

**VCB Board of Director's Meeting Minutes**  
**Sawgrass Golf Resort and Spa, Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida**  
**February 3, 2010 – 1:30 p.m.**

**Meeting called to order by Charles Cox at 1:55 p.m.**

Charles Cox welcomed all members and ex-officios to the board.

**Roll Call:** Barbara Golden called roll.

**Present:** Charles Cox, Kathy Fleming, John Fraser, Tina Puckett, Mark Schwantner, Virginia Whetstone, David Mariotti, St. Augustine Vice-Mayor Errol Jones, St. Augustine Beach Vice-Mayor Andrea Samuels, County Commissioner Cyndi Stephenson.

**Staff Present:** Richard Goldman, Barbara Golden, Lori Driscoll, Evelyn Vazquez, Jay Humphreys.

**Others:** Paul Williamson, Joe Finnegan, John Johnson, and Celeste Kuhar.

**Approval of Minutes:** David Mariotti made a motion to approve as presented the minutes from the Board of Director's meeting held on January 6, 2010. Motion was seconded by Mark Schwantner. **Approved unanimously.**

**Treasurer's Report:** Bob O'Neill reported that the January VCB balance is \$52,504.36. The St. Johns County Bed Tax collections are flat at best for the year with year to date collections off by about 10%.

**Approval of Treasurer's Report:** Mark Schwantner made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented. The motion was seconded by John Fraser. **Approved unanimously.**

**Executive Committee Report:**

**New Partners**

Charles Cox presented partners for approval that included Faver Pottery, Castle Garden Inn Bed & Breakfast, SEE Coastal Media, Leigh Cort Publicity, Ghost Augustine, San Marco Avenue Merchants Association, and Old City Weddings.

It was also requested to have Board action to drop partners that would not be renewing from the VCB partnership roles.

The partners to drop included: Centennial House Bed & Breakfast; Conch House Marina Resort, Panache Salon, Rodeway Inn, Collage Restaurant.

In addition, there was a list of approximately 25 other businesses that had not responded to the partnership renewals. It was requested that the Board review and contact the businesses on the list requesting their renewal prior to Board action of removing these businesses' VCB Partnership.

John Fraser made a motion to accept the seven current applicants as partners of the Visitors and Convention Bureau and to drop the five partners listed as non-renewal from VCB partnership and a letter will be sent to the complete list of submitted requests asking them to renew their partnership. The motion was seconded by Bob O'Neill. **Approved unanimously.**

### **VCB Contract with St. Johns County**

Chairman Cox updated the Board on the status of the new VCB contract. There are still some negotiations ongoing regarding Exhibit C. The issues are being worked out. The Board was asked to review Exhibit C and report to staff via e-mail any concerns or issues with the final document that includes the County's final minor revisions.

Mark Schwantner made a motion that pending no comments from the Board, staff is to proceed with finalizing the contract with St. Johns County. The motion was seconded by Johns Fraser.

**Discussion:** It was further discussed that the VCB should have an email or written quote for all purchases, not just verbal quotes. It was requested that Richard send all Board members requesting their comments.

**Approved unanimously.**

### **Y Partnership Contract**

Charles reported that the Y Partnership agreement is finalized and that Y Partnership team will be working with PGAV to review all available research. The Y Partnership team will be participating in a destination emersion in mid-February to get familiar with the destination. In addition, the Y Partnership will be presenting a preliminary campaign to the Board in March for the approval of the April campaign launch.

**Additional 4<sup>th</sup> penny to Bed Tax-** Charles Cox reported to the Board that the County Commission has approved the collection of the 4<sup>th</sup> penny of the Bed Tax and that collection will begin on April a. Disbursement, which is yet to be allocated, will begin on June 1. The County may add a new category for the additional penny where controversial expenses like fireworks the convention center and others will be covered.

### **Director's Report:**

Richard Goldman thanked the Board for their hard work on all of the contracts that have moved forward.

### **Advertising**

Richard presented the winter advertising campaign, Romance Lives Here. The contract with Chisano for this campaign with the county is not yet finalized, but will be prior to the campaign launch in early February. The Romance Lives Here campaign includes print and online. The fulfillment is all electronic to a specified landing page. The call to action is a tiered set of packages, by price. Each

sample package links directly to the property's web page. In addition, the landing page will have a video with candid visitor interviews about romance.

The proposed media placement chart for the Chisano Romance campaign was presented. The plan recommends predominantly online, but includes print in the Villages and Tampa areas and Public Radio in Miami and Jacksonville, directing the consumer to the online fulfillment.

There was discussion about the destination-wide representation of the VCB's Marketing efforts and the importance that all aspects of the destination are represented, geographically and experiences. It was further discussed that Y Partnership is working on creating a marketing and brand message that fairly represents the entire destination.

Goldman also presented to the Board the [www.VisitPonteVedra.com](http://www.VisitPonteVedra.com) website that is part of the county's partnership with the PGA Tour. The website is being created primarily to promote THE PLAYERS Championship from February through May. Thereafter the site is to promote Ponte Vedra Beach as a visitor destination.

The presentation brings the subject of sub-brands to the table, which will be completely addressed in the future. In the meantime, this site is a contractual obligation. Miles Media created the architecture for the site and VCB staff created content. Most of the posted stories were pulled from the main site because of the relevance to Ponte Vedra. The landing pages feature THE PLAYERS, and all content is about the area, listings of VCB, PV Chamber, Florida's First Coast of Golf members along with the PGA Tour. The VCB Cat I budget does pay for this site.

It was requested by the Board that the VisitPonteVedra.com images be captioned where possible. This site will be promoted by the PGA for more information on the area. It was noted that this is a shallow micro-site that links back to [www.Getaway4Florida.com](http://www.Getaway4Florida.com). Over time, the site will evolve.

Richard reported that he had met with Leslee White, with the St. Augustine Lighthouse. Leslee had presented to VCB staff examples of the Heritage Site designation. The VCB has been insured that there are no Federal regulatory controls over the heritage area. Kathy Fleming reinforced that a Maritime Heritage Designation will allow for funding and eligibility for other grants.

It was requested that the Board support the program by offering in-kind resources and letters of support. The purpose is to demonstrate to Federal Government that throughout the community there is support to work together to make the Heritage designation. The designation will be used to position the unique heritage of the area.

By Board consensus it was determined that the VCB support the Maritime Heritage Designation.

### **VCB Department Reports**

Richard Goldman reported in the Month of December, the STR Report indicated that for the first time in a year, there was an increase in occupancy, comparing December 2008 to December 2009. Overall, the STR reports indicate that the destination is doing considerably better than many of our competitive set and SAPV&B is doing about the same as other Florida destinations.

Richard also reported on the website visitation, there is some improvement on the bounce rate and time spent. He reported that there are some challenges with the effectiveness of the website and it is being evaluated.

After just five days of promotions, the Birding & FotoFest already has 45 registrants.

In January, the Sales Department performed two sales missions. One was to the Sun City Center, which has already produced three group bookings. In addition, the sales department is opening up more partner opportunities for participation in appointment shows. Upcoming sales programs were reviewed.

Richard also reported on the successful contacts made at the PGA TOUR Show in January. There were contacts made with the Golf Channel and other media outlets.

Richard also reported that USA Today ran a ½ page feature about Ponte Vedra Beach that was a direct result of the VCB Communications Department efforts. He further reported that 687% more media impressions with 41% more value in media coverage over the same time period as last year.

It was requested that staff reevaluate the STR comp sets used for comparison. When the STR contract renews in March staff will re-evaluate. It was further requested that Board members send Richard suggestions for comp-set cities.

The next VCB Board of Director's meeting is scheduled for March 3, 2010 in St. Augustine. Location yet to be determined.

Bob O'Neill made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by John Fraser. **The motion was approved unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 2:48 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Barbara Golden