

Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission

Minutes of March 16, 2016

Members Present: Beverly Baker, Betty Girouard, Kathie Terpening, Ron Darby, Shannon Neveaux, Terry Lancon, Sandra Reaux, Odile Segrest

Members Absent: Marlene Theriot

Others Present: Alison Miller, Charlene Beckett, Hillary Baker

The meeting was called to order and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Shannon Neveaux welcomed all in attendance at the meeting. A motion was made by Ron Darby, seconded by Beverly Baker, and unanimously carried to amend the agenda to move motion needed items first since Beverly needs to leave the meeting early.

Hillary Baker had no guest comments. Charlene Beckett provided the Commission with an update on upcoming events that will be taking place in downtown Abbeville, such as the Great American Clean-up, Movies in the Square, Sounds on the Square, etc., and invited the Commission to attend the events.

A motion was made by Ron Darby, seconded by Terry Lancon, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of January 20, 2016 as written.

A motion was made by Odile Segrest, seconded by Terry Lancon, and unanimously carried to approve the Treasurer's Report and payment of bills as presented.

A motion was made by Kathie Terpening, seconded by Ron Darby, and unanimously carried to remove Beverly Baker and Mary Kathy Richard and add Shannon Neveaux and Marlene Theriot to the signature cards on our Bank of Abbeville accounts. Alison Miller is also authorized to remove Rebecca Shirley as an authorized signature on the safe deposit box. Authorized signatures on all accounts will be Alison Miller (Executive Director), Betty Girouard (Vice-Chairman), Kathryn Terpening (Secretary), Shannon Neveaux (Chairman) and Marlene Theriot (Treasurer).

Alison Miller informed the Commission about upcoming journalists that will be visiting the parish to write articles about the parish and coastal Louisiana. A motion was made by Betty Girouard, seconded by Sandra Reaux, and unanimously carried to pay for the accommodations and meals for these press trips.

A motion was made by Ron Darby, seconded by Kathie Terpening, and unanimously carried to sign the letter regarding the protection of funds dedicated to coastal restoration and protection.

Alison Miller reminded the Commission of the 2015 Financial Disclosure Forms that will need to be filled out and mailed in before May 15, 2016. Alison Miller will mail all of the Commissioners forms together by certified mail.

Alison Miller informed the Commission on the declining revenue collected from the occupancy tax. Since the Commission already budgeted conservatively in 2016, there is not much room to cut. Several options were discussed regarding funding sources. A motion was made by Ron Darby, seconded by Terry Lancon, and unanimously carried to have Alison Miller meet with local municipalities, governing officials, tourism businesses, etc. to ask for funding. Alison Miller will prepare a list of marketing opportunities to present to the local municipalities, governing officials, tourism businesses, etc. and will have this available at the May meeting for approval.

Alison Miller informed the Commission on the Louisiana Office of Tourism's Cooperative Marketing Grant, which is a reimbursable 50/50 match grant. Should the Tourist Commission apply, the Commission would have to come up with the full amount of the grant then submit invoices for approval for the 50 percent reimbursement. The Commissioners felt that due to the declining revenue, it would not be the right time to apply for the grant in case the State decides not to reimburse the Tourist Commission in a timely manner.

Alison Miller provided the Commission with a clarification on Ethics Ruling No. 2011-167 which prohibits the Commission from promoting and marketing a tourism business that is primarily owned by a current Commissioner. Since it would be a conflict of interest for Beverly Baker to continue to serve, Mrs. Baker turned in her letter of resignation effective March 17, 2016. A motion was made by Kathie Terpening, seconded by Terry Lancon, and unanimously carried to accept Beverly Baker's letter of resignation. Alison Miller will notify the Police Jury so that a replacement for Mrs. Baker will be found.

Ron Darby and Shannon Neveaux provided the Commission with information about a parish-wide collection of donated items, such as cleaning supplies, for the flood victims in Texas. Lynn Guillory with the Vermilion Chamber of Commerce will be setting up a meeting and will provide the Tourist Commission with drop-off locations once that has been established.

The next meeting of the Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission will be held on Wednesday, May 18, 2015 at 4:00 pm at Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission.

There being no further business, a motion was made by Kathie Terpening, seconded by Betty Girouard, and unanimously carried to adjourn.

Minutes taken and respectively submitted by:
Kathie Terpening, VPTC Secretary