

Metro Tourism and Convention Commission Minutes

January 15, 2020

Commissioners in Attendance: Howard Kittell, Mark Hayes, Leesa LeClaire, Randy Miller, Tonya Lewis, Sherry Franklin, Shannon Sanders.

NCVC Staff in Attendance: Butch Spyridon, Andrea Arnold, Adrienne Siemers, Jeff Mefford, Marie Sueing, Chelsea McCready

Others: Channel 4 photographer in attendance

Howard Kittell called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m.

Leesa LeClaire made a motion to accept the minutes from the October meeting; Tonya Lewis seconded; motion passed.

Kittell asked Jeff Mefford for a financial report. Mefford reported that five months into the fiscal year the finances are on track with the budget plan. Tax collections show growth over last year's record levels. Of note on the report: some of the costs associated with the second documentary have been slightly higher than anticipated; the report reflects all of the expenses for July 4th and just initial costs for New Year's Eve. The finances are on track to meet or exceed organizational goals. The annual independent audit for the NCVC is completed, with a clean report and no management recommendations. A final copy will be sent to Metro.

Sherry Franklin made a motion to accept the finance report; Randy Miller seconded; motion passed.

Kittell asked for Butch Spyridon to provide a report from the NCVC. Spyridon reported that the New Year's Eve event generated 25,529 rooms sold, a record for the city. The event also had the largest attendance. There were no security issues with the event. The event was covered by NBC and CNN resulting in tremendous national media exposure for the city.

Spyridon reported that he continues to work with the city on the NCVC budget discussions for in preparation for FY 21. The previous administration had requested \$3.6 million in hotel occupancy tax collections from FY 19 and \$3 million from FY 20 for the city's budget. Will inform the Commission of any further discussion regarding potential cuts by the city from occupancy tax collections.

Spyridon reported that the vinyl record pop-up shop concept in New York called "Spin On" closed yesterday. The three-month project was successful, generated over 34 million impressions in editorial coverage for the city, including Forbes magazine. The team may consider the concept for another market.

The city has recently received several notable national accolades, including:

Conde Nast Traveler (20 places in the world to go in 2020)

Forbes (the top 20 destinations for 2020)

Sports Business Journal (2019 Year-End Awards – Nashville Best Sports City).

Adrienne Siemers, Sr. VP of Sales, reported that the city won the bid to host the American Society of Association Executives in 2020. Hosted most previously in 2014 and the event results in a significant amount of booked future convention business. Interest in Nashville continues to be high, with the team facilitating 45 convention site visits and 17 tourism site visits in the last quarter. The team hosted two receptions using Nashville artists to entertain clients and sell future business for the city: Charlie Worsham at American Bus Association and Caitlyn Smith at PCMA.

Marie Sueing, Sr. VP of Multicultural Sales and Marketing, reported that the organization was promoting multiple events for the upcoming Black History Month. The NCVC is also working to promote the annual Spring Sing fundraising event for the Fisk Jubilee Singers. Next year's event will mark the 150th anniversary of the FJS and plans are already underway. The team is assisting the National Museum of African American Music with the annual Legends event and grant opening announcement on Feb. 3.

Andrea Arnold, Sr. VP of Public Affairs, reported on efforts for the upcoming state legislative session to attempt to defeat several bills that are deemed discriminatory. Arnold also reported on workforce efforts, citing upcoming recruitment trips to universities with hospitality programs and hosting two local job fairs in February and March.

Chelsea McCready, VP of Research, presented the latest market data from STR, showing that Nashville's growth continues to grow but has started to show signs of slowing. This is anticipated and reflects the new inventory opening.

Discussion ensued concerning working with industry partners to best prepare to absorb the influx of new hotel room openings planned for the next 12-18 months. Discussion also centered around the potential growth of the New Year's Eve event, noting that the attendance and hotel rooms sold were close to capacity.

Leesa LeClaire made a motion to adjourn; Mark Hayes seconded; motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 3 p.m.