



CITY OF ST. MARYS

418 OSBORNE STREET
ST. MARYS, GEORGIA 31558

St. Marvs Convention and Visitors Bureau
400 Osborne Street, St. Marvs

Minutes: September 28, 2021 3:00 p.m.

***Mask are REQUIRED regardless of vaccination status.**

- I. Meeting Called to Order at 3:02pm by Darlene Landreth.**
- II. Quorum is Present. Staff: Angela Wigger**
In Person: Darlene Landreth, Judy Thurner, Mary Neff.
Via Phone: Mardja Gray, Jim Goodman, Sugar Yadav (after approval of the agenda).
Absent: Jerry Lee, Melissa Braun, Valerie Fautz
- III. Approval of the August 2021 Minutes**
Motion to Approve the Minutes by Judy Thurner. Seconded by Mary Neff.
No discussion.
MOTION APPROVED.
- IV. Granting Audience to the Public – Molly Verlin of Molly’s Old South Tours introduced herself. She is starting walking tour programs in St. Marys with a target open of Friday, October 8. We will get her added to the website and assist in promoting. Welcome to Molly! She instructs Art History & Humanities at FSCJ and does tours in other cities plus works as a step on guide and with Rick Steves on PBS Travel.**
- V. Approval of the Agenda**
Motion to Approve the Agenda by Mary Neff. Seconded by Judy Thurner. No discussion.
MOTION APPROVED.
- VI. Old Business**
- 1. Cumberland Island Update – Jill Hamilton Anderson – The 2:45 ferry ends on 9/30. For Columbus Day weekend they will add it and they are thinking to add in between Christmas and New Years when they will run the Tuesday & Wednesday ferries. A price increase has been approved. \$34 Adults, \$32 Seniors, \$24 Youth, 5 & Under are Free. There will be veteran and local resident discounts available. The cart program which in now \$5 for 45 minutes and has no guest accountability is being changed. It will move to a \$10 per night fee or \$20 if multiple nights. They have had about 5000 more people in 2020 than in 2019. There are currently no bike rentals because global supply chain is backlogged. Guests can take their own bikes. There is about a 15-bike maximum. Plum Orchard is still closed and being worked on until maybe the end of October. There will NOT be a Plum Orchard Christmas Event this year. The museum is good. They have about 5 people per hour and the capacity is 10 people at a time due to COVID. It is running mainly with staff right now; they have two volunteers that were willing to work (due to COVID).**
 - 2. Exit 1 Visitors Center Update – Wesleigh Reaves – the state VIC is getting back to its pre-COVID numbers. They had been at around 20,000 cars and were up to 40,000 cars per month in August. Information Sessions, where personal contact is exchanged, has gone from 600 to 2,300 interactions, with pre-COVID numbers being closer to 3,000. They do now have three full time staff + herself and ideally would like to have one part time fill-in.**
- VII. New Business**
- 1. BRAG Winter Ride and Big BRAG – Angela Wigger – Winter Ride will be February 15 -20, 2022. They are thinking of bringing Big BRAG back but are having some route challenges that they may not be able to work out.**
- VIII. Other Business**
- 1. Christmas Tour of Homes Discussion – Angela Wigger- we have three homes confirmed, so we will work to secure two more.**
 - 2. Christmas in the Park Update – Angela Wigger – It is planned for the first Saturday in December.**

3. RVIC/Governor's Conference Update – Angela Wigger – 400+ attendance at the conference. New organizational structure was rolled out and the new marketing promo, “Ready. Set. GA.” Was updated and shared. Trend has been that surges and delta variant have been causing pauses in travel and will happen again with new surges or new variants, but people are returning to travel. They gave a recap of what the state and state VICs have done over the last year, shared travel sentiment info and more. There are some presentation videos that Angela will forward to the board. New goal is to be not only #1 state for business but #1 state for tourism.

4. Kiwanis Club St. Marys Seafood Festival – Angela Wigger/Judy Thurner – Looking like strong attendance and interest. There are about 90 vendors plus kids' amusements, music in the park, seafood vendors and restaurants serving seafood.

5. Build A Scarecrow, October 16th 10am-2pm – Angela Wigger – it is still planned for October 16th 10-2pm at Orange Hall. Valerie will be volunteering to assist.

- IX. Hotel/Motel Tax, St. Marys Financials – attached to packet Page 3-9
- X. Director's Report & Events Recap – Angela Wigger - attached to packet Page 10
- XI. Adjournment
Motion to Adjourn by Judy Thurner, Seconded by Mary Neff.
MEETING ADJOURNED.