



# THE WOODLANDS

## CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

**July 13, 2010**

11:30 p.m.

MINUTES OF ANNUAL MEETING

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

THE WOODLANDS CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

The Board of Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB) of Montgomery County, Texas held their Annual Meeting on July 13, 2010 in The Woodlands Township Chambers 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  
Kent Johnson, Director  
Lloyd Matthews, Treasurer  
Claude Hunter, Secretary

Don Norrell, Director  
Fred Domenick, Director  
Nick Wolda, TWCVB President

Director Karen Hoylman was not in attendance at this meeting.

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

Agenda Item No. 1 Adoption of Agenda: Chairman Blair called the meeting to order at 11:40 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 Hunter to adopt the Agenda and seconded by Director Norrell and carried by a unanimous vote.

Agenda Item No. 2 Members elect the Directors for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau: In accordance with the Bylaws of The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB), a 501(c) (6) nonprofit corporation, Members of TWCVB are charged with the responsibility of electing Directors to serve on the Board of Directors for TWCVB.

- **Nelda Blair**, CVB Member, Township Director;
- **Lloyd Matthews**, CVB Member, Township Director;
- **Claude Hunter**, CVB Member, Township Director;
- **Don Norrell**, CVB Member, President – The Woodlands Township;
- **Karen Hoylman**, CVB Member, President – South Montgomery County Woodlands Chamber of Commerce;
- **Fred Domenick**, CVB Member, General Manager – The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel & Convention Center;
- **Kent Johnson**, CVB Member, General Manager – The Woodlands Resort & Conference

Ballots were distributed for voting. Ballots were collected by President Wolda, tallied and the above listed members were approved. A Motion was made by Director Hunter to approve the election and appoint the individuals named above to the Board of Directors for TWCVB to serve from July 2010 through June 2011 and seconded by Director Matthews and carried by a unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 3 Directors elect Officers for The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau: In accordance with the Bylaws of The Woodlands Convention & Visitors Bureau (TWCVB), a 501(c) (6) nonprofit corporation, Members of TWCVB are charged with the responsibility of electing Officers to serve on the Board of Directors for TWCVB.

Chairman Blair explained there are four Officer positions to be considered for TWCVB. The Officer positions to be elected are: Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary.

Chairman Blair made a recommendation regarding election of officers. The Woodlands Township continues to provide the majority of the funds for TWCVB and she recommends that the Officers be Members who currently serve as Directors on The Woodlands Township Board of Directors as well as Directors on TWCVB Board. Due to the fact that there are only three Directors that hold positions on both Boards, two of the Officer's positions would need to be combined. According to the Bylaws of TWCVB, the positions of Secretary and Treasurer can be combined. Chairman Blair recommended TWCVB combine these two Officer positions.

Chairman Blair recommended the following Officers:

- Chairman, Nelda Blair
- Vice-Chairman, Claude Hunter
- Treasurer/Secretary, Lloyd Matthews
- President, Nick Wolda
- General Manager, Casey Snyder

Ballots were distributed for voting. The ballots were collected by President Wolda, tallied and the above listed members were approved to serve as TWCVB officers. A Motion was made by Director Norrell to approve the election and appointment of the officers for TWCVB to serve from July 2010 through June 2011 and seconded by Director Johnson and carried by a unanimous vote.

Director Matthews offered that he agrees with combining these officer positions for the current time but for the future TWCVB needs to have other non-Township Directors who serve as TWCVB Directors be eligible to serve in TWCVB officers positions. Chairman Blair offered agreement to this statement. President Wolda stated that the Bylaws of TWCVB allow for officer consideration/voting to take place at other meetings not just the Annual meeting.

Next Agenda Item No. 4: Public Comment: None

Next Agenda Item No. 5 Consider and approve minutes from the June 23, 2010 special meeting: Motion was made by Director Hunter to accept the minutes from the June 23, 2010 special meeting and seconded by Director Matthews and carried by a unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 6 Consider and receive Financial Report for May 2010 Meeting: President Wolda offered discussion and presentation of the Financial Report for May 2010. He noted that a mistake was found on page 12 regarding a double entry on an encumbrance and a new page was distributed to replace it.

After discussion, Chairman Blair called for a Motion to accept the May 2010 Financial Report. A Motion was made by Director Matthews to accept the Financial Report for May 2010 as presented. The Motion was seconded by Director Hunter and carried by a unanimous vote.

Next Agenda Item No. 7 Receive an Update on The Woodlands Film Commission: Presentation given by Connie DeGuerre with The South Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce and The Woodlands Film Commission. Having a Woodlands Film Commission will be highly beneficial in promoting The Woodlands to regional, national and international crews to come here and film. It is an asset in developing relationships with location scouts and will help in building a strong relationship with The Texas Film Commission and the Houston Film Commission.

Having a Woodlands Film Commission will serve as a sales tax incentive and will benefit the local economy. Production money will be spent locally at hotel, restaurants and merchants. A 30 second commercial can bring as much as \$1,000,000 into a community.

In The Woodlands Film Commission's first year brought over \$225,000 to the area in the following productions:

- TV commercials for Citgo, Amegy Bank and Amoco Credit Union
- Homeland Defense Training Film
- Feature Film
- Festival Circuit Films
- Music Videos
- A&E Biography Segment
- University of Houston Student Project
- Current Project: Devon Luxury Soap (only being shown in Nigeria but being filmed here)

The Woodlands Film Commission website is still under construction and not active yet but anticipating it will be active by this coming fall. There will be photos, text, links to all partners and linked to TWCVB website.

Next Agenda Item No. 8 Receive a six month update on advertising: Presentation made by Casey Snyder, General Manager. TWCVB's Mission is to position The Woodlands as a regionally, nationally and internationally recognized tourist destination by developing quality marketing programs and events to attract visitors and stimulate economic development and growth. Manlove Marketing and Communications is TWCVB's advertising agency on record.

From January 2010 to June 2010:

27.7 million impressions generated through use of advertising:

- 347 TV spots
- 43 Radio spots
- Print Ads
- E-Newsletters
- Online

Upcoming for next six months:

- 129 TV spots in greater Houston area running thru August
- 179 radio spots in greater Houston area running thru October
- Article in July issue of Continental Magazine – “A City Among the Trees” (An editorial by a travel writer)
- Interfaith Dining Guide ad in Fall with distribution of 60,000
- See Texas First ad in Fall with 4.5 million impressions

CVB front page (only) website is now in Spanish. **Will make the “View in Spanish” more prominent.** Using this as a tracking mechanism to see what the need is to have rest of website in Spanish.

Cooperative Marketing 2010 Partners

- Market Street
- The Woodlands Development Company
- The Woodlands Mall
- The Woodlands Resort and Conference Center
- The Woodlands Waterway Marriott Hotel

Marketing Efforts – Cooperative Marketing

- Virtual Tour of The Woodlands
- Houston Visitor Guide – Fall 2010 Ad to run

Group Sales

- Convention South Magazine Ad in March
- The Woodlands Meeting Planner Guide: 500+ distributed
- E-newsletter circulated 700+
- Meeting Planning Website: Averaging 395 unique visits per month

New Groups coming to The Woodlands that have not been reported before at TWCVB Board meetings:

- Artist Expo Houston Convention
- Texas Payroll Conference
- Memorial Herman Ironman Texas
- State Fireman’s Fire Marshall Association
- South Montgomery Girls Softball League

Next Agenda Item No. 9 Receive a six month update on public relations: From January to June 2010 The Woodlands has been featured as a premier leisure destination in over 555 articles (both traditional and online media outlets). Efforts also resulted in placements in Texas Highways Magazine and Meetings South Magazine. TWCVB’s public relations agency is Kaplan Public Relations. From January to June 2010, TWCVB’s PR value is \$214,460.20.

Articles featured on The Woodlands as a destination:

- Continental Magazine
- Houston Chronicle
- TexasTravel.com (editorial coverage, no cost to TWCVB)
- Texas Highways (editorial coverage, no cost to TWCVB)

Showed picture of Ironman Texas announcement in Time Square in New York City and viewed video that Marketing Director from Memorial Herman created from press coverage regarding Herman Memorial Ironman Texas.

Next Agenda Item No. 10 Consider and approve policy regarding placing service providers on TWCVB website: TWCVB has been approached by service providers to be included on TWCVB promotional materials including TWCVB website, [www.VisitTheWoodlands.com](http://www.VisitTheWoodlands.com), The Woodlands Visitor Guide & Map, and The Woodlands Discovery Guide & Savings Book.

President Wolda led the discussion saying that currently, TWCVB includes service providers as long as they fall within The Woodlands Township boundaries. This is the first criteria used to determine whether or not to grant the request to be placed on TWCVB website. There is a need to develop a policy with guidelines to follow. TWCVB has asked Bret Strong, Legal Counsel for TWCVB, to review and provide a recommended policy.

Mr. Strong offered there are two levels to this issue. One is there are businesses that provide legitimate services and should be included on the website. The other is corporate and the Bylaws of TWCVB actually provide membership opportunities for these types. These memberships are not voting members.

There is a Class A and a Class B membership. The Class B is a non-voting membership and are paid members of TWCVB. TWCVB would need to decide if this is a process it would like to start. There are many businesses that are in support of TWCVB mission but may not be physically located in the boundaries of The Woodlands Township. There are also some types of businesses located within the boundaries that TWCVB may not want to have support its mission and be on the website. This needs to be reviewed on a global basis to determine the policy to follow. There is value to being on TWCVB's website and that value needs to support the Mission. Any business with a store front in The Township collecting sales tax is listed on the website.

Director Matthews suggested that TWCVB research how other CVB's handle businesses being listed on their websites. President Wolda offered that this research would be done and brought back to the Board for review and consideration. Developing a policy will continue to be researched and suggestions brought before the Board members.

No action needed at this time on this agenda item.

Next Agenda Item No. 11: Consider and discuss policy regarding transportation providers in The Woodlands: TWCVB has been approached by several different transportation providers to help promote their transportation services that are in The Woodlands. Currently, TWCVB includes only The Woodlands Waterway Trolley and The Woodlands Water Taxi on its website. Private entities are not included in promotions.

President Wolda offered there are several other transportation services here in The Woodlands such as taxi service, bicycle services, limousine and other different types of taxi services. A policy for these types of services being included on TWCVB website needs to be developed. These types of services are not currently listed, however, TWCVB has had a number of requests from these types of service providers to be listed on TWCVB website under transportation.

Director Hunter asked if the use of the name “The Woodlands Township” is protected. Mr. Strong responded that “The Woodlands” part of the name has been licensed to The Woodlands Development Company and usage of the name is protected but “The Woodlands Township” or “The Woodlands Convention and Visitors Bureau” is not a trademark or registered name. TWCVB does not have the capabilities to regulate the usage of “The Woodlands” by businesses.

Director Matthews requested to see an approved list of service providers. The question was asked as to what justifies “approved.” President Wolda offered that along with the research to determine how other CVB’s handle listings on their websites that a list of transportation providers could be made to see what is available in the area. It was also suggested to see if Brazos Transit might be interested to help fund advertising cost of transportation.

Next Agenda Item No. 12 Discussion of 2011 TWCVB Budget: President Wolda discussed that group sales had increased. Activities for Memorial Day weekend are being discussed to create a destination weekend with possibly a fireworks display. Discussion is being held with The Parks and Recreation Department to see what other possibilities could be along The Woodlands Waterway.

There have been some reductions in the Waterway Square programming due to the fact that the interest and awareness of the area has grown due to all the programming that has been done in the area. There has been a small reduction in the international marketing area and TWCVB will still continue to participate in the Continental Mundo program. TWCVB budget will be presented to The Woodlands Township at the July 21, 2010 meeting.

Next Agenda Item No. 13 Receive TWCVB initiative reports:

Events presented by Julie DeGuerre:

- Red, Hot & Blue Survey Results based on 617 surveys collected as compared to 204 in 2009:
- Estimated attendance: Over 110,000 \*Record Year (estimated from local law enforcement)
- Number of zip codes represent 126 different locations
- **Festival location** rated as excellent or good: 98%
- **Festival** rated excellent or good: 96%
- **Parking** rated very easy or good: 94%
- **Entertainment** rated excellent or good: 97%
- **Top activity** was fireworks and music came in second
- **Highest dollar amount to be spent** at the festival: \$25 to \$50

Other 4<sup>th</sup> of July Events in The Woodlands:

- Star Spangled Salute
- 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade
- Splash Day – Record Year over 6,000 attendees
- North Shore Park \* Riva Row Boat House fireworks viewing

Advertising and Public Relations:

- Total Public Relations Value: \$105,447
- Top (3) ways people heard about the festival: Online, multiple sources, newspaper

Discussion was held with Board members as to how to address the growth of the 4<sup>th</sup> of July event. Director Johnson made the suggestion that since this event has become so well known and attended that maybe some of the advertising dollars for this event could be used in other areas. President reminded the Board that advertising dollars from The Red, Hot & Blue are used not only to promote the event but as sponsors come on board advertising dollars are used to fulfill sponsorship entitlements. Other advertisement could be cut back due to the notoriety of the event. People now think of The Woodlands as a place to visit for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. The focus could be more on hotel stays to get visitors to stay overnight.

Director Johnson also suggested TWCVB might want to consider a secondary fireworks show at a different location like North Shore Park so attendance does not grow so large that attendees no longer enjoy it due to crowding and long lines. President Wolda offered that a great deal of thought and planning will go into next year's event to eliminate the over-crowding and the long lines at vendor booths.

President Wolda reported that there were no recorded incidents by the local law enforcement and ten "lost parents" that were reunited with children. Remarkable numbers given the size of the attendance!

Some of the factors that affected crowds this year were people were not travelling as much, the weather in other areas like Houston being under water and other events being cancelled.

Business Development presented by Kelly Overbeck:

- Red, Hot & Blue sponsorship finished at 92%  
( Ellis & Ellis was new sponsor at \$7,500 for this year)
- Waterway Square events currently at 83%
- Holiday events currently at 50%
  - Lighting of the Doves – Hubbell & Hudson
  - iWOW – Silver Eagle, Waste Management, and CenterPoint Energy
  - The Ice Rink – Coca Cola, Spectrum Events, & the Sponsor Party Host, The Strong Firm
  - Winter Wonderland – Donoho's Jewellers recommitted

Ms. Overbeck distributed a copy of the Magical Marketing for the Holidays sponsor packet to the 2010 – 2011 holidays. Please let her know if additional copies are needed.

In-kind sponsorships currently are at \$33,750 including printing, RHB Sponsor Area Hospitality, port-a-lets, hand washing stations, waste removal, waste containers, hot dogs and watermelon for food eating contests, etc. Please send to Ms. Overbeck any potential contacts that you might have.

Next Agenda Item No. 14: President's Report: Nick Wolda reported:

Chairman Blair spoke at the Sterling Ridge Village Association at the end of June. Presentations have been made to all Village Associations and they were all very receptive to efforts of TWCVB.

On July 14, Mrs. Blair and I will be speaking at the Hotel and Lodging Association of Greater Houston at The Woodlands Waterway Marriott regarding TWCVB and The Woodlands as a destination.

News coming from The Woodlands Development Company about two new restaurants coming to Waterway Square District. They are La Guadalupana Mexican Cuisine and Bar and Luca & Leonardo Ristorante. Construction will begin soon with a planned opening in December 2010. With the opening of these two new restaurants at 20 Waterway Avenue the building will be 905 occupied.

TWCVB would like to present a plaque to Director Hausman for her service 2006 to 2010. President Wolda had a plaque at this meeting. (She was not present at this meeting.) The plaque will given to her at the upcoming Township Board meeting.

Agenda Item No. 15: Board Announcements: None

Agenda Item No. 16: Agenda items for next meeting: None

Agenda Item No. 17: Chairman Blair called for Adjournment. Motion to adjourn made by Director Hunter and seconded by Director Matthews and carried by unanimous vote. Meeting adjourned at 1:05 p.m.