

**Metro Tourism Commission Meeting
November 17, 2022
Meeting Minutes**

Sherry Franklin called the meeting to order at 8:36 a.m. and conducted a roll call:

Commissioners:

Britney Chandler – present

Sherry Franklin– present

Neely Glenn – present

Mark Hayes – present

Howard Kittell – not present

Leesa LeClaire – present

Hank Adam Locklin – not present – arrived at 8:45 a.m.

Shannon Sanders – not present

Q-Juan Taylor – present

Other staff in attendance include:

Metro Staff: Ben Eagles, Ann Mikkelsen, Metro IT

NCVC Staff: Andrea Arnold, Deana Ivey, Bruce McGregor, Jeff Mefford, Adrienne Siemers, Brad Lineberry

Leesa LeClaire made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting; Q Taylor seconded; motion approved unanimously.

Franklin asked NCVC CFO Jeff Mefford for a financial report, who made the following notes:

- Hotel occupancy collections for FY 23 (July and August) have set monthly records for each of those months. Year-to-date collections for the first two months of FY 23 have exceeded the total from the previous year by 27.5%.
- The total amount billed to Metro for tourism sales and marketing activities is \$11,510,063. The contract is a reimbursement contract, and this amount only covers actual expenses.
- Total expenses for the first four months of the fiscal year total \$13,058,936, of which about 82% is covered through the contract. Expenses to date include costs for two of the three largest activities planned for the year – the July 4th event and the American Society of Association Executives annual conference hosted in Nashville. Both events came in under budget.
- The annual external CPA audit of the NCVC's FY 22 financial statements is complete, with no adjustments made. A final report is being prepared and will be provided to Metro Finance when delivered.

Franklin requested a report on NCVC tourism sales and marketing efforts for the quarter; Deana Ivey, President; Adrienne Siemers, Chief Sales Officer and Marie Sueing, Chief Multicultural Officer, made the following notes:

MARKETING:

- CBS will broadcast Nashville's New Year's Eve event as a live, five-hour broadcast on national television. It will be the only New Year's Eve broadcast from a central time zone location in the US, and viewership forecast is 97 million. Live performance at Bicentennial Mall include: the Fisk Jubilee Singers, Brooks and Dunn, Zac Brown Band, Kelsea Ballerini, with Jimmy Allen and Elle King hosting. Other performances throughout Nashville will be featured as part of the broadcast. In addition to the marketing return on investment, the city will see major results in rooms sold and direct visitor spend. For 2022, 200,000 attended with \$29.9 million in direct visitor spend and 29,118 rooms sold (79.1% occupancy for city). There are 1,939 more hotel rooms available this year over 2021. The event includes local charitable components, partnering with Second Harvest Food Bank and Care Kitchen Outreach. There are several major national promotions for the New Year's Eve event including: ValPack – distributed to 4 million homes, resulted in 10,000 contest entries; and Craven Snacks – point of purchase displays in 5,000 grocery stores in key markets, resulted in 21,000 contest entries.
- The NCVC PR team has hosted two domestic travel groups with 20 journalists and worked with 19 additional individual journalists on features stories on Nashville in the last three months. All neighborhoods throughout Nashville were showcased.
- An international ad campaign supporting the return of British Airways non-stop flight between London and Nashville was recently launched.
- New marketing partnerships were created with Robb Report, Global Traveler and TripAdvisor.
- Two local restaurants received major national accolades: Locust was named the best restaurant in the US and Audrey was noted in the top 50 best restaurants in the country. These significant achievements will be included in future marketing to support the overall dining scene in city.
- Dine Nashville is being planned for March 2023. It is a month-long program to market dining scene, including chef-collaborations events and traditional restaurant week promotion.

SALES:

- Hotel occupancy collection recovery is very strong, and Nashville is recovering stronger than most destinations in the US.
- NCVC's performance against organizational goals was shared, noting that sales efforts are pacing very positively. Convention sales for spring are forecast to be very strong.
- Sales leads continue to be very strong; convention attendance is slightly lower than pre-pandemic levels, but showing consistent signs of improvement.
- The Number of convention leads has increased 62 percent over last year, demonstrating strong demand for Nashville. The forecast calls for 2023 to be a record-breaking year for conventions.

- *CVent* recently ranked Nashville second only to Orlando for group occupancy.
- The ASAE conference has resulted in 28 leads representing 193,000 lead room nights to date.
- The sales team attended IMEX Americas, the largest convention trade show in the US, and met with 450 clients interested in booking meetings in Nashville.
- The sales team attended the National Coalition of Black Meeting Planners to solicit a bid to host conference in Nashville.
- The team is assisting with the National Coalition of Black Elected Officials, schedule to meet in Nashville in 2023.
- The team attended the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association meeting to solicit convention business for city.
- The team booked and is currently helping to plan the Association of African American Museums, scheduled to meet in Nashville in 2023.
- The team attended World Travel Market and met with 50 top tour operators and media representatives to solicit international leisure travel. International tour operators reported that travel sentiment for Nashville is very high.

Franklin requested a market research report from NCVC's VP of Research, Bruce McGregor, who made the following notes:

- Twelve hotels have opened in the city this year with a total of 1,888 rooms. These include Four Seasons, Hotel Fraye, the Conrad and 1 Hotel. Total current inventory in Davidson County is 269 hotels with 38,755 rooms. Forecast call for this to increase seven percent in 2023. The MSA (market including adjacent counties to Davidson) has 486 hotels with 56,976 rooms.
- Through 2024, Nashville is forecast to open 2,200 new hotel rooms.
- Nashville had 939,309 room nights sold in October, the first time the city has sold over 900,000 room nights in a month. The city also had the highest ever recorded monthly Average Daily Rate (ADR) with \$222.53, a 10.2 percent increase from 2021.
- Occupancy for October was 78.9 percent; an increase from 2021 (71 percent) but a decrease from October 2019 (84 percent). This is reflective of all the new supply in the market. There are more rooms being sold, but also more rooms to sell than ever before.
- Forecast data indicates that Nashville is poised for more growth in 2023 and 2024. International travel market is not forecast fully recover from pandemic until 2025, which is a significant growth market for Nashville.
- All information is sourced from Tourism Economics, a division of Harvard Economics, STR and internal booking data.

Franklin shared the proposed meeting dates for 2023:

- February 9, 2023
- May 11, 2023
- September 14, 2023

- November 16, 2023 – shift due to CMA Awards November 8, 2023

All quarterly meetings are on the second Thursday of the month, at 8:30 a.m. It is noted that the November meeting date has been changed from this model to accommodate the CMA Awards, noting many Commissioners direct role in that event.

Hank Adam Locklin made a motion to approve the proposed meeting dates for 2023; Mark Hayes seconded; motion approved unanimously.

Franklin adjourned the meeting at 9:15 a.m.