

County of Tarrant
City of Grapevine
State of Texas

MINUTES

The Grapevine Convention & Visitors Bureau Board of Directors met in Regular Session on Thursday, November 20, 2025 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 Chairman
Cynthia Blankenship	Board Member
Jeff Babcock	Board Member
Fabien Goury	Board Member
Chuck Pacioni	Board Member
Iain Scouller	Board Member
Mike Oakley	Alternate Board Member
Kim Farbisz	Alternate Board Member

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

Leon Leal	Council Liaison
Sue Wykes	Chamber Liaison
Paul W. McCallum	Executive Director
Leigh Lyons	Assistant Executive Director
C.J. Gardner	Website Manager
Becky Roberson	Executive Assistant

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 October 16, 2025 meeting.

Motion: Mark Terpening

Second: Cynthia Blankenship

Ayes: Szymaszek, Terpening, Blankenship, Babcock, Goury, Scouller, and Pacioni

Nays: None

Approved: 7 - 0

SALES AND MARKETING REPORT

Executive Director McCallum reported that Managing Director, Joe Thompson and National Sales Manager, Codi Missimo attended IMEX America, held in Las Vegas. IMEX is the largest tradeshow for global meetings, events and the incentive travel industry. The tradeshow lasted four days and hosted more than 16,000 attendees. In addition to the Convention and Visitors Bureau team, the Grapevine booth was hosted by representatives from Grand Hyatt DFW, Hyatt Regency DFW and Hilton DFW Lakes. The team also represented Grapevine at the Travel Texas booth along with Frisco, Galveston, The Woodlands, El Paso and Plano CVBs.

Mr. Thompson and Ms. Missimo participated in the Best of Texas reception at Top Golf. Grapevine partnered with San Antonio, Houston, and Austin. This was a first-time event. The 85 planners in attendance were IMEX attendees that were all hosted buyers, sponsored by MPI. Each CVB partner had an opportunity to speak to the group and conduct a raffle drawing.

Gaylord Hotels hosted a reception held at the Cosmo Hotel. All 6 Gaylord hotel properties invited top clients. This event proved to be a strong networking event for the team. The team used the opportunity to host two client dinners which provided additional time with VIP planners from Times 10 Association Management, American Guest, National Association for Public Health Statistics and Information Systems and others. The appointment-based tradeshow yielded 62 one-on-one appointments and the team returned with multiple new opportunities for Grapevine. Four requests for proposals for 2026, totaling over 3,450 room nights, have been received to date. Four additional requests for proposals are expected, ranging from 2026 through 2032.

Executive Director McCallum reported on a recent sales mission led by Director of Leisure and International Sales, Heather Egan. Ms. Egan conducted a European Travel Trade Mission which consisted of four separate missions.

Grapevine and Oklahoma continue to partner on fly/drive international itineraries, promoting Grapevine as the International gateway. The Travel Oklahoma travel trade mission took place October 11 – 19. This mission focused on the anniversary of Route 66 coming up in 2026. The mission started in Dublin, Ireland and worked its way through the United Kingdom, ending in London. In total, the team hosted eleven travel trade appointments.

In the UK, the team met with Internet Traveler, who has developed three Oklahoma itineraries, one of which includes Grapevine.

Brand USA Travel Week Europe took place October 19 – 24. Brand USA Travel Week offered educational sessions focused on the current global picture, European travel trends, what to expect with FIFA and the Olympics, Brand USA's new campaign and AI in

travel. Executive Director McCallum joined Ms. Egan for Brand USA Travel Week. Ms. Egan conducted 48 fifteen-minute travel trade appointments and Director McCallum attended leadership seminars. Evenings were spent networking with tour operators focused on showcasing Grapevine as the forefront of Texas destinations for international travelers. They came away with the knowledge that overall, the outlook is optimistic. While inbound international travel is trending down, the good news is that travelers are interested in authentic destinations and choosing “Real America” over Disney and the big cities, making Grapevine an ideal destination.

Ms. Egan conducted the Germany Travel Trade and Media Mission over October 24 – 29. She conducted a training session for T.r.u.e. America, Tour Consult and CANUSA’s Stuttgart office. In Frankfurt and Cologne, Ms. Egan conducted four more trade training sessions with CANUSA Frankfurt, Explorer Fernreisen Frankfurt, USA Reise-Experte and BikeTheBest. And finally in Dusseldorf, she conducted a training session and product planning meeting at the headquarters for Explorer Fernreisen, who has 5,000 travel agencies who work with them and are very interested in doing more with Grapevine. This is an important component as travel is regulated in Germany. The trainers that were met with will now share Grapevine with travel agents throughout the country. Explorer Fernreisen also expressed interest in having their North America Product Manager participate in a GrapeFest familiarization tour.

Ms. Egan completed the mission with USA Canada Experience in Zeist, Netherlands on October 30 and 31. She met with fourteen tour operators and three media agents. Le Beau Reizen shared that they had included Grapevine in their consumer show presentation. And AmerikaNu was excited to share their new magazine that features Grapevine and Oklahoma. Ms. Egan then partnered with Travel Texas, American Airlines and Visit Kissimmee for six travel agent trainings.

Focusing on domestic leisure sales, Brian Hilterbrandt conducted a mission to Texas AAA offices promoting Christmas Capital of Texas October 29 and 30. He visited 10 offices in Austin, San Antonio and Houston and met with multiple agents per office. A takeaway from the mission was that Gen Z want curated itineraries, and AAA is building out a variety of options for travelers. Agents expressed appreciation for the in-person visits.

Assistant Director, Leigh Lyons, reported on earned media. Television coverage focused on Christmas Capital of Texas. Director of Communications had an interview in Tyler that highlighted all that Grapevine has to offer over the forty days of Christmas Capital of Texas festival. She also had an appearance in Wichita Falls and participated in a podcast for House of Shine. The CW33 visited Nash Farm for a story.

There was print coverage in multiple magazines, including the 360 West calendar, Texas Highways Calendar, a Texas Monthly advertorial, Southlake Style and an article in Texas

Co-Op Power. Amerika Nu, a German publication, highlighted Route 66 and True West named Grapevine as one of the best winter towns. Texas Meetings and Events picked up Meow Wolf's recent international award and Meetings Today Texas showcased meeting opportunities at Gaylord Texan. These publications were displayed for board members to view at their leisure.

Assistant Director Lyons presented on website traffic for the month of October. The pages receiving most views on the Visit Grapevine website were Santa's North Pole Express, Buy Tickets, Christmas Capital of Texas Buy Tickets, Santa's North Pole Express Dates and Times and Day Out with Thomas. The website had more than 1.2 million page views in October, which is an increase of 34% year over year.

The Visit Grapevine page currently has two fly-ins. One showcases ICE! at Gaylord Texan and has a direct link to Gaylord's Buy Tickets page. The second fly-in promotes Christmas packages at Grapevine hotels and directs visitors to view various hotels. The goal is to drive overnight stays during the Christmas season.

Social media platforms reported strong numbers for October. The Visit Grapevine social accounts were reviewed. The monthly impression total for Facebook was 2 million, which was a 21.9% increase from September. The Visit Grapevine Facebook account has more than 80,464 followers. Instagram had a monthly impression total of more than 442 thousand and a reach total that was up 22% from last month.

Assistant Director Lyons completed her report by sharing that advertising placement could be viewed in the board packet.

ONGOING BUSINESS

Director McCallum presented an update on the Christmas Capital of Texas. New this year, Main Street will be closed to vehicle traffic on the weekends. He shared the schedule for the closures, covering Carol of Lights, the two Merry & Bright Drone Shows, 46th Annual Parade of Lights and weekends. The additional street closures were a topic of discussion among multiple city departments, and the decision was made with visitor safety taking priority. Plans are underway to add more lighting and more restrooms.

Events at the Historic Palace Theatre kicked off the season with eleven performers putting on twenty-four live shows and twenty-four Christmas movies and twenty-three Cartoons and Crafts events. The live Christmas tree arrived last Monday. It is a 60-foot-tall tree from Azalea, Oregon. It is a fresh cut white fir that weighs about 5,000 pounds and will take about three days to decorate.

On Monday, November 24, Mayor William D. Tate will pardon Tom T. Turkey, and we'll host local families chosen by the Community Outreach Center to ride the first Santa's North Pole Express trains of the season. That evening is the 37th Annual Carol of Lights. There

will be a variety of family-friendly activities, live music, crafts and tree lighting at the Town Square Gazebo.

Santa's North Pole Express has more excursions than ever before with an anticipated 80 thousand riders and all excursions are at capacity. To allow for more traditional photo ops and selfies and to expand traditional hometown Christmas feeling at the Town Square Gazebo, the artisans are being relocated. It is rebranded as the Grapevine Christmas Market at Santa's North Pole Express Village. There will be 16 vendors selling small stocking stuffers such as jewelry, trinkets, prepackaged pound cakes, Christmas nuts, popcorn and more. The market is open November 24 from 4 – 8 and then officially opens for the season the 28 through the 30 from 11 a.m. to 10:30 p.m.

Photos with Santa will also be available as walk ups from 9 a.m. – 10:15 a.m. beginning November 28th through December 30th. Staff will wear green vests that help them stand out to guests. We are adding more Visitor Information Center staff to answer questions. Staff will share restaurants, wineries, and shops up and down Main Street so visitors can fully enjoy the area.

The 5th Annual Merry & Bright Drone Shows are on Mondays December 1 and 8. You'll be able to see the shows from anywhere on Main Street. The 46th Annual Parade of Lights is Thursday, December 4. The Theme is Storybook Parade. Peace Plaza Ice Rink will open this coming Saturday through January 6.

To relieve congestion, the CVB has expanded Hometown Christmas. It is housed in the Tower Gallery at the CVB World Headquarters but is expanded into the Settlement to City museums in an effort to spread the crowds out and keep them in town longer. Weems Alley will be home to Candy Cane Lane and Coca-Cola polar bear photo ops for more selfies and fun.

Christmas themed events are happening throughout Grapevine. Rudolph's Gift is taking place at the Grapevine Escape. The Texas Star Dinner Theater is showcasing A Cold-Hearted Christmas Fridays and Saturdays in November and Thursdays through Sundays in December. ICE! at Gaylord Texan kicked off Nov. 14. This year's theme is Elf. Lone Star Christmas also has Cirque Frost, where young Jack discovers his destiny as the legendary winter spirit, Jack Frost. Through a dazzling show of high-flying stunts and breathtaking feats, guests will witness the heartwarming tale of a dreamer who brings enchantment and wonder to the world. Snowland at Great Wolf Lodge is set to begin on November 24 and run through January 4.

Meow Wolf has a special seasonal show, Phenomenomaly on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. SEA LIFE has Santa scuba diving at 11 a.m. on Saturdays in December and on Christmas Eve. Bass Pro Shops Santa's Wonderland got underway at the end of October and offer complimentary pictures with Santa. There are more Christmas popup bars than ever before – the Holly Jolly Bar at Third Rail, Bubbles at Hotel Vin, Holiday Hideaway at Chicken N' Pickle and Bad Santa's Boathouse at Big Daddy's Cantina.

NEW BUSINESS

Director McCallum presented a grant request for \$5,000 from the Frontier Brigade Band. The band was founded in 2000 and is dedicated to the preservation of musical heritage of the United States. They perform impressions of the hometown and military bands from the American Civil War period. The band presents programs focused on providing their audiences enjoyable and historical experiences with the music of a bygone day and musical support for the events and celebrations of our history and culture. As part of the grant request, the Frontier Brigade Band will perform as the Grapevine Cornet Band at six performances throughout the next year.

Chairman Szymaszek stepped out of the meeting to take a call at 8:48 a.m.

In Chairman Szymaszek's absence, Vice Chairman Terpening called for a motion to fund the grant in aid request to the Frontier Brigade Band in the amount of \$5,000.

Motion: Mike Oakley

Second: Chuck Pacioni

Ayes: Terpening, Blankenship, Babcock, Goury, Scouller, Pacioni and Oakley

Nayes: None

Approved: 7 – 0

Director McCallum presented a grant request for \$5,000 on behalf of the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce to support the 46th annual Parade of Lights. First executed in 1979, the Parade of Lights occurs on the first Thursday in December each year. The Grapevine Chamber and City of Grapevine, with the support of Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, work together to create the Annual Grapevine Parade of Lights, the largest lighted Christmas parade in North Texas. The Grapevine Chamber is requesting a Grant in Aid of \$5,000 to assist with a variety of costs related to the production of the Parade of Lights. Discussion was had as to the multitude of groups that participate in the parade and the large number of attendees that the event pulls.

Vice Chairman Terpening called for a motion to fund the grant in aid request to the Grapevine Chamber of Commerce in the amount of \$5,000.

Motion: Cynthia Blankenship

Second: Chuck Pacioni

Ayes: Terpening, Blankenship, Babcock, Goury, Scouller, Pacioni and Oakley
Nays: None
Approved: 7 - 0

Board Chairman Szymaszek returned at 8:54 a.m.

HOTELS/ATTRACTIONS/ACTIVITIES

Grapevine Chamber Liaison, Sue Wykes, shared that the annual food drive to support Grace was well underway. She spoke to upcoming meetings, preparations for the 46th Annual Parade of Lights, the upcoming toy drive and the Chamber Awards Banquet.

Board Member Pacioni departed the meeting at 8:59 a.m.

Assistant Director Lyons reported on recent and upcoming business openings in Grapevine including Wildflower Outlaws, Primark at Grapevine Mills, Kate Weiser Chocolate, and Bubble Planet

ADJOURNMENT

Board Chairman Szymaszek called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Motion: Jeff Babcock

Second: Fabien Goury

Ayes: Szymaszek, Terpening, Blankenship, Babcock, Scouller, Goury, and Oakley

Nays: None

Approved: 7- 0

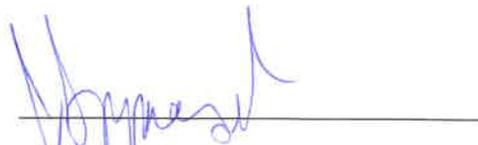
ATTEST:



Becky Roberson

Executive Assistant

APPROVED:



Joe Szymaszek

Chairman