



**CITY OF ST. MARYS**

418 OSBORNE STREET  
ST. MARYS, GEORGIA 31558

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**St. Marvs Convention and Visitors Bureau**

**Meeting Minutes: February 23, 2021 3:00 p.m.**

**Location: (Conference Call)**

- I. Call to Order – Called to order by Darlene Landreth at 3pm.
- II. Quorum: Yes – In attendance: Darlene Landreth, Melissa Braun, Mary Neff, Valerie Fautz, Jerry Lee, Judy Thurner, Jim Goodman, Sugar Yadav, Mardja Gray
- III. Approval of the January 26, 2021 Minutes  
Motion to Approve the Minutes with corrections to title and year by Judy Thurner. Seconded by Valerie Fautz.  
**MOTION CARRIED.**
- IV. Granting Audience to the Public - None
- V. Approval of the Agenda  
Motion to Approve the Agenda with the additions of Mardi Gras under Old Business and 2022 Budget under New Business by Mary Neff. Seconded by Judy Thurner. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- VI. Old Business
1. Cumberland Island Update – Jill Hamilton Anderson -Bob cat tracking study, by Penn State, predicts the extinction of cats from the island overtime. The reintroduction of 32 bobcats happened more than three decades ago and created an ideal experiment to examine the accuracy of a genetic-modeling technique that predicts extinction of isolated wildlife populations. A week or so is left on the construction of the visitor center dock and they'll let us know when guests will start loading there. Mary pointed out there are several upcoming days when both the 9 and 11:45 ferries are full and wondered if the ferry would add a 2:45 return option. Jill shared that the ferry service is not required to give notice of adding an afternoon ferry in the winter season. Mary inquired if Lang's has the ability to send newsletters out using the emails they collect for reservations. Jill did not think there was an opt-in button, which would allow unsolicited emails, but said they do use the emails for follow up service on reservation changes or announcements. They are still in COVID adaptive recovery Phase 2 with no option for amendments to any service changes until Phase 3.
  2. New Officers shall be nominated and elected in February to begin service at the first regular meeting in February. Term expirations 01/31/2021, Melissa Braun, Sugar Yadav, Mardja Gray – Angela Wigger – Angela shared that Mr. Gant appointed Melissa Braun, Mr. Reilly appointed Sugar Yadav, and Councilwoman Lisa James appointed Mardja Gray. Also, shared that Darlene is willing to remain Chair, Mardja Gray to serve as Vice Chair, and Valerie Fautz to serve as Secretary and asked if there were any other volunteers or nominations before a motion to vote in the slate as presented. There were no additions. A motion was made by Mary Neff to accept the slate as presented and seconded by Sugar Yadav. **MOTION CARRIED.**
  3. Mardi Gras Update – Angela Wigger & Mardja Gray - Per the board's request last month, Angela did talk to Jolene Andersen and a meeting will be requested in the coming weeks to reaffirm that the SMCVB wants to see the festival back in St. Marys next year. Jolene shared some of her challenges with having it in St. Marys vs. Kingsland. To assist in defraying the fees they incur in St. Marys Angela would request the board consider supporting KBAY with a marketing sponsorship of \$1,000 if the 2022 festival comes back to St. Marys. Mardja made the motion that we include the \$1,000 in our budget for marketing sponsorship of Mardi Gras if it is in St. Marys and Darlene seconded. **MOTION CARRIED.**
- VII. New Business
1. Amelia River Cruises and Amelia Offshore – Darlene Landreth and Angela offered updates that Amelia River Cruises is still moving forward and hoping to start service mid to end of March. They are awaiting the completion of the fuel dock at Amelia. Captain Nate Parsons is offering small (up to 6 persons) charters between St. Marys and Amelia and has specific marketing created for cyclists. Angela has emailed the flyers for both departure locations to the board.
  2. 2022 Budget Worksheets – Angela Wigger- The finance department has requested proposed budget worksheets be turned in by March 5<sup>th</sup>. Angela will process and submit and review the outcome and media plan in the coming months. She asked that if anyone has any alternate media publications they would like to consider be added to the media plan, from those we normally participate with, that they get that information to Angela within the next 5-7 days.

VIII. Other Business

1. General State Tourism and Business/Event updates – Angela Wigger - The marketing co-ops presented by the state were for travel analytics programs with cost options this fiscal year for \$3,000.00, \$6,000.00, \$22,500.00, or \$70,000.00. We do already receive general county data from the state on an annual basis and these programs don't work well in our budget so we will not be participating but will keep on the lookout for FY2022 opportunities. BRAG had 64 attendees and the week went well with few hiccups. The reception the CVB hosts was at the hotel this year and the Mayor stopped in to offer his welcome. Angela has been meeting with Kiwanis to assist in planning of the Independence Day Festival, so that COVID mitigation is included in the permit process and to assist them through the permit submission process. The Georgia WWII Heritage Trail was launched this past week and is getting some great coverage across the state.
2. Media/Marketing updates – Angela Wigger - Web over last 30 days: Website – 29,009 Views (23,861 Views January; 21,891 Views December). Facebook – 14,843 Followers; 12,554 Post Reach. Google Map Listing – 21,100 Searches (2,800 on listing on Search, 18,300 listing on Maps). MEDIA: AJC Spring Travel, Explore Georgia Spring Break, WWII Heritage Trail

IX. Hotel/Motel Tax, St. Marys Financials – Angela Wigger. Included in packet pages 3-6 for board review, there were no questions.

X. Director's Report – Angela Wigger -Included in packet page 7 for board review, there were no questions.

XI. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn by: Darlene Landreth. Seconded by Mary Neff.  
Adjourned

The mission of the St. Marys Convention & Visitors Bureau is to promote St. Marys as a desirable tourist destination, increase economic impact and foster a quality visitor experience to benefit the city.