many CVB staff members helped to fill those gaps and served in various capacities.

Dan Weinberger asked if Festival Staff would be open to a round table discussion with local Main Street merchants. Mr. McCallum let him know that Denton Bricker, the Director of Festival and Events had already suggested a collaboration and was putting a plan of work into place currently. Part of that plan was for Mr. Bricker to attend monthly HDGA meetings.

Bruce and Rene’ Herndon were praised for their strong leadership as the co-chairs of the 38th Annual Main Street Fest. And it was reported that two RFPs had already come in from the meeting planning FAM that participated during the festival.

A video highlighting footage from the 38th Annual Main Street Fest was shared with the board members.

Board Member, Chuck Pacioni departed the meeting to accommodate another commitment.

NEW BUISNESS

An article on Meow Wolf from D Magazine was given to each board member. Everyone shared their excitement about this project. Mr. McCallum shared that Meow Wolf is expected to expend the Grapevine visitor demographic greatly, much the way that was seen with the addition of Bass Pro. There is great optimism that Meow Wolf will dramatically boost the local art scene. There have been strategies put in place that will feature Meow Wolf in our travel arena, both domestic and international. Media kits are currently being conspired. And there is planning underway for a pre-FAM centered around Meow Wolf in 2023. It was also shared that New Mexico reports that their Meow Wolf created more room nights than any other attraction throughout the state. A video of the New Mexico Meow Wolf was shown.

Mr. McCallum presented a grant request for a 1913 J.I. Case Steam Action Engine. This particular steam tractor is identical to those used on the Grapevine Prairie of yesteryear. It has had just two owners, been impeccably maintained and is in full working order. Furthermore, for the last seventy years it was owned by J.D. Wilbanks, the great uncle of Grapevine's own C. Shane Wilbanks. We have documentation from a news article that shows that one month ago, a 1913 J.I. Case Steam Action Engine sold for 1.3 million. This historical piece of agricultural machinery costs \$60,000. Funds from Grapevine's festivals go towards preservation, restoration and heritage education. This purchase will honor Grapevine's agricultural heritage and aid in maintaining the small town feel that appeals to so many residents and visitors, alike. It will be showcased in parades, used in education programs at Nash Farm and prominently displayed. With the addition of the steam action engine, the thresher that lives at Nash Farm and with the recent donation of the 1932 Grain truck, we would now have the entire picture of the workings of a historic functioning farmstead.

Chairman Szymaszek called for a motion to approve the grant.

Motion : Cynthia Blankenship
Second: Dan Weinberger
Ayes: Terpening, Scouller, Meek, Rogers, Blankenship, Weinberger
Nays: None
Approved 6-0

Mr. McCallum requested funding approval for a Needs Assessment Study for the Grapevine Convention Center, which was opened in 1988. He explained that improvements have been made through the years and that our team has done an amazing job of maintaining the property. He went on to explain that most of our current business comes through consumer shows. He further explained that the goal isn't to compete with the hotels yet it is time to decide if the Convention Center warrants a major renovation. Needs Assessment Studies usually cost \$100,000 to \$150,000. There are two companies that specialize in this arena. HVS, specializes in smaller to mid-size convention, exhibit and entertainment facilities. Gensler, a well-established architect firm, typically deals with larger convention centers but does do

smaller projects, as well. The goal of the assessment is to give leadership a better idea of what the options are and where the greatest needs are. The budget for the next fiscal year will be presented in June and approved shortly thereafter. The request for this assessment to be added to the upcoming budget was made.

Chairman Szymaszek called for a motion to approve the grant.

Motion : Dan Weinberger
Second: Mark Terpening
Ayes: Terpening, Scouller, Meek, Rogers, Blankenship, Weinberger
Nays: None
Approved 6-0

ADJOURMENT

Motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 9:37 a.m.

Motion : Iain Scouller
Second: Mark Terpening
Ayes: Terpening, Scouller, Meek, Rogers, Blankenship, Weinberger
Nays: None
Approved 6-0

ATTEST:

APPROVED:



Becky Roberson
Interim Assistant to the Executive Director



Joe Szymaszek
Chairman