

# Blue Ribbon Commission

## Minutes

February 10, 2020 4:00 PM  
Historic Metropolitan Courthouse  
One Public Square Suite 205  
Committee Room 2 Nashville, TN 37201

Members Present: VM Jim Shulman, CM Bob Mendes, CM Gloria Hausser, Chair Dave Goetz, Gracie Porter, Emily Evans, Margaret Darby, DJ Wootson, Patrick Green and Brad Rayson. Attending on behalf of Mayor Cooper: Kristin Wilson. Attending for Finance Dept.: Talia Lomax-O'dneal.

Members Absent:, Tracy Kane

Per the published Agenda:

1. Call to Order, Notice of Appeal Rights  
The meeting was called to order by Chair Goetz at 4:00PM CST. The Chair notified the public of their appeal rights.
2. Approval of Minutes from January 27, 2020  
Draft minutes were unanimously approved without amendment.
3. Presentation from Butch Spyridon, President and CEO, Nashville Convention and Visitors Corporation. (Materials attached.)  
Please refer to documents for Mr. Spyridon's remarks.  
Mr. Spyridon outlined the three revenue sources used for promotion of conventions and tourism, the largest being the 2% hotel tax. In addition 50 cents/room goes to the events fund, and .25% on sales in the central business district is used to rebates to conventions, necessary due to having the third highest hotel taxes in the country. He said Nashville produces one third of all visitor revenue in Tennessee. 40% of the total comes from conventions, 32% from leisure (e.g., downtown tourists) and 28% from business travel. He offered five ways to consider increasing revenues.  
Questions from members focused on what happens if there is a downturn in tourism. Spyridon said several times due to the economy or the flood tourism revenue dropped 20%. He said his organization has flexibility to cut back expenditures in response, and also can focus promotion on nearby communities to keep tourists coming. He also said that the open span space at the Music City Center is largely adequate but that there is a shortage of breakout or meeting rooms. This need is not supported by surrounding hotels.
4. Member Evans said she had arranged for presentations at the next BRC meeting from others in the tourism and financial services industries. This meeting will be February 24.
5. Chair Goetz also said the BRC will continue to meet into March (9 and 23) and April (13 and 27).
6. Adjourn  
There being no other business, the Commission adjourned at 5:00 PM.