

Metro Tourism and Convention Commission

Minutes

April 12, 201

Commissioners present: Howard Kittell, Sherry Franklin, Leesa LeClaire, Hank Locklin, Randy Miller, Shannon Sanders

Staff present: Andrea Arnold, Deana Ivey, Kay Witt, Marie Sueing, Jeff Mefford, Terry Clements

Meeting **Called to Order** by Chair Howard Kittell

No corrections or additions to the Minutes of the previous meeting were noted.

Motion to Approve by Shannon Sanders, **Seconded** by Leesa LeClaire; **unanimously approved.**

NCVC Financial Report

NCVC CFO Jeff Mefford reported:

As Terry will report in more detail, Hotel Tax collections for the year have continued to exceed our budget projections, which translates for us into greater marketing opportunities.

Spending does not occur evenly through the 12 months of the fiscal year, so this is not a perfect measure. But as a rough evaluation of where things stand at this point, we are 75% of the way through the fiscal year, and have requested 73% of the anticipated total contract revenue. So things are tracking pretty much as you would expect. Also, the allocation of our spending among the major budget categories is also tracking in line with our original budget plan.

As you already know, the CVC's revenue does not reflect actual tax collections for the year. But rather as a reimbursement contract, we receive revenue from the city only as we request it to reimburse actual expenses incurred, so there is no profit received by the CVC through the contract. And the total tax collections reported by the city will usually be greater than the revenue that we actually receive.

I'll let the others describe our recent activities in detail, but there are a few lines on the financial report that I'll touch on.

- Host City Commitments - Line 15
- Visual Tools - Line 34
- Event Production - Line 35
- FF&E - Line 55

One other item is the Advertising spending reported on Line 28. This might appear to be lagging behind at this point, but some of our heaviest advertising takes place in the spring before vacation season, and also we will not record the \$1 million in support for the Nashville TV show this season that will flow through the CVC until the end of the year.

In total, the city's hotel tax collections have exceeded the original budget projections this year by double digits, while we project that our use of the funds will only grow by about 3% over budget.

So financially, the year is going well for the city and the NCV's ability to promote Nashville.

Although it took place several months ago, I wanted to report for the minutes that as required by our contract, we did file a copy of our annual external CPA audit report for last fiscal year with Metro.

Motion to Approve Financial Report made by Shannon Sanders, **seconded** by Leesa LeClaire; **unanimously approved.**

CVC Report:

Kay Witt reported the tourism sales team was up to 90% of their goals with 3 months to go.

They have been all over the world: Berlin, Denmark, London, Brazil and Australia. We are digging into the International market, we think it will be very good for Nashville. On the domestic side, we've attended annual trade shows for bus tour operators

Convention sales will end the year strong.

We will host PCMA (Professional Convention Management Association) in January 2018. We will have about 2,500 meeting planners here looking at Nashville as a potential site for their meetings. We are excited to position Nashville for the next round of folks to book business.

We got a large business push when the Music City Center opened and now we will show them what's new to keep the momentum going.

We are greatly aided by our music reputation, the Nashville TV show helps, particularly internationally and our authenticity is a good sell.

Our biggest obstacle is air lift, particularly from the western U. S.

Availability of rooms is still a problem until the new hotels start opening.

Hotels have booked a lot of their own business so there are fewer city-wide conventions this year.

Deana Ivey reported New Year's Eve was successful, we were happy with the new location and downtown merchants were pleased with their experience. The Honky Tonks, bars and clubs did a lot of business. We sold 500 more rooms than previous years, with 24,500 rooms sold just in Nashville. Sponsorship sales were up 13%. Deana showed a 2 minute highlight video of NYE. We do it to sell hotel rooms but the benefit of having such a great event is the public relations. CNN cut to the Nashville event several times during their evening broadcast. People Magazine covered it and it always helps when Nichole Kidman comes on stage and dances with Keith Urban. That picture was in Entertainment Weekly and Entertainment Tonight. Altogether, it was about \$13 million in PR value.

One of the big pushes this year is the anniversary of all the music attractions. Country Music Hall of Fame is 50, Bluebird Café is 35, Ryman Auditorium, Studio B, Tin Pan South and Nashville Songwriters Association International all have significant anniversaries. We have put them all together to promote the music history of Nashville. We are doing a lot of social media and advertising.

When you go to the airport, Niki Taylor is a supermodel that lives in Nashville. We put her in front of our attractions and shot great photos. You'll see them in the airport halls. This display will be there for a year. The photos are also at our visitor center and the featured attractions can use them.

The first documentary "For the Love of Music" was very successful and it is still running in the U. K. all this year. We have gotten a lot of mileage from it so we decided to do a volume 2. We think the 2nd one will top the first. It is based on the songwriting community in Nashville. Our very own Commissioner Shannon Sanders stars in it. Commission saw a 2 minute trailer, We already have about 50 songwriters interviewed and hope to film the last interviews next week.

Terry Clements reported on Hotel Tax Collections, hotel pipeline report and the STR 2016 year-end.

Marie Sueing reported on the Fisk Jubilee Singers event this year and announced April 7, 2018 date for next year at the Ryman.

National Museum of African American Music will have their Legends Luncheon June 1. Honorees at the City winery event will be Kirk Franklin, Teddy Riley, David Porter and Patti LaBelle.

City Center Productions is doing Black Music Honors for the 2nd year.

The 5 + Broad project (previously Nashville Convention Center) will hold a groundbreaking event for the development and NMAAM on April 18.

Andrea Arnold reported on a group we are working with: Tennessee Thrives.

It is a statewide grassroots coalition of 400 + businesses that made a statement before the Legislative session that discriminatory bills at the State level hurt our reputation and therefore our ability to do business. Please think before you pass legislation.

At the beginning of the session, there were 11 bills filed we deemed would be discriminatory and damage our reputation. The two that were signature pieces of legislation were the bathroom bill and defense of natural marriage.

Both bill are dead for this year, with the bathroom bill dead for 2 years.

Hospitality Works is our focus on workforce. Our team has visited DePaul, Perdue, Virginia Tech and Johnson and Wales to talk to hospitality students. We've been to numerous career fairs. We will have another industry career fair here in August. Our workforce website is getting good use.

Our training department continues and has trained 4,800 people this year, 500 more than last year. We are researching a Greeter Program as is offered in other cities. Our trainer Shannon Largen is in Chicago studying how they do their program. A visitor signs up and with a group of 10 to 15 people, meet with a local volunteer who gives a general overview of Nashville. This is not a tour, but a way to extend our warm southern hospitality and a taste of Nashville.

She announced our Annual Luncheon May 9. The event will honor the Hitmaker winners. The guest speaker is Amanda Hite, CEO of STR who will discuss industry trends. The Bud Wendell award will be presented to Steve Turner. The Francis S, Guess award will be presented to Pat Emery on behalf of Kitty Moon Emery.

Meeting adjourned