

Convention & Visitors Bureau Advisory Board Special Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 29, 2020 – 10 a.m.
Johnnie Arolfo Civic Center, Meeting Rooms 1 & 2
400 W. Walker, League City, TX 77573

I. Call Meeting to Order

Called to order by Kalpesh Patel at 10:01 a.m.

II. Roll Call and Declaration of a Quorum

Members Present: Kalpesh Patel, Dee Scott, Bridget Bear, Jacob Pratt, Cory Thomas, Amber Murphy, and Tejal Patel

Members Absent: Jim Molina and Shawna Reid

Staff Present: Sarah Greer Osborne, Michael Kramm, and Ranya Botros

Guests Present: Larry Millican, Greg Gripon, and Justin Gripon

A quorum has been established.

III. Citizens Request to Address the Board

None

IV. Discuss and Consider Approval of the January 15, 2020 CVB Advisory Board Meeting Minutes

Motion to approve January 15, 2020 meeting minutes: Bridget Bear

Second to approve January 15, 2020 meeting minutes: Cory Thomas

Vote: 7 (for) 0 (against) 2 (absent) 0 (abstain)

V. Hot Application Presentation – Lions Club request for HOT funds for 2020 League City Music Festival

Justin Gripon said he is the chairman of the 2020 League City Music Festival. He added that he is a current League City Lions Club member and a third generation Lions Club member.

He said the music festival supports Lions Club activities that benefit the community. He mentioned this is the one fundraising event that supports their activities and is the primary fund driver for the activities they do in the community.

Justin said they will be working with the City of League City to update their music festival promotional video.

During Justin's presentation, he aired a previous music festival promotional video, and he also aired a music video by Kevin Fowler and Roger Creager from their new album entitled "Dos Borrachos."

Justin added that this year they booked two performers back-to-back on the same night.

He showed an image of a past music festival featuring Clint Black. He said the music festival is going on 66 years.

He indicated that proceeds from the music festival over the last ten years impacted over \$100,000 in eye exams for CCISD students. He added they also financed eyeglasses.

He said the music festival proceeds also benefit their monthly "Senior Breakfast," which is held on the first Sunday of every month, excluding holidays. Over the past ten years, \$33,000 were used to support this effort.

Justin said proceeds also support the Texas Summer Camp for children. They sent \$78,000 to support the camp. He said his Lions Club sponsored 62 children from this camp, which gives children the opportunity to experience what a summer camp is all about in addition to experiencing the joy of making new friendships. He mentioned they have a doctor on staff during the entire camp. He also said they recently gave one child the opportunity to go to this camp, which was this child's first camp experience.

He said after Hurricane Harvey, the Lions Club played a direct role in assisting the community by providing people with food at Hometown Heroes Park. He also said \$23,000 went back into the community with direct financial aid.

He mentioned that CCISD had a livestock auction last week, and the Lions Club contributed \$28,000 towards that project.

He also said they give over \$18,000 in scholarships.

Justin said he wanted to point out how much proceeds from the music festival support the community.

In terms of the Barbeque Cook-Off, Justin said they have 100 teams each year from across the state. He added that it is an IBC sanctioned event. He also mentioned people stay for more than three days. He said the cook-off has a huge impact on the community, and they generate \$200,000 in economic activity from the cook-off event.

Justin said that attendance at the event was about 6,000, however, that figure fluctuates. He added that people going to the event shop and dine in League City, and spend at least \$100.

He said the event generates about \$600,000. He added that it's a family-friendly event where they will bring in a new train, etc. He added that everything is free for CCISD students. He also said they will be making changes to "Kids Day."

Justin asked the CVB Board to support this event.

Tejal inquired about tracking the hotel stays.

Justin said they track the number of direct clicks on links on their website, as they have a link to each of the hotels on the music festival's website. However, he said they don't have a way of knowing if people booked a hotel or not.

Sarah asked if codes were created last year.

Bridget said South Shore Harbour used ten codes last year.

Kalpesh said he uses codes, too.

Justin said they partner with hotels, and give them weekend passes for their guests, which ultimately benefits everyone.

Sarah said the Barbeque Cook-Off has many teams and inquired about conducting an exit survey to find out if they spent extra money in League City.

Justin said this year they have new cook-off chairmen – Justin West and Ryan Smith.

Sarah said they need to have people survey each tent by physically going to each tent and asking them questions, as most people are not going to take an electronic survey.

Justin said they have a check in process at the cook-off, so they can work to incorporate a survey in that process.

Sarah said going off of \$800,000 in terms of economic impact is anecdotal.

Amber inquired if Esteban's Restaurant gets full during this event.

Jacob responded and said it's hard to tell.

Dee commented on the music festival's expenses and said they spent \$189,000 and only made \$15,000 profit. She said this event hasn't been making any money.

Justin said they included a Sunday last year. He said this year, they won't be adding Sunday, and Thursday is an open day. He added that the carnival won't come unless they have a certain number of days secured. He also said they added karaoke for the soft opening. He mentioned they will have separate karaoke sessions for adults and kids.

He said they take lessons they learned from the previous year to improve the event, which is why they made adjustments to their carnival.

Dee inquired about the budget for the event, and a few members and guests directed her to read a breakdown of the budget in the packet.

Justin said one hopes for one thing, but at times the outcome can be different. He also said this year they will have Kevin Fowler and Roger Creager on Saturday, and on Friday they will have "Bag of Donuts" perform.

Dee said she wanted to know why they spent \$75,000 on entertainment. She also asked if \$15,000 in profit is really enhancing their bottom line.

Greg and Cory said the entertainment cost includes lighting and the stage.

Justin said that if the event is not making any money, they look to compensate and learn from the previous year.

Justin said the music festival offers three different things – the cook-off, bringing people from across the state, and daytime, family-friendly focused activities with a discount. He said they normally charge between \$15 and \$20 during the concert. They will be offering \$5 during the day, so kids and families can enjoy the event without being concerned about the money.

Sarah said the cost concerns her, as paying between \$15 and \$20 is a drawback.

Cory said the Galveston Fair and Rodeo and the Alvin Community Fair both charged \$20. He added that \$20 is the cost one pays to see the band perform.

Kalpesh wanted to know if they have a breakdown of the prices.

Justin and Greg responded to Kalpesh and said they don't have that data.

Justin said they have two different mindsets for the festival. He added that the bouncy houses and carnival is only \$5 for the day; if one is not a fan of the concert, he or she won't pay \$20.

Sarah said for that specific music genre, \$20 is too much to charge.

Amber said if one goes in the evening, he or she will pay \$20.

Cory said that over the last three years, they were behind in booking the entertainment.

Sarah said she thought about the current demographics within the City. She also said if a mother of two kids with an average household income of \$106,000 watched the music video aired during the presentation, she would get offended, as men were drunk in that video.

Amber responded to Sarah and said the demographic fits her, and she and her friends get VIP tickets, and make it a "Girl's Night." She also said they arrange for uber drivers, too.

Cory responded to Sarah by saying he fits the description of the guy who drives on the weekend and listens to that type of music.

Dee said League City residents wouldn't be interested in that.

Justin said they are hitting the mark with ticket pricing at \$5, which is geared towards the 35-year-old mom, so she can have a fun family experience. He said they have a separate audience geared towards concert attendees who pay \$20 only to see the concert.

Dee said if they pay \$20, they won't have money to spend on their vendors, and they won't go back to the event, which should be worrisome.

Greg said their vendors were very happy.

Justin said vendors are open during the entire event, and the only concern they have is where their tent is placed.

Cory reiterated that during the last three years, they were behind in terms of getting the entertainment booked. He said in 2015, they made \$86,000 in profit.

Dee said this CVB Board has to be more than a "check writing group."

Sarah said the CVB Board was restructured, and part of the duty of the Board is to make recommendations and revise how HOT funds are spent. She also said they may consider spending HOT funds on advertising. She added that they said no to other events in the past.

Dee said the goal is to help people get started, not to sustain them.

Tejal said the CVB Board is about promoting tourism. She inquired about the amount of funding the music festival requested in previous years. She wanted an explanation on what the City will get from the marketing efforts.

Justin said they aren't as concerned about who they attract locally to the festival. He said their focus is on attracting people outside of League City. He added that it is very challenging to bring people who live outside the City to the event, and those are the people who will stay in hotels.

Tejal asked if they will be advertising on radio stations.

Justin said they are partnering with one of two major companies, including Cox Media Group to make sure they have a return on their investment. He said it varies from year to year.

He added that Channel 2 does a segment on the music festival.

Kalpesh said it's difficult to make a decision when they don't have a breakdown of where the people are coming from.

Tejal said the majority are local.

Kalpesh said the CVB Board needs to know where the people are coming from.

Sarah said they need to build it in their pre-ticket sales.

Cory said they partnered with Microsoft to keep track but none of it worked.

Sarah said they need to keep a tally of where the people came from at the ticket booth.

Bridget said that marketing for one of the events included requesting zip codes.

Sarah said they should request zip codes for the cook-off, too, as there is no firm data.

Amber said they went off of positive assumptions with respect to data.

Kalpesh said this event has not been impacting the hospitality industry. The funding supports a good cause, but it is mainly affecting the local community.

Amber said the event promotes the arts and agrees it is a very local event.

Tejal said that the music festival is requesting \$35,000, which is a lot. She said the CVB Board is not against the event, but the music festival needs to be more diligent in tracking stats about the event.

Justin said the CVB Board will receive a follow-up report with better attendance tracking and zip code tracking. He said the report will be more robust.

Sarah inquired about who the sponsors are for the event.

Greg said Ron Carter is a \$10,000 sponsor. He also said they have another \$20,000 sponsor, but he can't share their name until he receives the funds. He added that Civil Homes will also be a \$20,000 sponsor.

Justin added that generators were donated by Land and Sea Power.

Amber said the City had a tent last year.

Sarah said the City promoted the event for employees.

Jacob said he would abstain from voting, as Esteban's Restaurant catered the event.

Cory said he would also abstain from voting, as he is a Lions Club member.

An executive session was held.

VI. Consider and Take Action on Lions Club Application

Motion to approve \$15,000 in HOT funds for the Lions Club Music Festival:

Bridget Bear

Second to approve \$15,000 in HOT funds for the Lions Club Music Festival:

Dee Scott

Vote: 5 (for) 0 (against) 2 (absent) 2 (abstain)

VII. Request for Future Agenda Items

None

VIII. Announcements

None

IX. Next CVB Advisory Board Scheduled Meeting – February 19, 2020

X. Adjournment

Adjourned at 11:13 a.m.