



Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority
Board Meeting at SVAA Office
2238 State Road 44, NSB, FL 32168
April 26, 2022 – 10:00 AM -12:00 PM

BOARD MEETING AGENDA

- I. **Call to Order:** Betsy Baker, Chairwoman
Roll Call: Debbie Meihls

Public Participation: Public Participation is limited to three minutes, unless otherwise granted by the Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority members

- II. **Approval of the Minutes** from the February 22, 2021, Board Meeting

- III. **Chair Report** – Betsy Baker

- Reminder of the upcoming meetings
- **September 27, 2022 – MMGY Visioning Session with Board**
- These meet the statutory quarterly requirement for board meeting.

- IV. **Treasurers Report** – Donna Ruby will discuss and present the following financials for approval for audit.

- February Financials
- March Financials
- Benefit Pkg of SVAA/NSBVB

- V. **Discussion and Approval:** Damian O’Grady, Ignite Sales & Marketing – Will provide an update on the UK Marketing and Central Europe, Travel and PR overview.

- VI. **Discussion and Approval of Budget Plan FY22/23:** Debbie Meihls will present the budget to be approved by SVAA Board then further approved by Volusia County Council in August 2022. **\$2,600,000.**

- VII. **Discussion & Approval of Media Plan** for FY22/23: Roberto Schaps, CEO Relebrands to provide update on media campaigns {as provided in the overall budget approved in February 2022 meeting.}
- VIII. **Update on Website Plan for FY21/22:** Franci Edgerly, CEO of ITI Digital to provide Digital/Web {as provided in the overall budget approved at February 2022 Meeting.}
- IX. **CEO Report:** Debbie Meihls: Mrs. Meihls will present the topline from her report.
- X. **Old Business:**
- XI. **Public Participation:** Public Participation is limited to three minutes, unless otherwise granted by the Southeast Volusia Advertising Authority members.
- XII. **Board Comments:**

- XIII. **Adjourn**

2021/2022 Fiscal Year Meetings:

~~October 26, 2021 — Research: Zartico, Research Data, Sunshine Law Review.~~

~~December 14, 2021- Audit Results & Master Plan and 3 year strategic plan approval.~~

~~February 22, 2022 — Research & Advertising updates~~

April 26, 2022 – Budget & Marketing Plan Approvals: Remaining FY21/22 and FY22/23

September 27, 2022 – Year End Review and Workshop for FY22/23 Mktg. Visioning Meeting MMGY

***These meet the Statutorily quarterly requirement for board meeting**



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Meeting Called to Order: Betsy Baker – Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:01 a.m.

Roll Call: Debbie Meihls – CEO, did roll call.

Members Present: Betsy Baker, Jamie Dudley, Donna Ruby, Tom Clapsaddle, Chad Truxall, Richard England, and Rebecca Simmons.

Staff Present: Debbie Meihls and Mia Legarda.

Other Guests: Andrea Kerr – Asst. County Atty., Roberto Schaps – Relebrand, Franci Edgerly – ITI Digital, Scott Steger – EXIT Realty and President of SEV Chamber of Commerce, and Norm Paytel and Karen – Spectrum Reach.

Public Participation: None.

Debbie Meihls introduced Damian O’ Grady and Anita Clements on Zoom from the Ignite Sales & Marketing UK office to give a presentation.

Approval of Minutes: Chad Truxall made a motion to approve the February 22, 2022, board minutes. Tom Clapsaddle seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Discussion and Approval of Damian O’Grady, Ignite Sales & Marketing Plan for FY 22/23:

Damian O’Grady presented that the Brits and Irish travel style differs from the US market by travelling during the shoulder or off seasons, they have 3-4 main travel windows, and they stay 14 nights on average. When Ignite Sales & Marketing started with NSB back in 2017, the destination was unheard of, now a lot of the Tour Operators feature NSB. Most UK or Irish travelers use Tour Operators/Travel Agents. They are more interested in going to Florida, they are seeing very positive numbers for 2022 and record levels by 2023. The war in Ukraine had not affected bookings so far as Florida is perceived as a safe destination. NSB is hosting 27 UK travel agents in June 22, in conjunction with Visit FL and TTG, NSB will also be attending IPW in Orlando in June 22 that is attended by over 100 UK operators and 70 UK press. Tour Operator activity and online brochures; Virgin Atlantic Holidays is one of the top ones working with the Hampton Inn and Best Western. Trailfinders is also one of the top operators in the UK that will do city to city tours. He showed examples of the marketing activity they’ve been doing in the UK, such as Ocean Holidays, an e-mail marketing campaign that got sent out to 130,000 e-mails in the UK.

Anita Clements presented the PR activities. Since January 2017, there have been 255 mentions of New Smyrna Beach with a total advertising value equivalency of \$1,729,408.00 and a total reach across all features/media titles of 107,593,481. 13 individual media and influencer visits 2017 to date and positive media feedback, saying that they really enjoyed the laid-back atmosphere. She showed coverage



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highlights examples like double page spreads, glossy magazine sheets, and positive coverage. She explained that IMM took place in London this past March 14th-15th. There were 400 delegates, 122 tourism and travel exhibitor brands, 270 journalists, 66 influencers and content creators, and NSB met with 33 journalists and influencers over 2 days, like a speed dating session. She talked about press releases, the next focus would be the opening of Victoria Waterfront Estate 1883 as a new destination, story pitching feature of US top dog friendly restaurant such as Yellow Dog Eats, media meetings, media events, and Visit USA and Visit Florida PR partnerships. She discussed upcoming PR activity such as 3 UK media and PR hosts from Ignite will visit NSB in Autumn 2022 for new dedicated destination features, individual media visits, and IMM in Berlin and London will be secured for NSB.

Damian asked the board for any questions. Betsy asked if the high cost of airplane flights impact the booking and exchange rate. Damian answered that they would have a small impact this year and 2023. Debbie explained that there is a lot of pent-up demand in the UK since they went into lockdown before the US, and they perceive Florida as a very safe destination. She recalled that when she was first there, Trailfinders took Cocoa Beach out and replaced it with New Smyrna Beach and we are looking to pick up where we left off. Debbie gave the Ignite team kudos for still pitching us even though we shut them down during the pandemic, stating that we are still seeing the residual effects. IPW is happening in June, and we have up to 50 appointments that we can get and have a high demand for meetings. She expressed that the board approved for Ignite to not only take over the UK market, but the German market as well. Debbie stated that we have on the agenda the discussion and approval of both UK and German markets budget for next fiscal year would be \$177,000.00 which is \$110,000.00 for the UK Market and \$67,000.00 for the German Market, this includes the retainer and marketing fees with PR and doing IMM. Debbie noted that the East Coast has always been behind the West Coast of Florida, except for Miami, when it comes to international travelers. Chad stated that they have talked about shifting the visitor profile for Sunday-Thursday market. He asked if in general, as we've engaged more with the UK market and been more deliberate in our efforts, that we have seen that profile change in the last 5 years or so. Damian answered that that is 100% correct; the UK, Irish, and Germans spend more on vacation in Florida when they travel. Debbie stated that there has been an increase in the Sunday-Thursday pattern as they spend 3 times more than the domestic traveler. She stated it's very important to stay in this market.

Approval for Ignite Sales & Marketing Budget of \$177,000.00: Richard England made a motion to approve the budget. Rebecca Simmons seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Chair Report: Betsy Baker.

Betsy reminded the board of the upcoming meetings. The next meeting is in September for the year-end review and workshop. Betsy asked where the meeting will take place. Debbie answered that the



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September workshop will be at the Brannon Center where the visioning sessions for the Master Plan with the Steering Committee will be brought up to the board and will have a visioning session with the board, where it will be brought up for approval in the October board meeting. Betsy asked what the latest number of RSVPs are for the Tourism Breakfast on May 10th. Debbie answered it was very light, 30 plus people have RSVP'd. She explained that after the breakfast there will be focus groups with other stakeholders present that are not part of the Steering Committee, VIP group, or the board.

Treasurer's Report: Donna Ruby.

Donna reported that at the close of March 2022, \$1,126,178.91 in the checking operations account and \$1,500,001.94 in reserve funds. All the expenses remain within budget. She pointed out to note that in March, the county changed who and how the investment portfolio is managed, which includes our resort tax fund. She explained that because of the change, we received \$3,148.63 less than the posted collections. Tom asked if that's the fee. Donna answered that it is not, the new asset manager sold off some of the holdings to purchase what they feel is better for us in the long run, the selloff created a loss. Debbie stated that the county reassured them that this should be a one-time thing. Donna stated all financials are in order for February and March 2022 and she is placing them on file for audit.

Donna moved on to the benefit package for SVAA employees. She stated the purpose for the revision is for retaining employees. She proposed a change to the employee savings plan, the 401k, they have gone over with the payroll provider for us to stay competitive. The current 401k plan is up to a 3% salary match and the employees are vested 100% from day one. The proposed 401k plan is to increase the employer contribution to 5% and the employees will be vested 20% at year 2, 40% at year 3, 60% at year 4, 80% at year 5, and 100% at year 6. Chad asked if the eligibility for employees to start this is at 3 months. Debbie answered yes, after the introductory period of 90 days. Tom asked if this starts in 2023, in the next budget cycle. Debbie answered it starts the next month, but there are only 2 employees doing it, so it doesn't affect the current budget that much.

Approval for Accepting the Proposed Changes to the 401k Benefit Portion of the Employee Benefits:

Donna Ruby made a motion to accept the changes. Richard England seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Donna moved on to the employee retention plan, she stated that she discussed with Debbie about retaining Elizabeth Gifford. She expressed that Elizabeth received an increase in 2021 and would like to propose an additional 2% increase starting July 2022. Elizabeth has been attending the Southeast Tourism Society for her TMP Accreditation and will be completely finished in 2023. The increase is in Debbie's perview to do, and is not technically seeking for approval, but for full disclosure. The board agrees. \$1,200.00 will be the increase from now until the end of the year. Donna expressed that Elizabeth has been courted regularly by other companies and the increase still puts her under what a



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marketing director is. Debbie stated that she would like to increase Elizabeth another 8% for next year; 5% on October 1st and 3% after she graduates from Southeast Tourism Society TMP which would bring her up to \$66,188.00, which is still under, but she has been brought up this current fiscal year as well.

Discussion and Approval of Budget Plan FY 22/23: Debbie Meihls.

Debbie explained the chart shows the FY 20/21 Actuals per audited results from November 2021, the Adopted and Estimate for FY 21/22, and the request for FY 22/23. She stated that there is some carry over since we are up almost 38% over last year. With the bed tax, we brought in almost \$1,600,000.00, our budget is almost \$2,600,00.00 and we have never had this much of our budget brought in at this time of year. She stated the projected budget is \$2,600,000.00 for next year. Even though there is some slow down, there is a lot of pent-up demand. The one reason is because we are a newfound discovery, and the hoteliers can vouch that they are very adept at not having 100% occupancy but increasing the average daily rate (ADR) which makes the RevPAR go up. Debbie stated Research Data is not seeing a huge decline in visitors coming even in the next year. Debbie asked Scott Steger if there is a decline in real estate. Scott answered what they are not seeing any decline in Florida real estate, there might be a softening, but does not see it changing. Chad expressed his concerns of the amount of growth will affect the way of life here. Debbie voiced, that is the reason why sustainability is brought up in the Master Plan, we had 842 residents respond to the survey saying that they understand tourism but are concerned with parking and traffic. She expressed that we do not market during the peak times, but during shoulder seasons, it's just hyper-tourism right now and she doesn't think it's going to stop. Debbie stated that the Master Plan is a huge step to show everyone that we care. Debbie explained we have budgeted for a full staff for FY 21/22, but we waited until this year to hire. She stated the FY 22/23 payroll is budgeted for 5 people, while we will have 4 this year, the marketing and advertising has increased, and other operating expenses has been held pretty strong. The grand total operating budget is \$3,761,767.00, projecting to put \$250,000.00 back into reserves for next year. Debbie expressed it would be \$1,750,000.00 in reserves for next year. \$5,511,787.00 is what we are growing into, because we have been frugal and was able to roll that money over.

Approval for Budget Plan FY 22/23: Donna Ruby made a motion to accept the budget for FY 22/23 as proposed. Jamie Dudley seconded the motion. *All members in favor.*

Media Plan for FY 22/23: Roberto Schaps, CEO Relebrand.

- Roberto Schaps presented the FY 22/23 Media Strategy has not changed, but just trying to understand the market and where to place the money.
- Planning Parameters – drive awareness and consideration of NSB, targeting ages 35 – 64, key geography, timing, media considerations, and budget of \$500,000.00.
- Media Strategy & Channel Recommendation – focus on key geographic, SEM as primary driver



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of travel planning, and drive awareness through mass media.

- Partner Recommendation and Budget Allocation – SEM Engine Marketing: 12 ad groups to maximize relevancy and secure a higher position. Streaming Video: Increase awareness through digital video, follow up with retargeting through display. Display: To site traffic.
- Publisher Direct – Alternative Destination Targeting, Direct Flight Routes, and Drive Markets.
 - Expedia Group: NSB ADR has been higher than all competitive destinations in the last 3 years.
 - Sojern: Moving beyond demographics and basic travel data. They can also see the competitor.
- Television – Heavy up in key months: Oct. – Jan. and June – Aug. with a monthly budget of about \$37,500.00.
- Media Budget FY 22/23: \$500,000.00 (part of total \$1,000,000.00 approved on Feb. 26, 2022).

Update on Website Play for FY 21/22: Franci Edgerly, CEO of ITI Digital.

- New Website – Making final adjustments, moving from custom-code to open-source (HubSpot), and the CMS ties up all marketing forms.
- Highlights – Maps, highlighting communities, home screen is split in two, mobile app QR code, Google Places and reviews, and dedicated Instagram UGC library, Greenways/Parks, Topic or Attraction-Specific, The NSB Area page, Groups, Weddings, Film page, Events Calendar 4.0 Upgrade.
- New Services:
 - Business Concierge Pg & Listings-Powered by Google Places.
 - Email Database Development-Two Sweepstake Campaigns: est. 4,000 leads per campaign.
 - SEO-Increase Digital Footprint, Blog Strategy-Maximizing Distribution of “NSB Insider”.
 - New Mobile App-New UX, Upgraded CMS, Personalization & Gamification Features.
 - Website Chatbot (by Facebook Messenger)-Setup & Management.
 - HubSpot Smart Rules-Website Content Personalization.

CEO Report: Debbie Meihls.

Debbie stated we are 37% up year-to-date and thanked the board for approving the budget for FY 22/23 and will let them know what the county will say. The Master Plan and Strategic Plan; 78 stakeholders responded to the survey and as of this morning, 870 residents responded. They have done 6 VIP interviews between mayors and county councils; the focus group is going to be on May 10th after the Tourism Breakfast and the Steering Committee on May 12th. The Visioning Meeting is on August 24th and September 27th for the board and will be brought back to the board in October to be approved. There will be a new hire, Haley Chenowith starting on Monday, May 2nd. She stated that the number one focus right now is getting the budget ready for the county.



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Old Business: None.

Public Participation: None.

Comments: Roberto brought up the new Visitor Guides. Debbie explained the guide was done in-house by Roberto's team, on sustainable paper, and was printed by CND. She expressed we are updating continuously and will be reprinting again soon due to high demand from Welcome Centers and Leads. She explained that we are sending out the new Visitor Guide to the businesses mentioned in it and has had a good reach so far.

Adjourn: Meeting Adjourned 12:04 p.m.