



CITY OF ST. MARYS

418 OSBORNE STREET
ST. MARYS, GEORGIA 31558

St. Marys Convention and Visitors Bureau
St. Marys Welcome Center, Ward Hernandez Building
400 Osborne Street
Minutes: June 27, 2023, 3:30 p.m.

- I. Called to Order by Darlene Landreth at 3:30 p.m.
- II. Quorum Present. Board Members: Valerie Fautz, Tyler Carpenter, Darlene Landreth, Sugar Yadav, Judy Thurner, Allen Rassi, Mardja Gray. Staff: Angela Wigger
- III. Approval of the May 2023 Meeting Minutes by Judy Thurner. Seconded by Allen Rassi.
APPROVED.
- IV. Granting Audience to the Public – Welcome extended to Vivian Hutton (121 Forest Ridge Drive, Kingsland). Vivian is an employee of Spencer House Inn interested in the tourism office and chamber office and is attending to learn more and be more engaged in the community.
- V. Approval of the Agenda
Motion to Approve the Agenda with the addition of Old Business 5, Open Board Position Update and Old Business 6, Spencer House Bed Tax Update by Tyler Carpenter and Seconded by Mardja Gray.
APPROVED.
- VI. Other Business
Cumberland Island Updates – CUIS Staff or Angela Wigger – Angela Wigger sent the board an email on June 14th to let the board know Gary Ingram called over the weekend to share he has accepted the position as superintendent at Rocky Mountain National Park beginning July 30. He was invited to the meeting but did not make it. No CUIS staff update was given for the meeting. Contacts until Gary's position is filled are Steve Theus and Cindy Brewer. The final speaker series event was held June 17th and went well. No CUIS representatives were in attendance.
 1. Crooked River State Park Updates – CRSP Staff or Angela Wigger – Park Manager Emmanuel Stewart was updated via email, with a follow up phone call, with the next few meeting dates and invited to attend. The CRSP June events are posted online and on our event board.
 2. Resignation from SMCVB Secretary Position effective 6/20/2023 – Darlene Landreth shared that Valerie Fautz is retaining her at-large position on the board but has turned in her resignation as the secretary.
 3. Request for Appointment of SMCVB Secretary Position – Darlene Landreth asked if there were any volunteers to take up the secretary position. Judy Thurner volunteered. Motion by Sugar Yadav to nominate Judy Thurner as secretary was seconded by Mardja Gray.
APPROVED.

VII. Old Business

1. St. Marys Community Market Discussion/Updates – Darlene Landreth stated the market discussion was put forward on the agenda per our last meeting, that Misti Kline could not attend the meeting, and that Valerie Fautz requested Items A-F be added to the agenda, so we will go through those and discuss as we go. Valerie Fautz stated she brought a list of additional questions but that they may be answered in the documents provided.

a. Document /Discovery for CVB Responsibility for City Market – Request by Valerie Fautz. Angela Wigger provided SMCVB meeting minutes from April 24, 2012, that showed an approved motion to absorb the community market from DDA into Tourism and meeting minutes from June 26, 2012, that showed an approved motion was returned by the DDA Board to turn the market over to the CVB and a letter would be sent to vendors with the introduction. The letter was sent in July 2012 and a copy can be provided.

b. Document /Discovery for CVB deliverables to City Market – Request by Valerie Fautz. Valerie asked what we do for the market. Angela Wigger stated that she didn't have anything in writing that stated they were deliverables, but she included the market paperwork we've created in the packet including the following:

- Vendor layout map, vendor tracking and payment sheets from 2012-2013 and 2022-2023
- Photos of the Facebook event banner and newest flyer that was created in October 2022 after a request for an updated flyer (created matching marketing assets available to vendors for FB or handouts)
- Photos of paid ads from Atlanta Magazine 2023, St. Marys Magazine 2023, a prior years SM Magazine ad, and the Guide to Camden County ad.
- Also pictured are the market yard signs and the permanent pavilion & market sign.
- Additional advertising includes a paid ad and editorial in the MapTech Boaters Guide, Explore Georgia listing, T&G calendar listing, page on our website, listed in the JIA airport video, event banner.
- Booth or table space at the market, saves them from brick-and-mortar fees, business license fees, and exemption from the Georgia Food Act based on items being sold at an event sponsored by a political subdivision of the state and approved by city.

c. Document /Discovery or permit/participation fee from City Market vendors – Request by Valerie Fautz: Vendor application was included in packet. The rates and policies are listed.

d. Document /Discovery of fees collected from City Market vendors– Request by Valerie Fautz- Fees are initial \$10 application fee and \$25 monthly fee. The amount collected monthly is listed on the Directors Report each month and it is posted to the Miscellaneous Income (38.9010) account code on our tourism revenues report each month. Also included in the account code are any other events we hold like Build-A-Scarecrow and Tour of Homes. Valerie stated she would like to see a monthly report with just the market information each month.

e. Document /Discovery for location of City Market – Request by Valerie Fautz. Angela Wigger shared she has no document that shows how the location was selected but it is city property that we are allowed to sell items on. We are not allowed to sell items inside the park and the lot to the side of the park is not as visible and we would have to move often for events (like festivals and weddings). We were at the T&G parking lot for a few years due to downtown construction and the vendors were given the option of the Gateway Property and did not like it due to the lack of visibility. Angela stated that we will need to move the market from the pavilion for an extended but temporary time frame because the tent set ups and the combination of freezes and heavy water events have destroyed the grass. The city can not grow grass while they are there, and the vendors/customers are in mud if it has rained. Angela doesn't know the city's plans but was told they are looking at several options for the area. She's surveyed a few vendors to see if they prefer Orange Hall or the DDA owned lot next to Big A and the traffic light. So far Orange Hall is the most preferred. She also asked if there were any issues with or changes to the market they might want to share and if they'd like a schedule change from every week to signing up for two weeks or four weeks, and reminded to let us know, if they know in advance, that they will be out so we can fill their spot for the day.

f. Appointment of Misty Kline as liaison from City Market to CVB – Request by Valerie Fautz: Angela Wigger shared that, as stated last month to Misti Kline, she was not aware there were any questions or concerns that had been raised had not been addressed and additionally she felt the letter presented last month was an inaccurate representation of the market. She disagrees with the need for an onsite coordinator. Kingsland's market that started in May, may have one, but they are once a month and booths are assigned the day of the market. All our vendors are assigned spaces in advance unless they are a floater filling in. Misti does run the market page. Angela has spent time with her ensuring it is clear it's a vendor run page and suggested she turn comments off if she didn't want to interact with guests or vendors. At the time of creation, she stated she runs several pages and was okay with referring questions that needed to be referred over to the welcome center. Regarding a coordinator, Angela and staff already handle payments, sign up new vendors, take calls/emails from potential vendors. Linda is the point of contact for vendors and tracks payment and vendors. Linda visits the market in person the first or second Saturday each month. Angela shared that in the past we offered free space for produce tables to entice them and have reached out to three of the local farms and it seems to just not work for the u-pick business model, plus it has been a really tough growing season or two. She has not heard back from the local farms that she reached out to most recently but learned of a new one, J4 Farms on Hwy110, and will reach out once they are growing. Also, FFA may be a viable possibility after August. As far as Misti being a volunteer, we thought she was already a volunteer because she volunteered to do the FB page and to be an in person point of contact for new vendors if they had questions. We have also shared information for years with Misti in writing and in person to share with vendors and she's shared vendor discussions with us if a need or request came up. We were accustomed to her coming in the office to pay and stay and visit at least once a month. People are, in fact, being told we are full and that's because we do not double sell paid space. We did, however, strengthen our policy on no-shows/non-payment and developed a floater/backup vendor program to fill empty spots when vendors are out. Valerie Fautz stated she is not comfortable discussing Misti while she's not here. Darlene Landreth suggested we amend the agenda here to move Old Business 1. F., to next month because Valerie does not want to discuss further.

Motion to move Old Business 1. F. to August agenda by Tyler Carpenter. Seconded by Judy Thurner.

APPROVED.

Judy Thurner stated the need to point out that it's not even been made clear if we even need a liaison and what a liaison and what exactly they would do. Valerie Fautz began to speak on those items and Darlene Landreth asked if it should wait since we just move Item F. to next month. Valerie said no she was just answering Judy's questions. Valerie shared that Misti runs the Facebook page and does an awesome job and if the board hasn't seen the page, they should take look and that she posts who is there each week so could report that. Angela Wigger stated the page is good, but she didn't think Valerie should be able to move forward talking about what Misti does if we can't talk about what the CVB team does or move forward with a resolution. Item discussion stopped and will move forward next month.

Mardja Gray stated she's not clear why we'd discuss appointing a liaison or volunteer at all because it should be advertised so other vendors have the same opportunity if it's decided that we do need one. Judy Thurner stated again the need to point out that it's not been made clear that a liaison is needed based on what our staff does. Tyler Carpenter motioned to withdraw his previous motion to move Old Business, Item F, Appointment of Misty Kline as liaison from City Market to CVB and revise the motion to add to Old Business next month a discussion on the appointment of a liaison, if it's needed, and other ways to report on the community market. Judy Thurner withdrew initial second and seconded the amended motion.

APPROVED.

Angela Wigger asked to come back to Item E, market location, briefly because she wanted to discuss a need to move the market to either Orange Hall or the DDA site and does not know what the city plans are but wants to be prepared and have a plan in place to move to Orange Hall if asked to move or need to move in July, otherwise we can wait to discuss again next month. Judy Thurner motioned to move to Orange Hall, if required, prior to next meeting. Mardja Gray seconded.

APPROVED.

2. Budget Updates FY2024, Public Budget Hearings - Angela Wigger (6/5 & 6/19) – No issues and budget passed as presented.

3. Governor's Conference on Jekyll Island Update- Angela Wigger shared that she will register herself for full attendance and will apply for a scholarship to cover the fees when it comes out and will register Darlene Landreth and Valerie Fautz.
4. Event Committee Discussion as suggested by Valerie Fautz – Angela Wigger stated that Valerie Fautz suggested an event committee last month, so we've added it here for discussion. We do have the scarecrow and tour of homes, so if there's an interest to participate, we can set this up. Valerie shared that after her recent meeting with Deborah Walker-Reed she learned that an official committee is a little more formal than what she had in mind with chair and vice chair appointments and meeting minutes.
5. Open board Position Update – Tyler Carpenter requested. – Angela reported Jane has not submitted her application. Angela will reach out to Spencer House and Riverview.
6. Spencer House Inn Bed Tax Update – Requested by Valerie Fautz – Angela Wigger Shared that the city sent out a certified letter to let them officially know they are past due 4 months.

VIII. New Business

1. Business & Event Updates – Angela Wigger or BOD Members – St. Marys Realty moved to the old Merry Mermaid building and a cigar shop has moved into the old tattoo shop next to Once Upon A Bookseller. The Olde Towne Art Gallery has had their lease cancelled and will need to be out of the Captain Morse House by July 30th. They are looking at new options right now but may not remain downtown. Osprey Cove owners are telling Allen Rassi that the Bhavook Tripathi Osprey Cove Golf club purchase discussed last month has moved forward. Judy Thurner shared that the Independence Day Festival has 120 vendors/ 27 food vendors, and they are expecting a large crowd. Angela Wigger shared they are sold out of river cruise tickets.
- IX. FY2023 Hotel/Motel Tax & FY2023 St. Marys Financials Review – Angela Wigger highlighted we are at 99% of total revenue collected at \$295,859 and 88% of total budgeted expenditures at \$262,422 with 11 months reported and 1 month left.
- X. Director's Report/ Other/Marketing – Angela Wigger – Travel Media Press Room E-Newsletter with featured story, "Discovering the Character of St. Marys and Cumberland Island, Georgia," June 5 through LRC, Angela hosted Laurie Rowe and team conducted a site visit to St. Marys and Cumberland Island June 3-6 to explore and work on the 2023/2024 plans. 11 media mentions through June 23rd, including Garden & Gun e-newsletter, Wall Street Journal, House Beautiful, Thrillist, News Break, and more for more than a \$1.6 million total estimated value if we had paid for each of those. 535 welcome center visitors and \$635.77 in monthly revenue from sales, donations, tours, and market. Our donation towards the music in the park will hit in the June report.
- XI. Motion for Adjournment made by Valerie Fautz and seconded by Judy Thurner. ADJOURNED.

Minutes by Angela Wigger