



Board Meeting Minutes from April 25, 2024

Sussex County West Administrative Complex

In attendance: Anne Angel, Scott Anthony (Board Co-Chairperson), Drew DiFonzo, Mike Dunmyer, Kevin Evans, Meghan McCalley (subbing for Carol E.), Ben Gray, Bonnie Hall (Past Chair), Maggie Lingo, Fred Mast, Kristin Miller, Matt Parker (Board Chairperson), Bill Pfaff, Alison Schuch, Fred Thompson, Kevin Thompson, Scott Thomas, Lauren Weaver, Jessica Welch

Absent: Terry Carson, Karen Falk, Morgan Edgar, Carol Everhart, Linda Price, Patrick Ruhl

1. Call to Order time: 9:31am by Matt P.

2. Welcome and Introductions: Matt P. welcomed everyone and those in attendance introduced themselves through alphabetical roll call. In addition, Scott introduced new board members. Quorum confirmed by Scott T.

3. Approval of the January 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion by: Bonnie H., **Seconded by:** Kristin M., **Passed by** the Board.

4. Committee Reports

- **Finance** – Presented by Matt P.
Scott A. confirmed as new committee chair.

1. The PAT Revenue for the 3rd quarter is down \$27,378 from this same quarter last year (19.88% decrease). Year to date, the PAT Revenue is down \$239,160 from last year (16.3% decrease). By the end of the 3rd quarter each of the last 2 years, 89% of the annual PAT Revenue had been collected by this point of the year. If that holds true, SDT would collect another \$151,500 of PAT revenue this fiscal year.
 - a. When comparing PAT Revenue to prior years other than last year:
 - i. Current year PAT Revenue is down \$192,010 (14%) compared to 3/31/22.
 - ii. Current year PAT Revenue is up \$502,083 compared to 3/31/21.
 - iii. Current year PAT Revenue is up \$261,056 compared to 3/31/20.
2. Included in the Grant Income account is \$130,110.53 that has been received from the EDA Grant, less the \$11,563.20 that was for the City of Seaford. Because this is a reimbursement type grant, this is reimbursing eligible grant expenses that have already been spent - SDT isn't holding these funds for later use.
3. At 3/31/24, there was \$456,515 in the checking account. \$12,837.41 of this is reserved for the Culinary Coast campaign. There also is \$168,798 in SDT's reserve (money market) account since we've moved the \$37,125 reserve amount for the current year, and \$25,000 has been moved to an Edward Jones investment account.

Anne A. requested that a brief executive summary / narrative be provided by the committee prior to future board meetings. Committee will plan accordingly.

Motion to approve the 3rd Quarter Financial Statements by Mike D.,
Seconded by Ben G., **Passed** by the Board.

Matt P. presented the proposed FY 2025 Budget that includes totals with a HB 168 (STR inclusion) passage and without passage.

Motion to adopt the FY 2025 Budget by Bonnie H., **Seconded by** Drew D.,
Passed by the Board.

- **Policies & Procedures** – Presented by Ben G.

The committee has been working hard to analyze and revise the SDT Funding Application and Guidelines for applicant chambers. Ben G. outlined and highlighted all committee-recommended changes and reasons for doing so. All

changes and revisions will be incorporated to the FY 2025 SDT Funding Application that will be distributed to applicant chambers in early June.

Motion to adopt the SDT Funding Application Modifications by Alison S., **Seconded** by Kristin M., **Passed** by the Board.

- **Marketing** – Presented by Bonnie H.

Bonnie outlined and called out highlights of SDT's Third Quarter Marketing Report that was shared and posted in the Boardroom.

Bonnie referenced the SDT Media Coverage Report, powered by SDT's subscription to Muck Rack. SDT's advertising value equivalency (AVE) this quarter was \$177,941 with 19 million unique visits per month to the publications cited in the report.

The FY 2025 Marketing Plan was presented and shared in the virtual boardroom.

After discussion, **Motion to adopt the FY 2025 Marketing Plan** was made by Scott A., **Seconded** by Fred T., **Passed** by the Board.

- **Advocacy** – Presented by Drew D.

An update on HB 168 was provided that included a substitute bill provided by the Delaware Associations of Realtors. The big sticking point was their request to lower the state STR tax rate to 3% and negotiations are ongoing between their lobby and the hotel lobby. The bill is moving and the bill sponsor, Rep. Kim Williams is working hard to introduce and pass it sooner than later this legislative session.

5. DTO Update – Presented by Jessica W.

- DTO is working to schedule a meeting with the Division of Revenue to address discrepancies in the PAT reporting over the last year. Meeting will include division directors and county CVBs / DMOs.
- DTO just launched a new, revised website with their new web developer.
- They are working with PBS travel show, Travels with Darley, to highlight attractions throughout the state and are filming in Sussex County on 1/26. Stops include the Nanticoke Indian Museum and Zwaanendael Museum.

- Applications for their Sports Tourism Capital Investment Fund Grant have been received and review session scheduled for 5/6.
- They are working with Carvertise on a campaign from 5/15 – 7/15 highlighting the DE on Tap App.

6. Other Business / Announcements

Scott T. informed the Board that the SDT Annual Awards Luncheon is scheduled on Friday December 13, 2024 at the Hyatt Place Dewey.

7. Next Board Meeting is on July 18, 2024 from 9:30am - 11:30am.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:10am.