

**VCB Board of Director's Meeting Minutes
Hampton Inn St. Augustine Beach, Florida
April 14, 2010 – 1:30 p.m.**

Meeting called to order by Charles Cox at 1:40 p.m.

Charles Cox called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

Roll Call: Barbara Golden called roll.

Present: Charles Cox, Mark Schwantner, John Fraser, Irving Kass, Bob O'Neill, **Tina Puckett**, Virginia Whetstone, David Mariotti, St. Augustine Beach Commissioner Andrea Samuels, and Errol Jones, St. Augustine Commissioner.

Staff Present: Richard Goldman, Kristi Hansman, Barbara Golden, Jay Humphreys, Rick Hensler

Others: Sandra Adkins, Phil McDaniel, Marty Lewis, Joe Finnegan, and Y Partnership staff: Janet Ray, Rob Deluke, Barry Lott, Stewart Hill, Patty Combs.

Approval of Minutes: Irving Kass made a motion to approve as presented the minutes from the Board of Director's meeting held on March 18, 2010. Motion was seconded by Bob O'Neill **Approved unanimously.**

Treasurer's Report: Bob O'Neill reported that the January VCB balance is \$20,630.15, demonstrating a \$25.63 increase in the VCB account. TDC Collections are demonstrating upward trend for the month of March, but not up to the desired levels.

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

Y Partnership Presentation

Barry Lott from the Y Partnership team presented focus group results from the Atlanta and Orlando focus group studies. The focus groups presentations included creative and how it communicates the desirability of the area as a vacation destination. The second part of the focus group presentation included a rebranding of the logo and moniker of the destination.

Video and oral presentations of the results of the focus groups were provided. The responses from participating consumers suggest that the destination offers a variety of activities for vacationers and the "Red Couch Chronicles" received the most positive feedback from participants. Updated print creative concepts were presented with the explanation that this is not the final product. Web ads and web

video were not fully developed but the concept with some minor changes and professional voice-over work based on the distribution will be further developed.

Board members were asked for feedback on the creative. Commissioner Samuels expressed pleasure with the visuals and commended the creative team on the exceptional visual presentation. She also expressed concern that the presentations did not include enough information about the beaches. There was very non-specific information about St. Augustine Beach. It was explained by the Y Partnership staff that the print, radio and web presentations were only samplings and that there will be a fair amount of representation of the beaches in the final advertising, and would like to see more specific focus on the beaches. There will be themed campaigns that will focus on beaches, golf, history and other specific markets once the concept is approved for proceeding.

Dave Mariotti commented that he was pleased with the campaign overall and believes that is exceptional. He did comment that the print was his least favorite; He finds the 'scrolling' to be distracting from the overall message. Overall he felt the work was very well done. Barry Lott informed the creative will be massaged and will move forward with approval in developing the campaign.

The Y Partnership moved to the second part of the presentation, the logo placement and what to call the destination. The focus groups were presented with 4 versions of the revised logo. It was expressed by focus groups that the "Florida's Historic Coast", naming St. Augustine and Ponte Vedra, clearly described the destination and made sense of the destination from a geographic point. The current logo and moniker also ranked high.

Irving Kass commented that he had shared the concept of the new moniker with some local people and they all liked the idea of Florida's Historic Coast. It was noted that most people in the focus group study understood that Coast alludes to beaches. It was discussed that "First Coast" belongs to another destination and DMO.

It was noted that the change of the logo and name change would be a very gradual process considering the confusion and expense of an abrupt branding change. The new logo and the identification of Florida's Historic Coast could be gradually introduced. Virginia Whetstone commented that the existing logo was extensively tested several years ago and that the new name and adjusted logo makes sense for a refreshed look.

There was a motion by Virginia Whetstone to request that Y Partnership to move forward with the creative presented and concept and the implementation of the new logo and moniker based on responses of the quantitative study results. The motion was seconded by Bob O'Neill. **Approved Unanimously.**

Following the request and approval to move forward to further developing and implementing the concept, Patty Combs and Barry Lott presented the media plan. The buy is primarily web-TV and internet banners driving consumers to designated websites for online engagement. Frequency in radio, in-state newspaper print, trade publications and affordable VISIT FLORIDA co-op programs are also included in the media plan.

Andrea Samuels questioned why the focus was primarily summer and does it include a year-round component. It was discussed and explained that this particular set of offers has a summer focus and that we are working with the budget for the current fiscal year. But the campaign positioning of “stories” will be the basis for year-round marketing. It was also explained that a budget is being developed for the upcoming fiscal year.

Virginia Whetstone expressed a concern that there is a primary focus on Jacksonville and Orlando, and the secondary market is Miami and Atlanta and that a focus on Jacksonville will not create the optimal overnight visits. Visitors that travel more than 3 hours away are more likely to stay in hotels. It was discussed that many of the audience and board members that represent accommodations and events that from personal experience the destination does get a high number of overnight visitors from Jacksonville.

It was expressed that there has been serious consideration and research on the Orlando and Jacksonville markets and there appears to be a definite overnight visitor market base in those areas.

The Y Partnership presented a partner program for cooperative advertising online and in print that will effectively leverage the destinations advertising efforts with low production and placement costs.

Andrea Samuels inquired about the individual meetings for input in the plan. It was explained that Y Partnership staff met with some of the beach businesses who are VCB Partners.

**Executive Committee Report:
New Partners**

Charles Cox reported that the VCB Executive committee did vote to approve the following new partners:

- Distinguished Bed & Breakfast Inns of St. Augustine (www.innsfstaugustine.com)
- Old City Life Magazine (www.oldcitylife.com)
- Casey Toons, Inc (www.caseytoons.com)
- Sea Love Charters (www.sealovefishing.com)
- Raging Watersports (www.ragingwatersports.com)
- Café Atlántico Restaurant (www.cafeatlantico.net)

- PIT Surf Shop (www.pitsurfshop.com)
- Spanish Bakery (www.thespanishbakery.com)
- Oasis Restaurant (www.worldfamousoasis.com)

Since the current meeting no longer had a quorum in attendance, it was requested that staff conduct an email vote for approval.

On Thursday, April 15, an email vote was distributed to approve the above mentioned businesses as new partners. An electronic motion was made by Johns Fraser to accept those businesses as Partners. There was a second made by Kathy Fleming. Motion Approved 6-0.

Charles Cox also mentioned that the Executive Committee is reviewing some of the policies for partnership with the VCB.

Director's Report:

Richard Goldman presented a brief report on VCB Department reports. He also reported on TDC collections for February and a preliminary report for March collections. The STR Report, Inquiry reports, website visits, sales and communications departments activities reports were reviewed.

Jay Humphreys reported that in the past week, The Travel Guy, which airs on Canadian Travel Channel spent a week here filming primarily in St. Augustine and St. Augustine Beach. In addition, there were several national online and print stories in March, including a piece in Southern Living.

It was further reported by Richard that the VCB Partnership is up from last year.

Richard reported that the Romance Lives Here campaign created 9746 website visits. The primary visits to the website through mid-April included Tampa, Atlanta, Miami, Jacksonville, Wallingford, Connecticut.

He also reported that the Tourist Development Tax Ordinance was recently changed to reflect new funding categories.

The new categories are:

- Destination Marketing; formerly Category 1, uses 40% of 2 cents, 100% of 4th cent
- Arts and Cultural Development; formerly Category 2 uses 30% of first 2 cents
- Leisure and Recreation; formerly Category 3 uses 30% of first 2 cents
- Administration and Special uses; the new category uses 100% of 3rd penny

Richard also informed the board that the VCB will be collaborating with various stake holders to help affect the PGAV Plan implementation as an active participant.

He also reminded the Board that the Florida Birding and FotoFest will take place in the next week and that it is a VCB operated event that brings in world-wide participants.

Charles Cox thanked Sandra Adkins for hosting the meeting at the Hampton Inn on St. Augustine Beach and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Irving Kass made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Virginia Whetstone. **The motion was approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Barbara Golden