

**Monroe-West Monroe
Convention and Visitors Bureau
Board of Directors Meeting**

**Minutes
January 25, 2016**

Date and Place: The regular meeting of the Convention and Visitors Bureau was held at the Convention and Visitors Bureau office on January 25, 2016 at 4:00 p.m. The Chairman, Norene Smith presided.

Roll Call: **Present**

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Jerry Edmondson | Omar Elgourani |
| Sammy Gordy | Lane Howell |
| Sue Nicholson | Don O'Toole |
| Nash Patel | Ryan Roark |
| Janet Rutledge | Norene Smith |

Absent

Gretchen Kovac (excused)

Staff:

Alana Cooper, President/CEO
Sylvia Bullard, Office Manager
Elmer Noah, Board Attorney

Agenda: It was moved by Sammy Gordy and seconded by Lane Howell to approve the January 25, 2015 board meeting agenda. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Minutes: It was moved by Lane Howell and seconded by Jerry Edmondson to approve the December 21, 2015 minutes as read. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Treasurer Report: The board members reviewed the itemized deposits and disbursements showing the following balance on hand as of December 31, 2015.

General Funds \$7,855,579.71

Report filed for audit.

Travel Plans: It was moved by Sammy Gordy and seconded by Nash Patel to approve the additional travel plans for January through April 2016. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Committee Report:

Tourism Development Grant Committee – Janet Rutledge reported that the committee met on January 22, 2016 at 3:00 p.m. to review final payment requests and the January 10, 2016 grant applications. She stated that the special Promotion budget for 2016 is \$800,000.00 less funds already dedicated of \$200,397.50 leaving a balance of \$599,602.50 for the 2016 grant period.

She reported the following organizations submitted final payment requests.

1. Dirty South Marathon requested final payment in the amount of \$1,875.00 for the 2015 Marathon Race.
2. The Louisiana Purchase Gardens and Zoo requested final payment in the amount of \$625.00 to upgrade website.
3. The Northeast Louisiana Soccer Association requested final payment in the amount of 61,651.00 of \$66,000.00 dedicated for field lights. The committee approved with the amount of \$4,349.00 returning back to the special promotion line item.
4. The Downtown Monroe Alliance requested final payment in the amount of \$300.00 for the purchase of Christmas lights.

It was moved by Janet Rutledge and seconded by Jerry Edmondson to approve the final payment request as presented by the Tourism Development Grant Committee. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Janet Rutledge reported that the committee received seven (7) applications for Events, Festivals and Marketing Plans and Five (5) applications for Capital Improvement Projects.

After the committee discussed each grant request the committee made the following recommendations to fund the organizations as listed in the amount of \$357,100.00.

| Organization | Amount Requested | Amount Recommended |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Events, Festivals, or Marketing Plans | | |
| 1. Chennault Aviation & Military Museum Billboards and Branding | 46,760.00 | 35,000.00 |
| 2. City of Monroe/DeltaFest Advertising/Placed by CVB | 50,000.00 | 10,000.00 |
| 3. Downtown Monroe Alliance Billboards/Marketing (3) Festivals | 21,500.00 | -0- |
| 4. Downtown RiverMarket Two (2) Billboards and Vinyl changes placed by CVB \$6,000 for Lights Purchase by CVB | 28,200.00 | 21,000.00 |
| 5. Mann’s Family Charities/ Crawfish Craze Barrel Run/Advertising | 12,500.00 | 10,000.00 |
| 6. Mu Tau Inc. Advertising \$8,000.00/Billboards \$1,500 Placed by CVB | 14,170.00 | 9,500.00 |
| 7. West Monroe Chamber of Commerce Ongoing Tour/Self-Guided Tour of the Cotton Port District | 4,600.00 | 4,600.00 |

It was moved by Sammy Gordy and seconded by Omar Elgourani to approve the Tourism Development Grant Committee as presented for funding of the January 10, 2016 grant applications for Events, Festivals and Marketing Plans in the amount of \$90,100.00. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

| Organization | Amount Requested | Amount Recommended |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Capital Improvement of New of Existing Tourist Oriented Attractions | | |
| 1. City of Monroe/Civic Center Upgrade Civic Center Fountain with LED Lights | 20,000.00 | 20,000.00 |
| 2. N/E Louisiana Soccer Association Purchase Portable Bleachers | 130,000.00 | 130,000.00 |
| 3. West Monroe Civitan/Smiles Park Purchase Equipment | 50,000.00 | 20,000.00 |
| 4. University of Louisiana at Monroe ULM Beach Volley Courts Improvements | 65,000.00 | 65,000.00 |
| 5. West Monroe Dixie Youth Biedenharn Ballpark/Drainage | 462,000.00 | 32,000.00 |

It was moved by Janet Rutledge and seconded by Sue Nicholson to approve the Tourism Development Grant Committee report as presented for funding of the January 10, 2016 grant applications for Capital Improvements of New or Existing Tourist Attractions in the amount of \$267,000.00. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Other Business:

Judy Randall with Randall Travel Marketing, Inc. was contracted to do a Visitors Intercept Survey on local attractions, hotels and restaurants in the area. She presented the 2015 Survey with comparison to the 2007 survey to the Board of Directors of the review of her findings.

President/CEO Report

Alana Cooper reported that the Convention and Visitors Bureau will bid to host the Dixie Major World Series to be held July 28 through August 2, 2017 in Monroe-West Monroe. She requested board approve to dedicate \$12,000.00 for bid fee and other expenses.

It was moved by Sammy Gordy and seconded by Omar Elgourani to dedicate \$12,000.00 for bid fee and other expenses to host the Dixie Major World Series if the Convention and Visitors Bureau is the successful bidder. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Alana Cooper reported that the Convention and Visitors Bureau will host the American Bass Anglers National Championship Tournament for 500 fishermen to be held October 21 through 27, 2017 in Monroe-West Monroe. She requested board approval to dedicate \$20,000.00 to host the tournament.

It was moved by Sammy Gordy and seconded by Lane Howell to dedicate \$20,000.00 to host the American Bass Anglers National Championship Tournament to be held October 21 through 27, 2017 in Monroe-West Monroe. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negatives votes.

Alana Cooper reported that the Convention and Visitors Bureau will again offer one (1) Scholarship to the STS Marketing College in the amount of \$3,000.00 and one (1) Scholarship to the Lt. Governor's Conference in the amount of \$750.00. She requested board approval of the expenditures in the amount of \$3,750.00.

It was moved by Omar Elgourani and seconded by Sue Nicholson to approve the expenditures of \$3,750.00 for one (1) Scholarship to the STS Marketing College in the amount of \$3,000.00 and one (1) Scholarship to the Lt. Governor's Conference in the amount of \$750.00. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Adjournment: There being no further business, it was moved by Lane Howell and seconded by Omar Elgourani to adjourn at 5:20 p.m. Motion carried by a vote of ten (10) affirmative votes to zero (0) negative votes.

Norene Smith, Chairwoman

Lane Howell, Secretary/Treasurer

