

Minutes

Destination El Paso Advisory Board Meeting

Thursday, January 13, 2022 4:00 p.m.

Destination El Paso Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present

Gracie Viramontes
Patrice Hills
Katherine Brennand
Katie Scott
Gina Roe Davis

Board Members Absent

Elvira Galvan Galindo
Johnny Escalante

Destination EP Staff

Jose Garcia
Brooke Underwood
Veronica Castro
Amanda Fernandez

I. Call to Order

- The meeting was called to order at 4:03 p.m.

II. Approval of Minutes

- Motion to approve the minutes by Gina Roe Davis.
- Seconded by Katie Scott.

III. General Manager's Update: Jose Garcia

- #### IV.
- Jose shared data with the board regarding hotel occupancy. We are at 66.2% for the week of January 2-8, 2021, with revenue at \$4.313M which is a drop for us. Federal travel has decreased along with the surge of the Omicron virus. Our occupancy is still strong compared to other cities within Texas. Katherine Brennand asked if the average rate of 83 for El Paso was based only on local rates or statewide. Jose responded that the ADR is based on all the cities in Texas that report to Smith Travel and El Paso is lower than other tourist cities.

V. Department Updates

- **Financials: Jose Garcia**
- Financial Narrative for November 2021.
- Total revenue for the month of November is at \$599,042 which our YTD budget is under at \$5,200.
- Total expenses for El Paso Live for the month of November 2021 were \$418,052 bringing YTD expenses under budget at \$194,381.
- Total expenses for Visit El Paso for the month of November 2021 were \$226,245 bringing YTD expenses under budget at \$302,337.
- Total expenses for Water Parks for the month of November 2021 were \$180,971 bringing YTD expenses over budget at \$6,916.
- YTD we are experiencing a positive variance of \$484,602.
- YTD after the influx of City of El Paso funding there is an Adjusted Net profit of \$1,020,484.
- Waterparks was not operational which affects expenses and revenues.
- **Tourism Development: Veronica Castro**
- Kylar Walker attended United States Tour Operators Association in San Diego December 7-10 and had 27 appointments with travel companies.
- We had our annual Tony the Tiger Sun Bowl Pre-Game Party on Dec. 31. The game was earlier this year, and we had a good showing of fans and visitors. Tony the Tiger made an appearance at the event, and we handed out rally towels.
- We were featured in Texas Highways- The Heart of Segundo Barrio. The church has received money to renovate the building. We were also featured in Texas Highways with an article about our rich history. AAA Explorer featured Rocket Buster Boots.
- We continue to run ads in Mexico encouraging them to come to El Paso for shopping and to receive the vaccination. We will be featured in Star News for the next 3 months and we are on the cover for the month of December. Star News is an inflight magazine for TAR airlines. TAR airlines services 18 cities with nonstop flights in Juarez.

- **Convention Development: Brooke Underwood**
- The team continues to travel in the month of December to also include Jose attending a show on behalf of Visit El Paso.
 - The first show was US Sports Congress in Frisco, TX attended by Ray, December 5-8. This was a show for event right holders and decision makers. Ray had 15 one on one appointments.
 - Ray also attended eSports Travel Summit in Pittsburgh, PA, December 14-16. This was a co-op with ASM Global with six ASM properties represented. Ray had 38 appointments and attended education sessions.
 - Jose Garcia traveled on behalf of the team and attended IAEE and attended the national sales meeting for ASM Global in Philadelphia, PA, December 7-9.
- Ray will be traveling to Southwest Showcase in January, and we will have three hotel partners traveling with us to this show.
- We will be traveling to Houston for the Texas Travel Alliance Unity Dinner in February. We have bid on this event to bring to El Paso and have been unsuccessful, but we hope to continue trying to bid for it. We will have the airport and hoteliers traveling with us to this event. We will be attending education sessions and the unity dinner encourages us to invite Representative so they can hear how important the travel industry is and continue funding for the industry.
- We will be hosting the Sports ETA 4S Rights Holders Conference in March. We are expecting about 75 rights holders to attend, and this gives us a chance to showcase the destination and all of our wonderful sports facilities.
- Film Commission had a great December with assisting two projects for Marlboro. Marlboro "stills" shoot was permitted to shoot on Scenic Dr., San Antonio St. downtown and near Rocket Buster Boots. The shoot was accompanied by a video "Behind the Scenes" shoot also for Marlboro, for social media and corporate media. Coordination with EPPD and Parks and Recreation was critical to the success of the Marlboro shoots.
- Katie Scott asked about transforming the Abraham Chavez Theatre into an Esports Arena. Brooke answered that there have been several discussions on what the Chavez should turn into and mentioned that we would need an anchor event to justify the expenses incurred to renovate the theatre. We continue to look at bringing in a tenant.
- **Venue and Event Management: Jose Garcia**
- Special Events was busy with the tear down of WinterFest. We had a difficult season with the public adjusting to the new synthetic ice rink, but we managed.
 - We had a total of 13,972 skaters in attendance.
 - The WinterFest Holiday Market featured 8-10 local artisans every Saturday evening.
 - The EPCF and PCFF Free Holiday Movies brought in a total of 2,888 movie goers.
 - As far as social media we had 1,789,506 impressions, 91,753 engagements, 682 clicks and the audience growth was 2,946.
- I am pleased to announce that we will be bringing back real ice for the 2022-2023 season. We have secured and contracted a real ice rink for the upcoming season.
- El Paso Live team has been very active with several shows in all of our venues. The total attendance in our venues for the month of December was 14,593.
- We had sold out and close to sold out shows in the Plaza Theatre and Abraham Chavez Theatre with Bert Kreischer, ZZ Top, and Dave Koz.
- Broadway returned to the Plaza Theatre with a two night showing of STOMP.
- **El Paso Water Parks: Jose Garcia**
- The managerial team played a major role in the preparation, operations, and tear down of Winterfest with the skating rink.
- We ran a Holiday special on our Season Passes and sold them for \$35 each. We had a great social media campaign promoting this special. For the month of December we have sold a total of 250 season passes.

- We will begin hiring and our goal is to be fully staffed by the end of March. We will begin lifeguard trainings in April to be ready to open all four waterparks in May.

***Adjourn 4:45pm**

***The next meeting will be on Thursday, February 10 at 4:00 PM via Zoom.**