



# THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

MINUTES OF MEETING  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU  
JANUARY 13, 2009

The Board of Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB) of Montgomery County, Texas held their Meeting on January 13, 2009 in The Woodlands Township Board Room at 10001 Woodloch Forest Drive, Suite 600, The Woodlands, Montgomery County, Texas. The roll was called and those in attendance were:

Nelda Blair, Chairman

Peggy Hausman, Vice Chairman

Lloyd Matthews, Secretary

Claude Hunter, Treasurer

Karen Hoylman, Director

Fred Domenick, Director

Nick Wolda, TWCVB President

Also in attendance were Bret Strong, Legal Counsel for the TWCVB, The Strong Firm; Don Norrell, President, The Woodlands Township; Steve Sumner, Vice President of Operations and Public Safety; Casey Snyder, TWCVB General Manager; Kelly Overbeck, TWCVB Business Development Manager; Julie DeGuerre, TWCVB Event Manager; Sharon Swaim, TWCVB Marketing Assistant; and Rachel Christensen, Marketing Intern.

Chairman Nelda Blair called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. and called for the adoption of the Agenda for this meeting that was developed and posted in the offices of The Woodlands Township. A motion was made by Director Hunter to adopt the Agenda and seconded by Director Hoylman and carried by unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Director Matthews to accept the meeting minutes from November 11, 2008 and seconded by Director Hunter. Motion carried by unanimous vote and the minutes were approved.

Next Agenda Item No. 3 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and receive the Financial Report for the TWCVB for November 2008. The December 2008 Financial Report was not final at the time of the meeting. TWCVB President Nick Wolda offered discussion and presentation on the Financial Reports. The TWCVB had a favorable balance through November 2008 of \$192,441. The TWCVB had a favorable variance of \$52,213. At some point, the TWCVB needs to decide if the \$52,213 should be kept in the TWCVB account or put back into The Township account.

President Wolda brought before the Board the idea of increasing the skating price by \$1 for next year's Ice Rink. He asked the Board to consider this for next year. It has been five years since we have had an increase. A price comparison was done and the Galleria charges \$11 and the new Houston downtown ice rink is at \$10 for everyone no matter the age.

After discussion, a Motion was made by Director Hoylman to accept the Financial Report for November 2008 as presented. The Motion was seconded by Director Domenick and passed by unanimous vote. The December 2008 Financial Report will be presented for approval at the March 2009 TWCVB Board.

Discussion: Considering the favorable variance balance of \$52,213, Director Domenick made a suggestion that the TWCVB might want to consider a new position for a Convention Sales or Service Manager. Before the March meeting a job analysis will need to be done and a job description developed for the position.

Next Agenda Item No. 4 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and appoint Don Norrell, President, The Woodlands Township, to the TWCVB Board of Directors. The TWCVB filled the vacant board position of The Woodlands Township President in September 2008 with the Township's Interim President Bob Kinnear. In October 2008, The Township Board of Directors hired Don Norrell as President of The Township. The TWCVB needs to replace Director Kinnear with The Township President Don Norrell.

Motion made by Director Hunter to replace Director Kinnear with Don Norrell. The Motion was seconded by Director Hoylman and passed by unanimous vote. Director Norrell took his seat on the Board.

Next Agenda Item No. 5 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval of the 2009 Service Agreement between The Woodlands Convention and Visitors Bureau and The Woodlands Township.

President Wolda offered that with the transfer of marketing dollars from The Woodlands Township to The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau, a service agreement is needed. This Service Agreement was approved by The Woodlands Township Board of Directors in December 2008.

After discussion, a Motion was made by Director Domenick to approve the Service Agreement between The Woodlands CVB and The Woodlands Township and seconded by Director Hunter and passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 6 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval of the Service Agreement with The Strong Firm to provide 2009 legal counsel to The Woodlands Convention and Visitors Bureau.

President Wolda offered discussion regarding Mickey Deison, Attorney at Law, who had assisted with the legal proceedings to create The Woodlands CVB and that he was not to be the long term legal council for TWCVB. The Strong Firm in The Woodlands brings vast experience in various corporate and commercial matters, and extensive knowledge of the local corporate and business community, and has provided excellent service to TWCVB over the past two years. It is recommended that The Strong Firm remain the legal council for TWCVB.

A Motion was made by Director Matthews to continue utilizing The Strong Firm for legal services for calendar year 2009. Motion seconded by Director Hoylman and passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 7 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval for the 2009 Public Relations contract with Kaplan Public Relations.

President Wolda offered discussion. Kaplan Public Relations has handled the destination marketing efforts of TWCVB since 2007. They have done an outstanding job in the travel and tourism business for TWCVB and recommendation is made to approve the contract with Kaplan Public Relations for 2009 services.

Motion was made recommending Kaplan Public Relations as TWCVB's public relations agency for 2009 by Director Hunter and the Motion was seconded by Director Domenick and passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 8 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval for the 2009 Service Agreement with the South Montgomery County Woodlands Chamber of Commerce for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau Visitor Services Program.

President Wolda offered discussion regarding this matter. TWCVB had entered into an agreement in 2007 with the Chamber to provide visitor services at Market Street, The Woodlands Mall, and The Chamber offices. This program has been very successful generating 72,000+ visitors representing 498 different zip codes, 67 different countries and 49 states. This year, the level of participation has been increased by \$7,500 with the addition of a staffed information booth at specified events in The Woodlands to do surveying for TWCVB.

Director Hoylman commented that the visitor services wanted to be very much involved in events with TWCVB so they can capture valuable information from visitors. Chairman Blair commented that this is an excellent program partnership with the Chamber and that it provides an excellent service.

A Motion was made by Director Hunter to approve the 2009 Service Agreement with The Chamber and the Motion was seconded by Director Matthews. The Motion passed by unanimous vote with one abstention by Director Hoylman.

Next Agenda Item No. 9 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval for the 2009 Advertising Sponsorship Agreement with The Woodlands Waterway Arts Council.

President Wolda offered discussion. In December 2008 TWCVB made a proclamation proclaiming the weekend of April 3 & 4 as the official Waterway Arts Festival weekend in The Woodlands. This is an advertising opportunity for TWCVB to promote The Woodlands as a unique destination to visitors through distribution of literature, media, and signage. After discussion, a Motion was made by Director Domenick to approve the Service Agreement and seconded by Director Hunter. Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 10 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and approve a contract between Manlove Marketing & Communications and The Woodlands CVB for the 2009 Destination Marketing Services. (Copy of the agreement was a handout)

After discussion by President Wolda explaining that after an extensive RFP was sent out Manlove Marketing & Communications was awarded TWCVB's advertising contract for 2009 with a right for two, one (1) year extension into 2010. These services are bid out every three years and it will be bid out again the summer of 2011.

A Motion was made by Director Matthews and seconded by Director Hunter to approve the 2009 contract with Manlove Marketing and Communications. The Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 11 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and approve the Destination Marketing Campaign theme for 2009.

President Wolda offered discussion that Manlove Marketing & Communications designed three different destination marketing campaigns. In November 2008, Manlove conducted a Focus Group on these three campaigns. The summary of the focus group is included in the Board book for this meeting. The conclusion was that “Fashions in Travel” be the 2009 campaign theme.

After discussion, a Motion was made by Director Hoylman and seconded by Director Hunter and the Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda item No. 12 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider participation in a Public Golf program with Canongate Golf Club.

President Wolda offered discussion regarding history of this proposal and current status. A Motion was made to vote to participate in the public golf program with Canongate Golf Club and to get partners by Director Matthews and seconded by Director Hoylman.

Director Hoylman wanted to make sure that the new Avia Hotel was contacted to find out their interest in this golf program. President Wolda will contact the new hotel.

Next Agenda item No. 13 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and receive a report on TWCVB holiday activities by President Wolda.

Update on Holiday Activities:

Lighting of the Doves and International Winter on the Waterway Survey results:

- 15,000+ attendance
- 47% attended from outside of South Montgomery County
- 84% rated festival location as excellent or good
- 75% rated the festival excellent and good
- 71% rated the festival parking excellent and good
- Partnered with Deretchin Elementary where the students chose a country and decorated a tree representing that country’s way of celebrating the holidays and the trees were displayed at the event.

2008-2009 Holiday Sponsor Update:

- Goal: \$120,000
- Actual: \$129,000

### The Ice Rink

- Open daily November 21, 2008 to January 19, 2009
- Named as one of America's best Ice Rinks on [www.ForbesTraveler.com](http://www.ForbesTraveler.com)
- Attendance: Had a strong start. As the season progressed the attendance fell and this drop was contributed to new location and visibility factor.
- TWCVB launched an extensive coupon promotion program (copy included as attachment)
- Origin of visitors: 48% outside The Woodlands
- Advertising efforts: television, radio, direct mail, newspapers, e-newsletters and public relations articles
- No parking issues

### **Other announcements by President Wolda:**

Agenda Item No. 14: Up date on Water Taxes. There is no new business or discussion as work is still being done.

Riva Row Boat House opening will be up coming and plans will be shared as they develop. This will be a place for renting a canoe or kayak. This will be a great promotional tool for The Woodlands to bring visitors and activities. TWCVB will be working with The Community Associations of The Woodlands on this project.

President Wolda offered that Chris Nunes, with the Parks and Recreation Department, at The Community Associations, wants to work closely with TWCVB to inform the hotel properties on this project so they can promote it to their visitors and guests. He wants to create a package to give to their guests for corporate, group and leisure travelers. A meeting will need to be set within the next month to do this.

Reminder: Mark your calendars for the 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Public Safety Banquet being held on March 6 at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel and Convention Center.

Casey Snyder, marketing manager, distributed new and updated Visitor Guide maps.

*Southern Living Magazine* named The Woodlands No. 8 as the best neighborhood for shopping in the southwest United States by 50,000 of their readers.

*Texas Meeting and Events* published a great article promoting the Woodlands as a great place to have an event, meeting, or conference.

Rachel Christensen was introduced as the new TWCVB marketing intern. She is studying hotel and restaurant management at the University of Houston's Conrad N. Hilton College of Hotel and Restaurant Management and she will be assisting TWCVB with marketing projects.

No matters of record.

Agenda items for next meeting: Discuss the possible new position of a Sales and Convention Manager.

Group photo will be taken of the TWCVB Board members and staff by Ted Washington immediately following the meeting.

Chairman called for Adjournment. Motion made by Director Hunter and seconded by Director Domenick and carried by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 am.