

RIVER PARISHES

TOURIST COMMISSION

MINUTES

Regular Board Meeting

January 20, 2021, 10 am

1811 West Airline Hwy, LaPlace, LA

Commission: Garrett Monti (Chairman), Elizabeth Joseph (Vice-Chair), Camella Landry (Secretary/Treasurer), Tracy Smith, Ricardo Smith, Paul Aucoin, Robert Taylor, Kevin Patel

- I. Call to Order / Roll Call (10:06am)
GM TS RS EJ PA RT (6-0)
- II. Prayer and Pledge of Allegiance Prayer: EJ Pledge: TS
- III. Agenda – *Action* (10:08am)
Motion to Amend Agenda to Reflect 2022 as the Date:
APPROVE M: PA 2: EJ
GM TS RS EJ PA RT (6-0)
Motion to adopt Amended Agenda
ADOPT M: TS 2: PA
GM TS RS EJ PA RT (6-0)
- IV. Administering of the Oath of Office to New and Reappointed Commissioners – *Action* (10:09am)
Keith Green administered the Oath of Office to Kevin Patel and Ricardo Smith; Kevin Patel took his seat with the Commissioners.
- V. Public Comment START: 10:14am END: 10:14am
NO PUBLIC COMMENTS
- VI. Minutes (10:14am)
 - December 2021 Regular Meeting Minutes– *Action*
 - Adopting the minutes of the December 2021 meeting.
ADOPT M: RT 2: PA
GM TS RS EJ PA RT KP (7-0)
- VII. Financial (10:15am)
 - December 2021 Monthly Financials – *Action*
 - Adopting the monthly financials for December 2021.
ADOPT M: RS 2: PA
GM TS RS EJ PA RT KP (7-0)

10:15am: JR gives review of 2021 Financials

10:23am: JR calls for questions

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TS: How are Airbnb's held accountable for remitting monthly taxes?

JR: They are not heavily chased after. Tracking would occur internally to enforce the remissions

KP: Who pays taxes on Airbnb's?

JR: The landlord is responsible for collecting taxes from the tenant

TS: The landlord will submit the collected taxes to Airbnb

RS: What about campgrounds? Are taxes collected from the renters?

JR: They do collect taxes at campgrounds. In St. John the Baptist Parish, permanent/long term campground residents are exempt from these.

TS: What are the qualifiers for being defined as, 'long term' as it applies to St. John the Baptist Parish campgrounds?

GM: The letter we were provided on this exemption defined it as a stay lasting 30 days or longer. We do want to be cautious and tread lightly on these long term stays as many are displaced residents of Louisiana's River Parishes post Ida.

VIII. Approvals (10:29am)

- Resolution 21-01 – Cooperative Endeavor Agreement w/ LA Department of the Treasury and the State of Louisiana - **Action**
 - Approving the Cooperative Endeavor Agreement w/ LA Department of the Treasury and the State of Louisiana according to Act 119 of 2021 Regular Legislative Session

APPROVE M: EJ 2: TS
GM TS RS EJ PA RT KP (7-0)

EJ: Wishes that this process was clearer defined to expedite receiving payments

IX. Executive Director's Report

- Operations
- Bonfire Country Season Update
- River Region Cruise Terminal Monthly Update
- Sales Report / St John Center
- Marketing & Public Relations Report
- Conferences
- Community Engagement

10:32am: JR to speak

10:33am: Meeting turned over to Louisiana Steam Train Association (LASTA) for a presentation

Questions/Comments on presentation:

EJ: Three commissioners are affiliated with St. John the Baptist Parish and will work together to aid in securing partnership with LASTA

RS: Wants to aid in partnership and see's value in it for the region as a whole

KP: Can help push this forward to see it actualized in Louisiana's River Parishes

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KP: What is the resistance with St. John the Baptist Parish in creating partnership?

LASTA: They are not resistant to a partnership but are slow to act. This slowdown in the process is a result of Hurricane Ida.

TS: What is the role of a partner with LASTA?

LASTA: The partner needs to be a public entity to monitor and certify that the funds granted to LASTA are applied in compliance with the terms.

TS: Will the funds granted go directly to LASTA or will they go through the partner?

LASTA: The funds could go either way. LASTA would prefer the partner be granted the funds, for best monitoring the distribution.

GM: To best evaluate this potential partnership, can we request paperwork from LASTA to have Keith Green review? Our next scheduled meeting is 2/17/22, we would like this to be completed prior to that date.

LASTA: Yes, we can provide the documentation by Monday January 24th. We are hoping that St. John the Baptist Parish will have committed to being a partner prior to your next meeting.

X. Chairman's Report (11:04am)

- Next Board Meeting – February 17, 2022

XI. Adjourn (11:05am)

APPROVE M: PA 2: RS
GM TS RS EJ PA RT KP (7-0)