

**Monroe-West Monroe Convention and Visitors Bureau
601 Constitution Drive
West Monroe, Louisiana 71292
Board of Directors Meeting
Minutes
December 21, 2020**

Date and Place: The regular meeting of the Convention and Visitors Bureau was held at the Convention and Visitors Bureau, 601 Constitution Drive, West Monroe, Louisiana 71292 at 4:00 p.m., December 21, 2020. Video Conference offered to Board Members that were unable to attend in person.

The Secretary-Treasurer Mickey Merritt presided.

Roll Call: Present

Kevin Crosby
Omar Elgourani
Jordan Guillot-Via Video Conference
Mickey Merritt
Sue Nicholson-Via Video Conference
Don O'Toole, Jr.
Nash Patel
Norene Smith
Roderick Worth-Via Video Conference

Absent

Sammy Gordy-Excused
Ryan Roark-Excused

Staff: Alana Cooper, President/CEO
Elmer Noah, Board Attorney
Krystle Ivey, Operations Administrator
Ruth Canales, Office Manager

Agenda: Don O'Toole moved, and Nash Patel seconded to approve the December 21, 2020, Board Meeting agenda. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Minutes: Nash Patel moved, and Don O'Toole seconded to approve the November 16, 2020 minutes as read. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Treasurer's Report: The board members reviewed the itemized deposits and disbursements showing a balance on hand as of November 30, 2020:

General Funds: \$8,075,205.90

Kevin Crosby moved, and Omar Elgourani seconded to approve the November 30, 2020 financial reports including the budget to actual comparison. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Staff Activities and Travel Plans: Nash Patel moved, and Omar Elgourani seconded to approve travel plans January 2021 through March 2021. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Committee Reports:

Facilities/Product Development Committee

President/CEO Alana Cooper reported that the Facilities/Product Development Committee met to discuss the indoor sports facility. The committee requested that Alana Cooper get with Victus Advisors to get a proposal for research to include an indoor track feasibility within the indoor sports complex. Two prices for the research were quoted: 1. A feasibility study analyzing comparable venues and building options, operating pro formas, updated fiscal and economic impact, and return on investment. The quote is for \$23,100. 2. Includes all listed, plus interviews with key track & field organizers at a cost of \$27,900. Timeline for completion is eight weeks with interviews.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Don O'Toole seconded to authorize President/CEO Alana Cooper to enter a contract with Victus Advisors for a full study, to include interviews with event coordinators, on the feasibility of adding an indoor track to the Indoor Sports Facility for the sum of \$27,900.00. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Tourism Development Grant Committee

Committee member Kevin Crosby reported on the Tourism Development Grant Committee meeting held prior to the Board of Directors meeting. The first item of discussion was the ULM Baseball Turf project. The grant, originally approved in July 2019, was extended to November 2020 due to Covid and they are seeking matching funds during this period. The new President, Dr. Ron Berry, has just been made aware of the grant awarded for the turf project. He has requested an additional extension to the end of June 2021 to acquire the necessary funds for the match. With the funding in place, he felt the project could be completed in the summer of 2021.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Norene Smith seconded to extend the ULM Baseball Turf grant to June 2021. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Kevin Crosby reported on the request for payment in the amount of \$18,569.75 to the Chennault Aviation and Military Museum Air Park. The original grant is for \$150,000.00 for Construction of the Airpark. The Committee recommended the payment of 20% of the construction project costs requested at the amount of \$12,753.75. The additional invoices submitted with this grant payment contained several items that fall outside of the construction bid costs such as geo tech, electrical, and concrete cylinders.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Nash Patel seconded to pay \$12,753.75 to the Friends of Chennault and Military Museum for the construction project and authorize President/CEO, Alana Cooper, to meet with Chennault Aviation and Military Museum and get a full plan of additional items not included in the

construction bid project that will be needed to complete the attraction. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Kevin Crosby reported on the request for the full grant payment from the ULM Activity Center in the amount of \$7,000.00 for portable mounds. Required paperwork was submitted and is complete.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Norene Smith seconded to pay the amount of \$7,000.00 to ULM Activity Center for the portable pitching mounds. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Kevin Crosby reported a request for final payment in the amount of \$7,332.00 from the Biedenharn Museum and Gardens. The Biedenharn reported their marketing plans changed and decreased due to Covid. With the decrease they stated that they can account for 1300 room nights during their operations of 2020.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Norene Smith seconded to pay the amount of \$7,332.00 to the Biedenharn Museum and Gardens for marketing expenses for their grant. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Kevin Crosby reported on the request from the Twin City Ballet. The original grant amount was \$10,000.00 to be split into four events. The Twin City Ballet requested full payment of \$2,500.00 for the workshop. The workshop was only three days held in August with usage of nine rooms instead of two weeks for 100-150 rooms. The second part requested was \$1,250.00 for the Christmas show. The Ballet reported that they had not purchased advertisement other than utilizing Facebook for the Christmas show which was held only once.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Norene Smith seconded to pay Twin City Ballet Company \$1,250.00 for the workshop and nothing for the Christmas show event. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Kevin Crosby reported that a representative from the Krewe de Riviere made a presentation to change their grant focus due to cancellation of the Mardi Gras Parade. The Krewe de Riviere proposes to do an event in Kiroli Park for a reverse parade. The Krewe will park their floats throughout the Park and let people drive or walk by depending on Covid restrictions. They asked to use the \$10,000.00 set aside for bands to march in the parade to be utilized for the bands to serve as entertainment throughout the day.

Kevin Crosby moved, and Omar Elgourani seconded to allow the Krewe de Riviere to use \$10,000.00 in funds for bands to be used for performers and that President/CEO Alana Cooper and Attorney Elmer Noah if necessary, work with the Krewe de Riviere to review the contracts for entertainment for protection in case of cancellation of the event. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Other Business:

President/CEO Alana Cooper told the Board that she had set up the Office Retreat for January 8, 2021 and asked permission for the office to be closed that day to allow the staff to participate in this training. Don O'Toole moved, and Omar Elgourani seconded to approve closing the office on January 8, 2021 for a Staff Retreat. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

President/CEO Alana Cooper requested a resolution authorizing her to sign on behalf of the Convention and Visitors Bureau. This is needed for state grants from the Louisiana Office of Tourism. Nash Patel moved, and Omar Elgourani seconded to sign an authorization resolution for President/CEO Alana Cooper to be authorized to sign on behalf of the Monroe-West Monroe Convention and Visitors Bureau of Ouachita Parish. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

President/CEO Report:

President/CEO Alana Cooper presented a budget for the Crappie Master Individual Championship, May 6-8, 2021. She requested up to \$30,000.00 be designated to host this event. Omar Elgourani moved, and Kevin Crosby seconded to designate Special Promotion funds of \$30,000.00 for the Crappie Master Individual Championship on May 6-8, 2021. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Adjournment: There being no further business, Don O'Toole moved, and Norene Smith seconded to adjourn at 5:00 p.m. Motion carried by a vote of six (6) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.



Ryan Roark, Chairman



Mickey Merritt, Secretary/Treasurer