

MINUTES

Visitcape Executive Board

FRIDAY, August 7, 2020

1:30 P.M.

Cape Girardeau Convention and Visitors Bureau

220 North Fountain Street

Scott Meyer (Not Present)

John Echimovich

Quantella Noto

Alyssa Phares

(Not Present) John Mehner

Randy Kluge

(Not Present) John Eric Klein

Brenda Newbern

Meeting was called to order at 1:32 by Brenda Newbern.

The minutes from the May 1, 2020 meeting were approved by Randy Kluge and seconded by John Echimovich.

The hotel/motel and restaurant tax receipts have not been received for June yet. The hotels are seeing better occupancy with some limited transient travel and the weekend sports teams are very much a positive for Cape Girardeau. Many of the hotels in the larger markets are still very low in the teens in some places. Both Randy and John stated that the recovery from COVID-19 will go well into the 2023-time frame to get back to what we were pre covid. Alyssa is looking at delving into new markets for the weekly business traveler and small sports training conference that would meet during that Sunday – Thursday time frame. There is that fear of the market not coming back. Quantella shared some of the conferences that she has been attending on Zoom but, thinks that the attendees are not as fulfilled by those meetings and we will see the conference market coming back and that is good for the larger hotels in the Drury and MidAmerica markets. The Star report shows that the interstate and small towns are running at approximately an 80% occupancy and that is great during this time.

The trends for the social media are up in all areas except the newsletter engagement was slightly down. Trip Advisor is showing that we need to stay top of mind with the traveler and we continue to market Cape Girardeau in publications that are inviting visitors to the area. The page views for domestic travel is up by +163%. The demand for local trips and staycations has increased. Reports show that 4-10 people are reading more non-news related content to cope - so we want Cape Girardeau available to them!

Alyssa shared the current activity with Keep Cape Strong info and website. She has been working with the sports teams and promoters on booking hotel rooms We have had people staying as far away as Charleston and Perryville. This reflects the pent-up energy and desire to play sports and travel in a safe environment. The promoters are taking temperatures and advising attendees and teams when they aren't playing to wear their masks. Alyssa has a lead from USSSA on the potential of a facility in our area. Based on the fact that the sales groups want to be back at conferences and conventions making the sell may help to get us back to the weekly trade shows. There are a lot of "road warriors" that want to get back to conferences and in person meetings. Promoters are thinking about the future. Group travel is predominately older travelers and they are hesitant to travel in large groups on a motor coach.

We must continue to stay positive and be sure to capture all visitors that we can from the current market!

Next meeting will be Friday, November 6, 2020. Meeting adjourned 2:40 pm.

