

MINUTES
REGULAR QUARTERLY MEETING
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU ADVISORY BOARD
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS
124 Old San Antonio Road
Boerne, TX 78006
Thursday, January 9, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER – 4:00 PM

In attendance were: Joe Granados, Jenny Rabb Faz, Mary Kanafani, Cristal Bitar, Elizabeth Castle, Brad Wilson, and Bexar Schenk.

Absent: Michelle Ernst and Taylor McClure Covington

Joe Granados called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

2. CITIZENS COMMENTS:

There were no public comments.

3. APPROVE MINUTES

Joe Granados called for a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting: Brad Wilson made the motion to approve, Bexar Schenk seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

THIS WAS APPROVED.

4. RECEIVE PRESENTATION OF 3RD QUARTER OF 2019 HOTEL PERFORMANCE AND STATISTICS

Larry explains that one of Jeanette's goals for the year is to increase her public speaking opportunities, so she will be taking over and presenting the CVB update to the board. Jeanette Teague, Assistant Director of the CVB is introduced and welcomed by the board.

a. Fair Market Share – Hill Country Competitive Set

Jeanette reviewed the 3rd quarter hotel performance spreadsheet and pointed out that Boerne received just over our market share as compared to our competitive set in the Hill Country. Larry added that while our average rate was down slightly, the total revenue was up.

Jeanette explained that the shaded numbers in pink were taken directly from Source Strategies reports and how to read the spreadsheet. Discussion followed with questions and comments.

Larry notes that we are on track to beat 2018 numbers for the year. Brad asked if this is the first quarter that The Bevy has come online, to which Larry confirmed.

b. 2019 STR Reports – October and November

Jeanette noted that these are monthly STR reports for October and November and that there is a 3 year comparison on these documents. She went on to explain the spreadsheets. Larry directed the board to check the demand number, which tells us how many rooms were needed and that demand has gone up every week since The Bevy has come online. Larry says new business is coming to the city because the demand is up. He also notes the average rate is down and he wishes it would rise. He is anticipating that in the spring and summer the rates will go up.

Brad questioned what the impact of construction on IH-10 has had and asked if there is any way that we know the impact of that based on the data presented.

Larry replied that the TXDOT signs directing people to Boerne have helped and that complaints are not as great since the signs have gone up. Larry added that people coming in on Hwy 46 say the traffic is bad too. Jeanette added that Bexar Schenk had said there will be a new exit on to South Main opening up in the future. Larry added that the 4th quarter of 2019 was shaping up to be one of the better 4th quarters the CVB has ever seen. Jeanette added that when our visitors become accustomed to the construction, we will see an increase in numbers, pointing out that people still go to Austin and Waco despite the traffic and construction.

Cristal Bitar noted that she has noticed less complaints on getting to

her hotel, but says over all she doesn't really see a difference.

Joe Granados added that his hotel (The Kendall) was different from the others because of their re-branding and they have seen more foot traffic, noting that his numbers had picked up around October.

Larry mentioned that foot traffic through the CVB has also gone up; Jeanette noted that we keep records of our visitors.

Joe said they had to stagger their front desk coverage.

5. RECEIVE UPDATE ON:

a. Advertising Schedule for FY 2019-2020

Jeanette moves on to discuss the advertising schedule and points out that our year starts October 1 and our budget rolls over. She adds that the advertising schedule is a living document that we continually add to and change. She points out the reach that each advertising line provides and explains that is how we decide where to spend advertising dollars.

Larry opens it up to the board for suggestions for where the CVB should advertise. He adds that we always work from the schedule but we also have money set aside for opportunities that pop up throughout the year.

Jeanette recommends that if the board has not reviewed advertising document, to take a look at it because it clarifies the use of our money toward advertising. She points out that print ads in magazines are very expensive and typically go out with the recycle every month, so that's why we spend more money on digital advertising.

She discusses the movie theater advertising the CVB had done in the past and says we are moving those dollars to digital TV instead; first in Houston and then moving to Austin for three months at a time, alternating throughout the year.

Cristal Bitar asked if the CVB had thought about YouTube where we can target certain zip codes?

Larry replied that we have advertised on Pandora on several occasions.

Cristal added that kids are on Pandora and that its a good way to get the word out. She said everyone is on YouTube now.

Joe asks if we use the same Boerne experience video and where do we include the influencer visits on the advertising schedule. Jeanette said those were not paid influencers and therefore were not on this paid ad schedule. She added that Texas Hill Country Magazine had sent the influencers to us that had stayed at The Kendall.

Joe added that he thinks we are creating some immediate impact and value with influencers and credited Tori Bellos for the influencer trip. Joe said he has seen new customers and an increase in their engagement.

b. Quarterly Advertising Plan 2019-2020

Jeanette moved on to the Quarterly Advertising schedule and pointed out that this document doesn't change a lot because its a seasonal schedule.

c. 3rd Quarter 2019 Social Media Update

As included in the packets, Jeanette addresses the social media statistics on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram as of September 30th. She mentions that Tori and Erika constantly post to these platforms and of course they also blog 1-2 per week.

Larry adds that we also send press releases through Melwater with a potential reach in the thousands. Also, Boerne was recently named

as one of the happiest cities in America which is being shared over and over again.

At this time, Jeanette points out the bag of various magazines and ads that the CVB has advertised in. She goes on to discuss the Visitor Guides and reminds the board that it is all done in-house in that Dayna Cartwright sells ads, Tori puts the book together and has it printed.

Discussion follows to include a sample of one of the newest ads Tori has designed.

Larry notes they are moving Erika into sales. When we thought about a new ad that was going into a popular area, when it comes to shopping Boerne wins by a Hill Country Mile. Went back to basics. Simple message. We are pushing the HCM.

Joe notes one of the biggest things we have been lacking is the best mix of retail and entertainment. says restaurants have shifted and he has noticed more live music happening down town. Do we have a plan or a vision for getting the nightlife in boerne?

Jeanette talks about past blogs, radio show, that Erika pushes special acts and different events through those channels. Live music is something we promote regularly. Blog for things to do indoors during winter as example. new flashes are growing all the time.

6. RECEIVE PRESENTATION ON 2020 HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX FUND PROCESS

a. Review HOT Fund Process Schedule

Jeanette moves on to talk about the next meeting which will be Hotel Occupancy Tax Application process. She refers to the HOT tax schedule and points out that we are getting ready to begin that process. She reminds the board that the CVB department is operated

entirely on HOT funds.

Then points out the application included in packet and talks about the rules and regulations.

b. Review HOT Fund Regulations and Procedures

Jeanette then directed the board to review the application prior to the next meeting taking into consideration the rules and regulations for HOT fund qualification. She pointed out the 9 categories in which an applicant could qualify for funding, but that they must first meet the two part criteria test to even be considered as noted on the application. She also notes that there are two media releases that will go out to help get the word out about this funding, as we usually only receive 3 or 4 applications per year.

Joe asked, "why do you say few groups are coming to apply?" to which Jeanette gave the example of an application from a group asking for HOT funds to pave their parking lot. In accordance with the Texas rules of uses for HOT funds, this application did not satisfy the two criteria requirements, nor fall into one of the 9 categories for usage.

Joe asks where the money goes if it is not used, to which Larry replied that it all goes back into the CVB budget. He also mentioned that we know of two new groups coming to apply for funds and we are excited about the possibilities with these groups.

Jeanette then commented that she is one who oversees the entire process and invited any questions or comments from the board.

Larry adds that this is the most important meeting that the CVB Board has and encourages them all to attend. He then gives a quick synopsis of how the process goes.

Cristal asks if meeting will be held in City Council Chambers, to which Jeanette replied, yes it will be.

7. STRATEGIC MARKETING PLAN

Referring to the Strategic Marketing Plan, Jeanette notes that we have again revamped our plan for the 2020 fiscal year, and like the advertising schedule, this a living document that we change and update throughout the year as needed.

Larry added that we look at it on a regular basis in order to lead us and keep us on track with where we need to be in terms of goals and strategies; he says that it is a great road map and we take it seriously. He goes on to invite the board to review the SMP and ask questions; we are open for ideas.

Jeanette points out the section on continuing education and organizations we are involved in for our industry in order to continue to grow and learn, which help us to keep up on trends and changes in our industry in order to better compete in our market.

As an example, TACVB will be in Boerne at the end of the month for their winter conference. The Bevy Hotel is the host hotel and is sold out for this 3 day conference and there were several other hotels in town that picked up rooms as well. Larry added that this will be an excellent opportunity to showcase Boerne for other meeting opportunities with members of this organization.

Joe comments that it is disappointing that the CVB can't hire a full time sales person yet and asks if we can explain the SMP process.

Larry responds by explaining that we look at the advertising opportunities and the reach associated with them and develop an outline that best aligns with the people that like coming to Boerne; typically people come from Houston and Austin. We look at each line item and section to see what's working and what's not. Larry goes to explain how the document is developed and adds that he also sends it to industry professionals like David Dunham with Texas Monthly Magazine and Bob Phillips with Improving Your Success to review it,

critique it and offer suggestions and criticism.

Some additional comments and discussion followed.

8. UPDATE ON CVB SALES EFFORTS

a. Sales Manager Training

Moving on to a discussion on group sales, Larry introduces Erika Yount, who is the scribe for the meeting. He explains her current duties with the CVB which include the weekly radio show, social media posting, blogging and administrative tasks and her intent to move into group sales. With 32 years in hotel sales, Larry will be training and teaching her the hotel business, conferences, why people buy, why people meet and taking her to trade shows and sales conferences. Like today, Jeanette will be taking on more of the day-to-day CVB business operations as Larry goes out to look for more group business.

Larry mentioned that we met with The Kendall's new sales person, Derek Valadez and will be working with him on leads. Larry says we are taking finding new business very seriously.

b. Destination Texas Trade Show – Austin

Jeanette moved on to talk about the Destination Texas trade show that we attended in December. Larry added that it was basically "speed dating" with top meeting planners from all over the country who were interested in bringing a meeting to Texas. Each "speed meeting" lasted 10-12 minutes and were arranged prior to the trade show in order to match interested groups with capable meeting venues. We came back with over 20 solid leads for Boerne.

Jeanette added that it was an expensive trade show to participate in but said it was worth it. We had the opportunity to showcase Boerne to some very valid meeting planners through our videos and website and received a lot of very positive interest and feedback.

c. Southwest Showcase Trade Show – Austin

Moving on to the upcoming trade show in Austin, Southwest Showcase, Larry explained that Erika would be attending this one wherein they would be in front of about 400 meeting planners who want to come to the hill country. We hope to bring back leads. name badges, what meetings they have and opportunities for business, and if you're a hotelier, you'll receive this information.

We are planning on attending more trade shows like this one and other opportunities like this.

9. RECEIVE ADVISORY BOARD MEETING DATES FOR 2020

Jeanette then reviewed the next meeting dates for the board and says the HOT funds meeting usually goes fairly quickly. She mentioned the deadline for hot tax applications and the possibility for an appeals meeting in the event one was needed, but had yet to have one. She also mentioned that other than the HOT Application meeting, the next two would be regular quarterly update meetings for the year.

10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD & STAFF

Joe Granados then asked if the Board had any other questions or comments.

Cristal Bitar asked when the two groups Larry referred to might be coming to Boerne?

Larry responded that one was for next year and the other was a festival that will be in the summer. Larry added the projected dates are 2021.

Jeanette added that the HOT fund applications are for monies to be budgeted for the following year.

Joe then complimented Jeanette on doing a good job presenting the review.

11. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

s/s Larry Woods _____
Boerne Convention and Visitors Bureau Director

CERTIFICATION

**I hereby certify that the above notice of meeting was posted on the 6th day of
January, 2020 at 4:00 p.m.**

s/s Jeanette Teague _____
Secretary

**NOTICE OF ASSISTANCE AT THE PUBLIC MEETINGS The Police / Municipal Court
Complex is wheelchair accessible. Access to the building and special parking is
available at the front entrance of the building. Requests for special services must be
received forty-eight (48) hours prior to the meeting time by calling the City
Secretary at 830-249-9511.**

Pursuant to Section 30.06 Penal Code (trespass by license holder with a concealed handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing law), may not enter this property with a concealed handgun.

Pursuant to section 30.07 Penal Code (trespass by license holder with an openly carried handgun), a person licensed under Subchapter H, Chapter 411, Government Code (handgun licensing law), may not enter this property with a handgun that is carried openly.