

TOURISM ADVISORY BOARD MINUTES

A regular meeting of the City of Brenham's Tourism Advisory Board was held on Thursday, April 20, 2023, beginning at 9:00 a.m. in The Barnhill Center, Morriss Hall in the Schulte Room, 106 Douglas Street, Brenham, Texas

Board Members present:

Scott Atwood
Jean Shoup
Jenny Van Dorf
Stacey Walters
Harrison Williams

Board Member absent:

Commissioner Kirk Hanath
James Pharaon

Visit Brenham Team present:

Director of Tourism and Marketing Jennifer Eckermann; Tourism and Marketing Coordinator Nancy Joiner; Hannah Mertz, Group Sales with Visit Brenham; Partners & Visitor Experience Manager, Kathrine Briscoe; Melinda Faubion, and Natalie Lange.

Visit Brenham Team absent:

Alex Dill, The Barnhill Center
Lu Hollander with Visit Brenham

Citizen:

Lindsey Pleasant with Hostie Rentals

Media Present:

none

1. Call Meeting to Order

Chairman Scott Atwood called the meeting to order.

2. Public Comments

Lindsey Pleasant from Hostie spoke about short-term rentals and that investors are no longer looking in Brenham anymore. For her business, Brenham's performance for short-term rentals was low.

REGULAR SESSION

3. Discuss and Possibly Act Upon Approval of Minutes from January 19, 2023, Board Meeting

A motion was made by Boardmember Shoup and seconded by Boardmember Walters to approve the minutes from January 19, 2023, Board Meeting.

Chair Scott Atwood called for a vote. The motion passed with voting as follows:

Scott Atwood	Yes
James Pharaon	Absent
Jean Shoup	Yes
Jenny Van Dorf	Yes
Stacey Walters	Yes
Harrison Williams	Yes
Commissioner Kirk Hanath	Absent

WORK SESSION

4. Spring/Wildflower Season Update to Include Visitor and Wildflower Watch Numbers

Hannah Mertz, Groups Sales with Visit Brenham presented this item. There were over 21,000 visitors to Blue Bell Creameries during Spring Break, March 13-17. Datafy numbers indicated that 18,000 visitors came downtown between March 12 – 20. The Visitor Center stayed busy during those days.

5. Texas Music Friendly (TMF) Report to Include Local Promotion of Events, Research from Other TMF Cities, and Committee Report

Kathrine Briscoe, Partners & Visitor Experience Manager presented this item. Texas Music Friendly met and they are keeping the database updated with new musicians and what venues have live music. They are planning on having a pre-concert in Alamo Alley before HNCTs with local musicians for about an hour and a half. Also, there will be a Music Night quarterly from 5-7 pm in Alamo Alley. This will be an acoustical version. The first date for this to happen will be October 6 to coincide with First Friday's Farmers Market.

6. Update on Changes to the Tourism Grant Application for 2023 Round Two Requests for Programs/Projects/Events Occurring July – December 2023

Jennifer Eckermann, Director of Tourism and Marketing, and Nancy Joiner, Tourism and Marketing Coordinator presented this item. Eckermann sent Commissioner Hanath the dates for the Round Two Tourism Grant Application. He has approved the dates for the next round. Nancy Joiner met with Hannah Mertz and Jennifer Eckermann to review the application and make changes to it. It is now more streamlined, and questions were added about the ticketed event, vendors, attendance, and a new budget spreadsheet.

7. Report on Texas Film Friendly Certification Process

Jennifer Eckermann, Director of Tourism and Marketing presented this item. We have considered applying for certification as Texas Film Friendly for several years and we are moving forward with the process. We are working on a draft and will take it to the City Council for approval in June. Kathrine Briscoe has been working on collecting and organizing photos that are needed for the application.

8. Report on Upcoming Application for the Smithsonian's 2024-2025 Museum on Main Street Program Texas Tour

Jennifer Eckermann, Director of Tourism and Marketing presented this item. The Texas Historical Commission's Heritage Tourism Program is partnering with the Smithsonian Institution to bring the Museum on Main Street traveling exhibition to Texas. Six rural communities will be selected to host an exhibit for six weeks each in 2025. There will be a two-year training program starting after selections are made in June of this year. We have 10 regions in the state of Texas and so the four that are not selected will have a chance to be a part of The Spark tour in 2026-2027. We are currently applying for this tour and the surrounding communities will be involved once we are accepted. We will apply either for tour stops 5 or 6 which will coincide with The Barnhill turning 100 years old.

9. Washington County Expo Report

Harrison Williams, Director of the Washington County Expo presented this item. It's been a very busy year at The Expo so far. He continues to work on projects at The Expo and one of those is a new sound system throughout the fairgrounds. They will begin working on a Master Plan for The Expo. More events are happening at The Expo and they are having to borrow equipment from surrounding counties to help facilitate these outdoor events. He is possibly looking at hiring more people to help with the labor and is currently fixing the old infrastructure as well.

10. Report on Hotel Occupancy Tax Collections

Jennifer Eckermann, Tourism and Marketing Director presented this item. The report presented was an update of HOT collections by the City of Brenham for Q1 for FY23. The FY23 Actual is higher than what was budgeted for the first quarter.

11. Visit Brenham DMO Q2 Report

Jennifer Eckermann, Director of Tourism and Marketing gave this report. Her report included the Quarter 2 Report for 2023. Kathrine Briscoe, Hannah Mertz, Melinda Faubion, and Natalie Lange also gave an update on the Visitor Center, Group Sales, Digital ads, and Social Media posts.

12. Administrative Report to Include STR Update and GovOS Contract Renewal, and Next Meeting Update

Jennifer Eckermann, Director of Tourism and Marketing gave this report. 96 West and Blue Bell Creameries won awards for Small Restaurant and Iconic Tourist Attraction respectively from Texas Travel. There was a Hotelier meeting yesterday and the Housing Task Force says that short-term rentals are only 1 % of all housing in Brenham. Our contract with MuniRevs/GovOS will be renewed and the amount has been prorated

for a less amount. Our next meeting will be July 20 and she will be at a conference, so we have changed it to July 13, 2023, at 9 am.

13. Adjourn

With no further business, Scott Atwood adjourned the meeting.

Scott Atwood

Scott Atwood
Board Chair

ATTEST:

Nancy Joiner

Nancy Joiner
Tourism & Marketing Coordinator