



## **Board of Directors Meeting**

Feb 12th at 8:30 a.m.

### **MINUTES**

#### **BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Chair John LaCivita, Vice Chair Tim Self, Secretary/Treasurer Wes Santos, Past Chair Richard Russell Hon. Tom Knight, Susie Bowie, Stacey Corley, Kim Farrell, Cindy Moore and Jason Samson; **Ex Abs:** Mark Sherwin Mike Quillen and Heather Van Wie

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Erin Duggan, Andrea Hunt, Kelly Harb, Pete Harvey, Suzanne Hackman, Hunter Carpenter, Jess Bertolini and Camille Seabrook

Board Meeting called to order at 8:30 AM by Chair John LaCivita

#### **Consent Agenda**

JL called for a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, the Employee Handbook removed to further discuss changes/updates/revisions. Stacey Corley moved to approve the Agenda with Emp Handbook removed. Richard Russell seconded the motion. All agreed; the motion passed. Discussion: Erin Duggan and Andrea Hunt reviewed the additional revisions made to the Emp Handbook after the Consent Agenda was sent to the Board. Susie Bowie moved to approve the amended handbook. Tim Self seconded the motion. All agreed.

#### **Financials**

Director of Finance, Andrea Hunt reviewed the November and December 2025 financial statements. Andrea added the notes below:

- Dec 2025- \$5000 surplus for the month, \$50,000 surplus YTD
- 1<sup>st</sup> month recognizing Visitor Guide sales income went to print in December
- Web banners sales are pacing ahead of budget
- Payroll expense looks underbudget, but December payroll was funded early January- timing will even out next month
- County reimbursements are funded. Slight delay due to questions from clerk but all have been cleared and reimbursed.
- Q1 compliance reporting has been completed and submitted to County ahead of contract terms.
- Started working on FY27 Budget preparation
- New IT Vendor is fully onboard, working on migration to SharePoint by end of month,

Discussion: Wes Santos inquired about the recent Audit Findings. Andrea advised that the County asked for some items and VSC was working to provide information. John LaCivita called for a motion to approve the November and December 2025 Financials. Richard Russell moved to approve the motion. Wes Santos seconded the motion. All agreed; the motion passed.

#### **VSC Quarterly Report FY26 Q1 Presentation**

Presented by Visit Sarasota County Leadership: Kelly Harb, CMP, VP of Marketing and Communications, Pete Harvey, Director of Sports, Hunter Carpenter, Director of Community Relations & Partnership, and Suzanne Hackman, Director of Sales & Industry Relations. Erin Duggan reviewed the first couple of slides showing what the Board has asked of VSC. Jason Samson asked about the data collection of Visitor Sentiment. Erin advised that Zartico was the platform used to track key data and reminded the Directors that a monthly email is sent to share the numbers collected. International funding moved to 1 time funding. Wes Santos noted that Int'l funding is

critical to marketing. John LaCivita asked why the area was not branded as SouthWest Coast instead of West Coast. Erin explained that West Coast was used in the spirit of collaboration with Manatee County. John suggested possibly looking into rebranding from West Coast to a more local (SRQ) centric title.

#### **LHG Domestic Public Relations Presentation**

Introduction given by Kelly Harb, CMP, VP of Marketing and Communications. Kelly gave a brief overview of PR efforts across the board. Presentation led by Mackenzie Comerer, Sr VP and Annelise O'Donnell, Account Supervisor. Erin Duggan followed up with full transparency about the representative handling Sports Tourism PR, Liz Knight being the daughter of Board Member Tom Knight and having a long term- over 10yrs- relationship with Visit Sarasota.

#### **TDT Advocacy Corner**

Hunter Carpeter, Director of Community Relations & Partnership reviewed the results from the TDT Working Group call- attended by Tim Self and Mike Quillen. There were productive conversations on marketing and creating an 'emergency toolkit' for the potential TDT funding fate. Jason Samson asked if the TDT/Property Tax conversation had come up again during this legislative session. Erin advised that to date it had not. Erin, Hunter and Wes had a chance to speak with others from around the state during the Tourism Day Summit in Tallahassee, FL. There was an opportunity to offer Rep McFarland clarification on how Bed Tax (TDT) funds were used in Sarasota. Wes mentioned that the overall sentiment was higher at this year's Summit. John L. suggested to proactively educate the community about what VSC does. Tim Self agreed that the emergency toolkit will support the education efforts. Susie Bowie noted that education is important when folks hear that they are saving money but do not understand at what costs.

#### **President & CEO Report**

Erin Duggan briefly reviewed the December 2025 Staff Reports, Local and International News Wins, Partner Dashboard, and Miles Sales, November 2025 Visitor Profile Dashboard, Legislative Update, the upcoming Open House at VSC Admin Offices, and Voice of Sarasota Nominations requests with Board Members.

#### **Approval of New Partners- no report for February 2026**

VSC Board Meeting ended at 9:47AM.