



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: **November 15, 2022**, 3:30 p.m.

- I. Call to Order – Darlene Landreth at 3:34 p.m.
- II. Quorum: Yes: Darlene Landreth, Valerie Fautz, Judy Thurner, Tyler Carpenter, Jake Alexander, Mardja Gray (via phone). Absent: Jim Goodman, Sugar Yadav, Melissa Braun
- III. Approval of the October 2022 Minutes
Motion to Approve the Minutes by Judy Thurner. Seconded by Valerie Fautz.
APPROVED.
- IV. Granting Audience to the Public (any speakers should provide name and address) – None.
- V. Motion to approve the agenda with the addition of Other Business #3 – Georgia VIC Update by Suzanne McNeal by Tyler Carpenter. Seconded by Judy Thurner.
APPROVED.
- VI. Other Business
 1. Cumberland Island Update – CUIS Staff by Jay Johnstone – Winter schedule is getting ready to begin on December 1 with no ferries on Tuesdays or Wednesday until March 1st. The Christmas at Plum Orchard tour is coming up on December 3rd and is sold out. The public meeting on the Visitor Use Management Plan (VUMP) was held November 17th. Highlights are that there is a recommended increase in the number of visitors each day. They would be spread out on the island. The NPS has suggested how to handle the increase with low impact to the island while increasing the options to visit and to experience more of the island. They will add designated boating and shorebird preservation areas to the south end. The full information is online. This guidance would not begin just because it's approved but would put allowances and guidance in place that could be put in place over the next 20 years. It is important that they get peoples feedback online. The link is on the NPS.gov/cuis website page. The museum opens back up tomorrow (November 16th) and will be open, at least temporarily, from 10am- 4pm. If visitation justifies it, they will keep the longer hours.
 2. Annual Immigration & Reform Report, DCA Finance & Board Report – Angela Wigger
 3. Georgia VIC Update by Suzanne McNeal – Wesley Reaves has resigned and moved back to Atlanta. Suzanne is acting as the Team Lead until the state hires a manager. Her email is smcneal@georgia.org.
- VII. Old Business
 1. SMCVB Annual Report – Angela Wigger – The annual report was given to city council and a copy was in the board meeting packet. FY22 ended at (unaudited) \$295,277 total hotel motel tax. Demographics continue to be outdoor and history enthusiasts' activities, cultural heritage events, and site/museum visits; Age group of 45 – 64 year-olds with a 50/50 mix of women vs. men; estimated average length stay of three nights; primarily leisure travelers with some small business and social meetings and reunions.

2. Discussion Slate of Officers for 2023: Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary. – Angela Wigger presented a draft slate of officers that will be presented at the January meeting. Additions can still be made at the January meeting. Voting will take place at the February meeting.

3. SMCVB Term Expiration Notice to the Public – Angela Wigger – Darlene Landreth is the only term expiration, and the expiration announcement will be made at city council in January. She is reapplying and a possible reappointment would happen late in February at city council.

4. Discussion on Highway 40 improvements – Updates - Angela Wigger- we will keep this on the agenda the next several months and will work with city staff to learn if any changes can be made in the next year that we can assist with.

VIII. New Business – No New Business

IX. Hotel/Motel Tax, St. Marys Financials – July to October hotel motel tax revenue is \$88,554. Total current revenue is \$103,959 and total expenditures are \$83,112. We did just have a budget adjustment approved at council, so an updated revenue report will be provided next month that reflects the addition of \$59,000 to better align with last years actual budget.

X. Director’s Report/ Other/Marketing/Events – Angela Wigger – Google Search numbers over the last month were over 1800 clicks to our website and 70,000 internet impressions. Angela presented to the “Leadership St. Marys” class November 17th. Jake shared that Cedar Oak is now serving pizzas in the evenings at the Café. They are making some renovations at Spencer House to accommodate a café & coffee shop with pastries. Watch Facebook for an open house date in November.

XI. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn by Tyler Carpenter. Seconded by Judy Thurner.
ADJOURNED at 4:39pm

Minutes by Angela Wigger