



THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

MINUTES OF MEETING
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU
March 10, 2009

The Board of Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB) of Montgomery County, Texas held their Meeting on March 10, 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

Don Norrell, Director

Nick Wolda, President

Also in attendance were Bret Strong, Legal Counsel for the TWCVB, The Strong Firm; Casey Snyder, TWCVB General Manager; Kelly Overbeck, TWCVB Business Development Manager; Julie DeGuerre, TWCVB Event Manager; Sharon Swaim, TWCVB Marketing Assistant.

Chairman Nelda Blair called the meeting to order at 8:33 a.m. and called for the adoption of the Agenda for this meeting that was developed and duly posted as required by law. A motion was made by Director Claude Hunter to adopt the Agenda and seconded by Director Lloyd Matthews and carried by unanimous vote.

Motion was made by Director Matthews to accept the meeting minutes from the January 13, 2009 CVB Board meeting 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 Reports for the TWCVB for January 2009 and February 2009. TWCVB President Nick Wolda offered discussion and presentation on the Financial Reports. After discussion, a Motion was made by Director Hunter to accept the Financial Reports for January 2009 and February 2009 as presented. The Motion was seconded by Director Hoylman and passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 4 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval of the 2009 Advertising Sponsorship Proposal for Food and Wine Week. The 2009 Festival is scheduled for May 26-31, 2009 being held in The Woodlands. This event drew over 10,000 attendees in 2008 and the expected crowd for 2009 is 12,000+. This is a very significant event and brings a great crowd of visitors from outside The Woodlands. The suggested level of advertising is \$10,000. As part of the sponsorship, The Woodlands would be featured in the Texas Monthly May issue. Director Hausman asked what would be the benefit for TWCVB to participate in this event. Director Domenick responded that a definite benefit is that it brings visitors and room nights to the local hotel businesses. It has become a significant and well attended event.

Chairman Blair asked for clarity on the exact location of the event. The Wine Walk is held in Market Street. There is a Saturday night event at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott. The main visibility of the TWCVB would be at the Wine Walk in Market Street and The Marriott on Saturday night. Director Hausman asked if all the sponsorship dollars go to a charity. President Wolda responded that the sponsorship of \$10,000 was being used strictly for advertising. After further discussion, a Motion was made by Director Matthews to approve the advertising sponsorship agreement and authorize the President of TWCVB to sign a contract. The Motion was seconded by Director Domenick and passed by unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 5 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and act upon approval of the event production vendor for 2009. A formal 10-page Request for Quote (RFQ) was sent out regarding event production for five major events: 12th Annual Red, Hot & Blue™, 27th Annual Lighting of The Doves™, International Winter on The Waterway™, The Ice Rink™ and Winter Wonderland™. The RFQ was sent to four companies and only two responded: Elias Events and Spectrum Events.

After further discussion, a Motion to recommend contracting Spectrum Catering, Concessions & Special Events as the 2009 TWCVB event production service company for calendar year 2009 with a one-year renewal for calendar year 2010 without RFQ process and negotiate another year's renewal not to exceed a 5 percent increase was made by Director Matthews and seconded by Director Hoylman. The Motion passed by unanimous vote.

Director Hausman expressed concern about the significant price differences on the returned RFQ's and Chairman Blair asked that the CVB Event Manager check with the other companies that did not respond and try to find out why they did not respond.

Next Agenda Item No. 6 offered by Chairman Blair: Consider and approve expenses for Fourth of July Fireworks. The contract agreement has been reviewed by legal counsel and was a handout at the meeting. President Wolda discussed the fact the Fireworks Extravaganza has become one of the Greater Houston's largest Independence Day celebrations. The fireworks alone draw more than 100,000 people to The Woodlands and its commercial areas as well as other areas in South Montgomery County.

Last year a request for proposal (RFP) was issued with a one-year renewal and Pyro Shows, a Tennessee based company, was selected. They did an outstanding job in 2008 and it is being recommended that Pyro Shows be used again in 2009. The product is costing more and their cost is going up. There was \$60,000 in the budget last year and again this year but we did the show for \$50,000 last year. Event Manager DeGuerre discussed that they were presented with the budget of \$50,000. With there being a 10% cost increase the same number of shells could be used but spaced out more in the 23-minute show or cut the time of the program by 10%. The show is 23 minutes. With the budget of \$60,000, it would cover the 10% cost increase and increase the count of shells and would be a longer show. President Wolda offered that Woodforest National Bank came in as a \$20,000 sponsor of show which they were only \$10,000 last year.

Director Hausman made a Motion to produce the show at the same \$50,000 and the Motion was seconded by Director Hunter. Discussion was held. We have a great festival but our fireworks show is what the 100,000+ spectators come to see. TWCVB needs to maintain the level of show it has done in the past. Chairman Blair, Directors Matthews, Domenick, Hoylman and Norrell voted no. Motion failed.

Chairman Blair called for a new Motion to approve the production of the fireworks show not to exceed cost of \$60,000 and authorize the TWCVB President to execute the contract in connection therewith. Motion made by Director Matthews and seconded by Director Domenick. Vote yes: Chairman Blair, Directors Domenick, Matthews, and Hoylman. Opposed: Directors Hausman and Hunter.

Next Agenda Item No. 7 offered by Chairman Blair: Discussion of Convention and Sales Manager and various approaches to increase group business. A convention sales manager position overview was distributed. Discussion was held as to the possible need in the future of a convention and sales manager position to recruit new business to The Woodlands in the areas of bus tours, reunions, sporting events, trade shows, convention groups, weddings and other groups. This is an area that it is felt should be developed possibly for the future. Research should be done with other Convention and Visitors Bureaus and make a comparison to what is done in other areas. This was discussion item only. No action was taken on this item.

Next Agenda Item No. 8 offered by Chairman Blair: Update on Destination Marketing activities by Marketing Manager, Casey Snyder:

2009 Destination Marketing Plan

- Television ads running April 2009 – July 2009
- Radio running May 2009 – July 2009
- Texas Monthly ad in May 2009 issue
- Continental Magazine ad – March 2009, May 2009 and June 2009
- Statewide Interactive – March 2009 – July 2009 (Search engine marketing)

International Marketing Media

- Status Magazine(Mexican publication) – March 2009 – November 2009
- El Reforma (banner ads) – May 2009 – July 2009

Information Distribution

- Current Newsletter – March 2009, June 2009, September 2009, December 2009
- Website – All of 2009
- E-Newsletter – February 2009 – December 2009

Tracking International marketing through landing page: www.VistaTheWoodlands.com.

Visitor Services

- 2,000+ visitors so far in 2009
- 158 different zip codes
- 39 countries
- 22 states

Current projects:

- Current Newsletter
- Spring/Summer 2009 Discovery Guide

Director Hunter asked if we would be targeting the Monterrey area and some of the more direct border cities in Mexico.

President Wolda responded that through TWCVB's partnership with Continental Airlines four cities are targeted: Monterey, Guadalajara, Mexico City and Leon. These advertising efforts do go to the high end markets in Mexico. Also, the TWCVB public relations efforts through visiting writers publish articles in affluent area newspapers and magazines in Mexico.

Chairman Blair commented that she would like to see not only just a list of zip codes from where visitors are coming but would like to know what are the increases in visitor numbers after these advertising efforts.

Next Agenda Item No. 9 offered by Chairman Blair:

President's Report

1. Riva Row Boat house opening is set for Saturday, April 25. TWCVB is working very closely with hotel properties for visitors coming to the area to make them aware of this new facility for their visitors.
2. Public Golf – No financial participation at this time and TWCVB can keep the golf symbol in its logo.
3. Events on Waterway – TWCVB is continuing to promote events on The Waterway not only sizable events like The Waterway Arts Festival, Red, Hot & Blue, etc., but to continue to promote smaller programming for the public (smaller events). TWCVB will be working closely with The Woodlands Development Company and a consulting company called GoThink to develop programming for Waterway Square. The need is to create Waterway Square's own identity by creating a sense of place.

Other Matters of Record

Director Hausman asked about the status of the Waterway Taxis? Chairman Blair responded that a meeting will be taking place before the next CVB Board meeting for more discussion on the handling of the Taxis and give an update at next meeting.

Director Hunter asked: How does the wording “Other Matters of Record” on the CVB agenda coordinate with what is required to conform with Open Records/Open Meetings procedures and items that are discussed at the meetings. Chairman Blair offered that the wording on the agenda will be changed to read: Board Announcements. President Wolda reminded the group that the CVB is not required under the Open Records/Open Meetings to conduct the CVB board meetings as open meetings , however, TWCVB tries to conduct meetings accordingly.

Director Matthews commented that he has asked President Wolda to get the board books out in a more timely manner and if items come up at the last minute do not hold up the books but have as a handout at meeting.

Agenda items for next meeting:

Waterway Taxis
Convention Group Business

Chairman Blair called for Adjournment. Motion made by Director Hausman and seconded by Director Hoylman and carried by unanimous vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:59 am.