

County of Tarrant
City of Grapevine
State of Texas

MINUTES

The Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors met in Regular Session on Thursday, October 17, 2024 at 8:00 a.m. at the Stephen W. Stinson Boardroom of the Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau, 636 S. Main Street, Grapevine, Texas with the following persons in attendance:

Joe Szymaszek	Chairman
Mark Terpening	Vice Chair
Cynthia Blankenship	Board Member
Iain Scouller	Board Member
Chuck Pacioni	Board Member
Dan Weinberger	Board Member
Mike Oakley	Board Member
Debi Meek	Board Member

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

Paul W. McCallum	Executive Director
Leigh Lyons	Assistant Executive Director
Becky Roberson	Executive Assistant
Leon Leal	Council Liaison
Kelly Schwartz	Chamber Liaison

Council Liaison arrived at 8:47 a.m.

Absent: Matthew Brink

CALL TO ORDER

Board Chairman, Joe Szymaszek, called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Board Chairman Szymaszek called for a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting. With a motion from Mike Oakley and seconded by Dan Weinberger, the minutes from the September 26, 2024 meeting were approved.

SALES AND MARKETING REPORT

Executive Director, Paul W. McCallum, began the meeting by acknowledging that October is Texas Wine Month and shared graphics used for in-market billboards that showcased Grapevine as a wine destination and spoke about the Urban Wine Trail. Director McCallum then shared data relating to the 2024 fiscal year end sales. He explained that the Sales Team was challenged with booking new business and sourcing more room nights year over year. The fiscal year of 2023 garnered 2.2 million sourced room nights. Sourced room nights to partner hotels reached a new record of 2,548,831 in the fiscal year of 2024, which is an increase of 14.3%. There were 1,957 sourced group leads to partner hotels in the 2024 fiscal year which equates to an increase of 12.9% year over year. Definite room nights for 2024 reached 393,837, an increase of 6% year over year.

Assistant Executive Director, Leigh Lyons reported on media throughout the month of September. She reported on the various avenues that advertised GrapeFest such as the cover of Star Local Media and the cover wrap and insert editorial in the Dallas Morning News Events Guide. Fabien Goury, culinary mastermind of Main Street Bakery, Chez Fabien and Piaf was featured on cover of the publication, 76092. Christmas Capital of Texas ticket sales received coverage online, in print and on television.

The Communications Team sent out press releases highlighting the 38th Annual GrapeFest People's Choice Winners, Qantas Airlines Barossa, South Australia Getaway Winner, the kickoff of Christmas Capital of Texas ticket sales and the upcoming Southwest Bluegrass Club's 50th Anniversary Grape Jam celebration.

In September, the official Grapevine Texas USA website had more than 3 million page views, with more than 1.6 million of those occurring on September 25 for the Christmas Capital of Texas go live sales day, and about 400k of those coming during the 38th Annual GrapeFest weekend. Leading up to the ticket launch on September 25, the team created multiple social media posts, press releases and special notices on our website. Our various social media outlets showed 440K users across the month of September, with 85k of those coming on Christmas Capital of Texas ticket day, and more than 90k of those occurring during the 38th Annual GrapeFest weekend.

Assistant Executive Director Lyons explained that interests are ever-evolving and utilizing social media allows us to target specific audiences. In September, the Communications Team created 225 social media posts on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn which lead to nearly 2 million impressions. The team is focused on driving business to Grapevine hotels, restaurants, shops and attractions.

Assistant Executive Director Lyons reported that the Communications Team began tracking social media followers in March of 2023 and has focused on a strategic plan for growth across the board. Since that time, the Visit Grapevine Instagram page has seen a significant increase in

followers and is up 68%. The Visit Grapevine Facebook page is up 24%. The Instagram account dedicated to Grapevine Vintage Railroad launched in March of 2023 with 8 followers and now has 8,703. The Grapevine Vintage Railroad Facebook page is up 25%. Mrs. Lyons shared some current social media trends, explained how our team utilizes the trends and showed examples of some recent posts. Fiscal Year 2024 media coverage was calculated at a value of 14.6 million dollars.

Assistant Director Lyons reported that the official Grapevine Texas USA website also showed impressive growth. The 2023 fiscal year had 1.8 million users and 8.2 million page views whereas the fiscal year of 2024 had 2.4 million users and 12 million page views. This represents a 33% increase in website users and 46% increase in page views year over year.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Director McCallum gave a GrapeFest update beginning with recognizing the thirty eight sponsors of the 38th Annual GrapeFest – A Texas Wine Experience presented by Bank of the West. He shared the pivotal role that the sponsors play, from monetary donations to promoting volunteering within their staff and physically serving in various hands on positions.

He went on to report that the winner of the Barossa, Australia was Keith Petrosky of Colleyville. He and his wife attended one of the Barossa Master Class sessions and were thrilled about visiting the renowned wine region of Barossa. This promotion allowed the Convention and Visitors Bureau to collect thousands of emails from interested parties that will become part of the database that will receive newsletters and information for events happening in Grapevine.

Director McCallum reported that the elevated wine experiences, Barossa Wine Pairing & Master Classes and Wine Pairing Seminars were heavily promoted and were at capacity weeks before the festival. The Barossa Master Classes were taught by Dean Hewitson of Hewitson Estate and wine industry strategist Dave Shilling taught the Wine Pairing seminars. Other elevated wine experiences included Liberty Park International Wine Experience, Liberty Park VIP activation, Champagne Terrace, Rose Rendezvous and People's Choice Wine Tasting Classic. These events continue to prove popular with festival goers.

Our Sister Cities staff and committee members hosted twenty delegates from Parras de la Fuente, Mexico over five days. Leading the delegation was Alcalde Fernando Orozco Lara accompanied by OCV (CVB) President, Olga Lara Rodriguez as well as Rotary leaders, tourism partners and business owners. During their time in Grapevine, they met with Mayor Tate and City Council members. They toured Fire Station #1 and the Grapevine Fire Department donated several pieces of equipment and bunker gear to the Parras Fire Department. They also toured the Dallas Fort Worth International Airport Fire Training Research Center. Parras has recently been selected for a new regional airport with plans to expand in order to accommodate future international flights.

They also visited the Grapevine water treatment facility. Parras has experienced notable growth due to tourism and the alcalde requested to meet with our staff regarding our water treatment program. The delegation toured Baylor Scott & White Medical Center with the hospital President, Naman Mahajan and board member, Darlene Freed. This resulted in the donation of not only medical equipment, but Parras has been added to Baylor's approved list for international medical missions.

The group also had the opportunity to tour the REC and Senior Center. The alcalde's wife has created a Senior living center in Parras and was interested to learn what programs we offer our seniors. The delegation also met with various Grapevine Rotary leaders and members. The two Rotaries have a robust relationship that continues to grow. The delegation from Parras met with members of the Women's Division of the Chamber who donated quilts and bedding to the Quinta Manuelita Orphanage in Parras. Lastly, they met with Ambucs members who committed to additional tricycles which foster mobility and independence to people with physical disabilities.

Director McCallum reported on media coverage for the 38th Annual GrapeFest played an important role in the overall success of the event by driving visitors to Grapevine. Pre-Festival, there were television appearances in Houston and Austin. There were also television appearances in the local Dallas Fort Worth market, covering WFAA, CW33, NBC5, FOX4. There was a podcast interview with We Know Vino featuring both international and local winery owners and wine makers, Dean Hewitson, Vanessa Lambert and Paul Bonarrigo. The Communications Team had live radio interviews with WBAP and 99.5 The Wolf. During the Festival, we had coverage from FOX4, WFAA, 99.5 The Wolf, 96.3 New Country and IHeartRadio. He then shared various print ads.

Assistant Director Lyons reported that the Convention Sales Team hosted nine meeting planners and their guests for a familiarization tour during GrapeFest. The weekend showcased the host hotel, Gaylord Texan as well the seven other full-service Grapevine hotels, many off-site venues and attractions, and our Historic Main Street District in full swing. There are three current requests for proposals with Gaylord presently. The goal of the familiarization tour is to move the needle to definite bookings. One proposal is for an event slated for 2027 requesting 1800 rooms peak, while another in for an executive council event scheduled in 2028, requesting 1200 rooms peak. One new request for proposal generated from the GrapeFest familiarization tour is for 2026 with 1310 total room nights.

Director of Leisure and International Sales, Heather Egan, hosted nineteen guests for the International Travel Trade GrapeFest Familiarization Tour. Attendees were primarily travel agents from the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia, including one travel writer from Germany and one tour operator from the Netherlands. As a result of the FAM tour, travel agents have already started booking clients at Grapevine hotels and the Netherlands tour operator, Indelible Travel, launched a new package featuring Grapevine.

NEW BUSINESS

Assistant Director Lyons reported that the Christmas Capital of Texas Creative campaign was well underway and shared some of the recommended ads. As the theme was highly successful last year, Share the Joy will return this year with the advertising focus directed at the drive markets, prompting guests to stay in Grapevine hotels. This is a critical time of year for our hotels so we are focusing in these markets to drive overnight stays. Local advertising will focus on promoting events such as the Monday night drone shows to drive local business to Grapevine during the early part of the week.

Director McCallum stated that much time and thought had gone into determining the best possible fencing solution for the historic Cotton Belt Depot District. He explained that an 8 foot high galvanized metal privacy fence, estimated at 600 linear feet would cover the designated distance. The galvanized metal would hold up well to environmental elements and be resistant to rusting. And the fence would be constructed with multiple panels so if there was an instance of needing to replace a single panel, that could be done without compromising the fence as a whole. The current design calls for two custom welded gate frames, a vertical center bar, two frame kits per gate, industrial heavy duty hinge set per gate, one heavy duty slide bolt latch, and 1 drop rod. He further explained that fencing of this caliber should last for decades and that Grapevine Vintage Railroad had the funds to support the purchase.

Following discussion, Board Chairman Szymaszek called for a motion to fund the purchase of fencing of the Cotton Belt Depot District in the amount of \$105,000.

Motion: Cynthia Blankenship

Second: Mark Terpening

Approved: 8-0

HOTELS/ATTRACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Grapevine Chamber liaison, Kelly Schwartz shared that the Sam's Club grand opening was today. Council liaison, Leon Leal stated that there was a large turnout from the community. Mrs. Schwartz stated the next chamber luncheon was scheduled for the following week and that on November 12, Blankenship Business Center would host an event to recognize its fifth anniversary.

Assistant Director Lyons shared that LEGOLAND Discovery Center was hosting Brick or Treat events for the duration of the month. Some activities include a seasonal scavenger hunt, Brick-or-Treating and the opportunity to view the exclusive 4D LEGO® Movie, The Great Monster Chase.

SEA LIFE Grapevine Aquarium is celebrating Halloween with Serafina the Sea Witch through October 31. Guests can assist Serafina by solving challenges and learn about the amazing "scary-not scary" sea creatures.

Rainforest Café will be celebrating its 30th anniversary. In honor of the anniversary, the restaurant will bring back classic favorites such as bimini chicken, Islands in the Stream Salmon and Southern Cross Lasagne.

The Comfort Inn has been rebranded as Spark by Hilton. Exterior update including new paint and signage. Our team is meeting with them in the coming days to see the interior renovations.

Fun Box, the world’s biggest bounce park, has returned to Grapevine Mills and will run through November 17.

Assistant Director Lyons ended the meeting by sharing that Newsweek readers voted Grapevine as the Best Christmas Town in the US. The voting took place in September and the award was announced earlier this month. The Christmas Capital of Texas and Gaylord Texan Resort were recognized.

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chairman Szymaszek called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:12 a.m.

Motion: Mark Terpening

Second: Iain Scouller

Approved: 8-0

ATTEST:



Becky Roberson

Executive Assistant

APPROVED:



Joe Szymaszek

Chairman