

**CLAYTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, APRIL 14, 2022**

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Damon T. Williams called the meeting to order at 4:13 p.m. Beth Bailey conducted the roll call.

II. ROLL CALL:

Attendee Name	Title	Status
Damon T. Williams	Chairman	Present
Miyoshi Bourget	Board Member	Present via Zoom
Lynda Browning	Vice Chair	Present
Myla Chapman	Board Member	Present
Tonya Clarke	Board Member	Present
Gabe Johnson	Board Member	Present via Zoom
Bud Smith	Board Member	Present

Staff: Tamara Patridge, Executive Director; Beth Bailey, Special Projects Manager/Interim Finance Manager

III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA

CONSENT AGENDA

MINUTES

1. March 2022

FINANCIAL REPORT

1. February 2022
 - a. Tourism Authority
 - b. Convention & Visitors Bureau

END OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion to approve, Myla Chapman; second, Lynda Browning. Unanimous approval.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

1. National Tourism Week
 - a. Ms. Patridge reported National Tourism Week is May 1-7, 2022. The U.S. Travel Association sponsors the event each year and provides a theme to support the

importance of tourism. This year's theme, "The Future of Travel is" will be used by tourism entities across the country with each day incorporating a different hashtag to represent various parts of tourism. The CVB will utilize these themes in social media posts throughout the week. The CVB staff will send each of the Tourism Authority members a reminder the week before to encourage them to share with their networks and on their own social media outlets.

- i. Sunday, May 1: Innovation
 1. Tour bus technology
 2. Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport/TSA facial recognition technology for security
 - ii. Monday, May 2: Recovery
 1. COVID protocols including touchless facilities and amenities; antibacterial supplies and hand sanitizing stations
 - iii. Tuesday, May 3: Increasing Global Competitiveness
 1. International group tour business
 2. Georgia and Clayton County film industry
 - iv. Wednesday, May 4: Rebuilding America's Workforce
 1. Visitors Center employee spotlights
 - v. Thursday, May 5: Inclusivity
 1. Spotlight on Hattie McDaniel and Butterfly McQueen
 2. Minority-owned retail products that are carried in the Visitors Center gift shop
 3. Open call for minority-owned Clayton County businesses to post on CVB social media
 - vi. Friday, May 6: In Person/Being Present
 1. Visitor Spotlights
 2. Customer appreciation day including discounted admission for tours and giveaways
 - vii. Saturday, May 7: Now/Present Day
 1. Clayton County Tourism Authority grants and impact on the community
 2. Spotlight on Newman Wetlands Center including the new TrackChair which was purchased through Tourism Authority grant program funding
- b. Ms. Patridge reported that there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony for Clayton County's Spivey Splash water park on Thursday, May 19th at noon. She reminded the board that there is a contract between the Clayton County CVB/Tourism Authority and Clayton County government to market attractions in unincorporated Clayton County. Previously, The Beach at Clayton County International Park, was the county's number one attraction prior to the pandemic shutdown and prior to the park's closing for renovations. She anticipates the new water park, Spivey Splash, will once again regain the title. The CVB will work leading up to the public opening of the park, scheduled for May 28th, and throughout the summer to promote this attraction to visitors. Ms. Patridge stated

that plans were in process to create a prize pack to include a family pack of tickets to Spivey Splash and 2-nights stay at a nearby Clayton County hotel.

- c. Member Browning indicated that she is aware that the owners of the Spivey Golf Club have expressed a desire to be more involved in the community. Member Clarke mentioned that Clayton County Schools had an upcoming golf tournament there. Ms. Patridge remarked that she would research further to identify public events held at the club that the CVB could help promote.
 - d. Member Bourget asked if the CVB could promote tennis tournaments at Clayton International Park. Ms. Patridge replied that she had helped to organize HBCU National Tennis Tournaments for the county in years past and once the tournaments resumed, she would ensure they are promoted.
2. State of the County Address 2022
 - a. Ms. Patridge reported that Chairman Turner included the annual report of activities of tourism and film in his annual State of the County address. She expressed her gratitude to the Chairman for acknowledging and appreciating the work of the CVB, Film Office, and Tourism Authority. The video portion of Chairman Turner's address that mentioned tourism and film was played for the board members.
3. Food Tourism
 - a. Ms. Patridge reported that she has been following travel trends as reported by U.S. Travel, and indications are that travel is returning to pre-pandemic numbers, so the time has come to increase advertising Clayton County as a destination. The CVB has contracted for ads in the upcoming *Conde Nast Traveler* magazine with a culinary theme promoting the county's vast international dining options.
 - b. Ms. Patridge shared that the CVB plans to launch a foodie week, from October 17-23, 2022, to support our local restaurants who are a large part of our hospitality industry. Foodie week will allow Clayton County restaurants to offer a deal of their choosing, i.e., buy one, get one or a percentage discount. Restaurants themselves will enter information on our website that will subsequently be promoted leading up to and throughout the week of the promotion. The purpose of foodie week is to promote Clayton County restaurants and support them as they continue to recover from the pandemic, as well as to promote Clayton County as a unique, independent, international dining destination. Ms. Patridge plans to identify and contact Atlanta Instagram influencers with a minimum of 10,000 followers and invite them to visit various Clayton County restaurants. She will ask them to post their experiences on their social media platforms using our local hashtags.
 - c. Ms. Patridge will monitor participation in foodie week to determine if a Clayton County Foodie Club may be beneficial for promotion of the local restaurant scene. Club activities may include a quarterly meetup, a designated hashtag for social media for the meetups, logo stickers for restauranteurs to display in their window as a supporter of the club, and small membership fee to offset a member t-shirt. Chairman Williams inquired about the financial obligation for foodie week and foodie club. Ms. Patridge reported this would not require a financial commitment – it would be a promotion with the restaurants offering the discount and the CVB would use social media to promote. Ms. Browning said that the Women of Clayton

County host “Thirsty Thursday” monthly and they would be able to tag on social media during foodie week. Ms. Clarke expressed concern that some local restaurants curb appeal could be off-putting. She asked if it would be possible for the Tourism Authority to offer small grants to restaurants to help them put their best foot forward. Ms. Patridge reported that type of grant wouldn’t be allowed under restrictions for the use of hotel/motel tax to fund for-profit business. Member Smith suggested reaching out to media outlet, Atlanta Eats, which has a weekly television show and web presence. Ms. Patridge that once their programming resumes, she will include them in the outreach along with other options for media coverage including Good Day Atlanta and Atlanta Magazine.

4. 85 South Studios

- a. Ms. Patridge referred to Chairman Turner’s State of the County Address and the announcement of Clayton County’s first film studio. The 85 South Show is a national comedy tour with a streaming podcast, a line of merchandise, and a conglomerate of platforms that support black owned businesses. The company principals began their careers working with celebrity Steve Harvey and they continue to partner with him on his new ventures and television shows. The owners, including Clayton English, who is the immediate past winner of NBC’s Last Comic Standing, are currently creating a new comedy series that will stream on their own Channel 85 app. Ms. Patridge received the referral for the business from a friend and former co-worker who now works with the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce. Ms. Patridge worked with the Director of the Clayton County Department of Community Development to officially amend, by unanimous vote of the Clayton County Board of Commissioners, the county’s zoning code to allow film studios to operate in both heavy and light industrial areas. 85 South Studios has completed a soft groundbreaking and they expect to have a grand opening in the 4th quarter this year. Ms. Clarke inquired about the location of the studio. Ms. Patridge said it in Morrow, in unincorporated Clayton County. Ms. Patridge reported she in talks with the 85 South Team to have them hold their annual car show at Clayton County International Park which will bring in about 2,000 visitors to Clayton County. Our Clayton County hotels in Stockbridge will be promoted to attendees for overnight stays. Chairman Williams asked if we knew the expected economic impact of the 85 South Studio. Ms. Patridge responded that it is unknown the full impact of the studio as this in the first of its kind in Clayton County. However, she will be able to use the same conservative multiplier for productions that she uses with the other filming locations once they are up and running.
- b. Ms. Patridge reported that the client is committed to supporting the Clayton County community. Ms. Patridge has connected the client with Clayton County Police Chief Kevin Roberts to support Police Department youth programs. She will continue to introduce the client to additional opportunities in the community so they can expand their outreach and so the community can benefit from their presence.

V. OLD BUSINESS

1. Tourism Authority Grant FY 2022

- a. Ms. Patridge reported to the board that the FY 2022 tourism grant cycle launched as scheduled on April 1st. The Clayton News published information about the grant with basic information on how to apply. Chairman Williams asked if the application was available online and Ms. Patridge informed the board that it was the CVB's website.
2. Chairman Williams inquired if the Tourism Authority would receive additional funding in FY 2023 to support the additional programs planned. Ms. Patridge informed the board that now is the time for her to reach out to the county to ensure that the Tourism Authority's FY 2023 distribution reflected the additional funding that was collected as a result of HB317, the short-term rental hotel/motel collections.
3. Ms. Browning remarked that if additional monies were available, it would be a good idea to increase more creative and intentional advertising. Ms. Patridge reported that she has plans to reach out to local artists to create original artwork that depicts the most artistic representation of each city in Clayton County. This artwork would be used to promote Clayton County through a variety of ways including a custom t-shirt. Ms. Browning agreed that each city has a uniqueness that could be used in promoting the county as a whole. Ms. Bourget said the African American residents are proud of Clayton County and their cities within the county and suggested we begin with the county then highlight what each city offers. Member Chapman remarked that promoting the county's diverse dining options is a great beginning. Ms. Clarke added that promoting the cities and what they have to offer can help lead to an identity for Clayton County. Ms. Bourget remarked that Clayton County was in America's spotlight during the Warnock and Ossoff elections. Ms. Browning said that she didn't want to see the county lose that momentum. Ms. Patridge informed the board that she was the initial point of contact for CNN in getting Clayton County officials on national news outlets. Because of her relationship with the major reporters at the media outlet, she received the first inquiry and connected them with Chairman Turner and election officials on election night. Ms. Patridge used the example of the Atlanta Rap Map by Veazey Studio to creatively illustrate the county with an outline and each city depicted with art that represents what makes them unique. Member Johnson remarked that Spivey Splash will be the impetus that places Clayton County at the forefront for visitor attractions. Ms. Bourget added that highlighting attractions such as the Atlanta State Farmers Market, Spivey Splash and other attractions on the artwork would illustrate all the cities. Ms. Browning remarked that these types of projects are why the Tourism Authority's FY 2023 budget needs an increase. Mr. Johnson reminded the board that if the budget is increased, hotel/motel tax dollars have a restricted use for tourism only. Ms. Patridge replied that she will ensure that any project that the Tourism Authority supports is an authorized use of hotel/motel tax dollars as governed by legislation and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT AND GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. Ms. Bourget thanked the board for their support through her recent illness and for the food delivery which lessened the burden for her family.

2. Ms. Browning requested that the board review the board retreat documents from November 2020 to revisit areas of recommendation from the consultant. Ms. Patridge replied that she would add this item to the agenda for the May meeting.

VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION

No matters of real estate, legal, or personnel for discussion.

VIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN

1. Motion Lynda Browning; second Tonya Clarke; unanimous approval
2. Meeting ended at 6:05 p.m.