



Board Member Orientation Binder



About Southern Delaware Tourism

Southern Delaware Tourism (SDT) is the official Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) for Sussex County, Delaware. SDT is a 501©6 non-profit DMO incorporated in 1989 under the name of Association of Sussex County Chambers of Commerce and Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., later referred to as the Sussex County Convention and Tourism Commission. Voting Board members are representatives of Sussex County Chambers of Commerce that receive a portion of the accommodation tax to support tourism. Board members carry weighted votes based on the accommodation tax contributed by each chamber's represented area. In addition, representatives from both the State Tourism Office and Sussex County Economic Development Office attend the Board meetings to provide up-dates in support of tourism. SDT works to increase occupancy for visitor accommodations in Sussex County . SDT employs four full time employees holding the positions of Executive Director, Communications Manager, Marketing Manager and Marketing Specialist.

SDT's mission is to support and encourage the identification, development and promotion of sustainable, year-round tourism in Southern Delaware that contributes to economic growth and improves the quality of life. Tourism is Sussex County's second-leading economic engine behind its agriculture industry. An estimated \$2.7 billion of Delaware's \$4.5 billion tourism revenue comes from visitor spending in Sussex County. Tourism employs 23,550 workers/jobs in the county with that number rising in the summer. SDT has a \$1.4 million annual budget that is funded primarily through the State Public Accommodations Tax. SDT Focal Points include but are not limited to:

- Development of annual plan that markets Sussex County to prospective visitors and increases overnight visitation year-round.
- Tracking and documenting visitor trends and metrics in Sussex County.
- Creation of a product development strategy that addresses the needs of visitors and potential visitors to Sussex County.
- Serving as a tourism hub and resource center for Sussex County.
- Informing, promoting and advocating the benefits of tourism as an economic driver to local communities, county, state and federal officials.

As a 501©6 non-profit organization and to meet the requirements of an IRC 501(c)(6) and Reg. 1.501(c)(6)-1, SDT must possess the following characteristics:

- It must be an association of persons having some common business organization interest and its purpose must be to promote this common business interest
- It must not be organized for profit
- No part of its net earnings may inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual
- Its activities must be directed to the improvement of business conditions of one or more lines of business as distinguished from the performance of particular services for individual persons
- Its primary activity does not consist of performing particular services for individual persons
- Its purpose must not be to engage in a regular business of a kind ordinarily carried on for profit, even if the business is operated on a cooperative basis or produces only sufficient income to be self-sustaining.

SDT Vision Statement

By collaborating with community stakeholders, SDT will position Sussex County, Delaware to thrive as a premier travel destination.

SDT Mission Statement

To support and encourage the identification, development and promotion of sustainable¹, year-round tourism in Southern Delaware that contributes to economic growth and improves the quality of life.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) defines sustainable tourism as follows:

'Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems.'

Board Member Responsibilities

By fulfilling the following responsibilities, members of the Board of Directors of the SDT are valued partners in the effort to promote Sussex County as a premiere travel destination.

1. Select and support the executive director and assess his or her performance.
Undertake a careful search to find the most qualified individual for the position of executive director. Ensure that the executive director has the moral and professional support he or she needs to further the goals of the organization. Provide counsel to the executive director in an annual review.
2. Provide proper financial oversight review and approve the annual budget, ensuring that proper financial controls are in place.
3. Provide adequate resources and advisors for the organization to fulfill its mission. Demonstrate the board's 100% support of the organization to constituents and stakeholders.
4. Ensure legal and ethical integrity and maintain accountability. The board is ultimately responsible for being informed of and meeting all legal and fiduciary responsibilities.
5. Recruit and orient new board members and assess board performance. Suggest possible nominees to the board who can make significant contributions to the work of the board and SDT based on the current needs of the board. Ideal candidates will have the following qualifications:
 - Extensive professional experience with significant executive leadership accomplishments in business, government, education, philanthropy, or the non-profit sector
 - Commitment to and understanding of SDT's beneficiaries, preferably based on experience

- Possess a natural affinity for cultivating relationships and facilitating and building consensus among diverse individuals
 - Possess personal qualities of integrity, credibility, and a passion for promoting tourism in Southern Delaware
6. Enhance the organization's public standing. Clearly articulate the organization's mission, accomplishments, and goals to the public and garner support from the community. Inform others about the organization and act as an ambassador for the organization in public and private settings.
 7. Ensure SDT's commitment to a diverse board and staff that reflects the communities it serves.

Basic Expectations

The following expectations help ensure that the Board of SDT is working in a manner that advances SDT's mission, vision, and strategic plans.

1. Establish as a high priority attendance at meetings and be a member of at least one committee or taskforce. The full board meets quarterly the (3rd) Thursday of January, April, July and October.
2. Be prepared to discuss the issues and business to be addressed at scheduled meetings, having read the agenda and all background / supporting materials relevant to the topics at hand.
3. Participate in strategic planning sessions, retreats and other educational events that enhance board member skills.
4. Be informed about SDT's mission, services, policies and programs.
5. Seek diligently to understand SDT's budget, finances, funding applications and audit reports.
6. Promote SDT by attending and supporting SDT events and forums.
7. Respect the confidentiality of privileged information both during and after serving on the board of the SDT. Adhere to SDT's Conflict of Interest Policy.
8. Follow board policies and maintain honest and ethical standards.
9. Provide support and advice to the staff but avoid interfering in administrative activities or making special requests of the staff.
10. Recognize that decisions of the board can be made only by a majority vote at a board meeting after constructive deliberation and representation of all facts and viewpoints. Respect and support the majority decisions of the Board of SDT, even when in a minority position on such actions, while retaining the right to seek changes through ethical and constructive channels.
11. Cultivate potential investors, volunteers, sponsors, committee members, and future board members.
12. Be an ambassador for SDT in the community. Effectively articulate the mission and goals of the organization.
13. Be open to traveling to other communities in Sussex County to learn more about all attractions and meet their leadership.

Board Level Committees

As a Southern Delaware Tourism Board Member, you are required to serve on at least one committee. It is recommended that the committee(s) that you serve align to your professional areas of expertise and interest.

The following are the four board-level committees with their respective scope statements

Policies & Procedures

- **Scope:** Oversees SDT annual operating procedures and board member orientation materials, reviews bylaws annually and annual budget procedure. This Committee also acts as the oversight committee assigned to leadership replacement and succession. This Committee sets the procedure for annual Chamber of Commerce Tourism Funding Applications and approves all changes to these policies. Committee is responsible for the enforcement of all board policies and will respond to all violations of policies with the appropriate action
- **Meetings**
 - At least twice/year (Fall/Spring) to review bylaws and annual procedure revisions
 - As necessary based on needs of the organization

Advocacy

- **Scope:** Follows legislation at all levels affecting tourism and overall investment in SDT's destination marketing efforts. More specifically, the committee will:
 - Strategize and communicate the value and return on investment that tourism yields to the state and local economy
 - Provide unified messaging based on all available information
 - Determine relevance of legislation in correlation with mission of SDT
 - Support needs of individual chambers, if possible, and act appropriately
 - Establish SDT Board approval before all positions are determined and made public
- **Meetings**
 - January and as necessary throughout the year

Finance

- **Scope:** Oversee all things that affect the financial well-being of SDT. Make policy regarding budget and spending that committee deems to be financially responsible.
More specifically, committee:
 - Oversees SDT annual budget process, reviewing line items and setting ranges in items such as salaries, marketing & administration
 - Serves as auditor of quarterly financial reports and presents such to the full board of directors
 - Is presented with and makes recommendations to the board on expenditures requested that are not approved in budget
 - Maintains oversight of ongoing operations with particular attention to waste, return on investments, and potential shortages
 - Seeks to predict future expenditures and plan for such events
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- **Meetings**
 - 2-3 times annually and as needed
 - First meeting October/November (review and planning), Second meeting January/February (budget preparation), Third meeting March/April (finalize budget for presentation to board)

Investment

- **Scope:** This committee will hire an investment advisor to manage funds SDT decides are available to invest. The committee will ensure the funds are invested in a manner consistent with the Investment Policy Statement and will monitor the account accordingly to see that expected results are being achieved.
- **Meetings**
 - 2-3 times annually and as needed

Marketing

- **Scope**
 - Oversees the overall marketing planning of the organization
 - Analyzes the current situation and information relating to marketing opportunities
 - Forecasts and determines marketing objectives
 - Develops marketing strategies and evaluates outcomes
 - Identifies resources for achieving the marketing objectives
- **Meetings**
 - Meet at least twice/year (Fall/Spring) to review marketing planning efforts and expenditures to date (budget vs. actual)
 - Schedule additional meetings, as necessary, based upon the needs of the organization

Chairperson, Co-Chairperson and Past Chair

Duties of Chairperson:

- 1)** The Chairperson shall call the Board of Directors' meetings and manage the meeting in a professional manner.
- 2)** Shall provide a leadership role in steering the organization toward the betterment of tourism in Southern Delaware.
- 3)** Shall represent the Southern Delaware Tourism Board of Directors, when appropriate, in a volunteer capacity in such instances as task forces, appointments, and on legislative issues.
- 4)** Shall uphold the mission of Southern Delaware Tourism, and instill it in others.
- 5)** Shall maintain contact with the Executive Director and provide necessary guidance.
- 6)** Shall oversee, with the Board of Directors, the budget and financial statement of the organization and other Commission matters.
- 7)** Shall appoint committee chairs that operate in an advisory capacity to the Board of Directors.

8) Shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.

9) Shall have the authority to approve an expenditure, on an emergency basis, if it falls within an approved budget category. This should be presented to the Board of Directors at the next meeting.

10) If an immediate decision is required and no board meeting is scheduled, the Chairperson (or his/her designee) shall poll the Board of Directors by telephone or electronic mail.

11) Shall provide a yearly performance evaluation of the Executive Director.

12) In the event that the full Board is not available to make a decision, such as at a conference, etc., the Chairperson, Co-Chairperson, and Executive Director, as a group, may make such decisions.

Duties of Co-Chairperson:

1) Shall preside at meetings in the absence of the Chairperson.

2) Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Chairperson.

3) Shall maintain contact with the Executive Director to keep abreast of SDT business.

4) Shall assist the Chairperson in writing the annual evaluation of the Executive Director.

5) Shall be an ex-officio member of all SDT committees.

Duties of Past Chair:

1) Shall provide transitional leadership and guidance to new Chairperson.

2) Shall attend all quarterly board meetings.

3) Shall assist the Chairperson in writing the annual evaluation of the Executive Director.

4) Shall serve for a term of one year



Destination Marketing Accreditation Program Organizational Code of Ethics

The Destination Marketing Accreditation Program (DMAP) requires that each organization adhere to the DMAP Code of Ethics as presented by DMAP Board of Directors.

As a DMAP – certified organization, SDT Board Members are required to:

- Provide exceptional customer service and detailed information on destination products and services.
- Treat all stakeholders, including members of Destinations International, courteously, ethically, and professionally.
- Actively encourage the integration of ethics into all aspects of management of the destination organizations' activities.
- Build collaborative relationships with other destination organization industry professionals and others for the advancement of the profession of destination marketing.
- Handle all inquiries, requests, transactions, correspondence, and complaints promptly, courteously, and fairly.
- Provide clean and well-maintained facilities and equipment for the enjoyment of their customers (members and clients).
- Exercise truth in all promotional materials concerning facilities, services, and amenities provided and advise the public in a reasonable manner if and when unable to provide the level of services or facilities as advertised. Promotional material supplied by the member must be appropriate for all audiences.
- Provide customers with complete details on prices, cancellation policies and services and ensure customers receive fair exchange for their foreign currency where appropriate.
- Promote responsible and sustainable use of environmental resource base when providing services and products to customers.
- Abide by all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws.

Note: All accredited destination organizations are required to read and abide by this code of ethics as a condition for initial and continuing accreditation.

Signed by: _____

Print Name: _____