



GREAT RIVERS & ROUTES TOURISM BUREAU
QUARTERLY BOARD MEETING
Alton City Hall, Alton, Illinois

Thursday, June 16, 2022
Meeting: 8:00 a.m.

AGENDA:

- I. *Call to Order*
- II. *Opening Remarks from President*
- III. *FY21 Audit Report*
- IV. *Approval of April Board Minutes*
- V. *Approval of Quarterly Financials*
- VI. *Finance Committee Report*
 - a. *Approval of FY23 Budget*
- VII. *Tourism Bureau Report*
- VIII. *Board Nominating Committee*
 - a. *2022-2023 Board of Directors*
- IX. *Committee Assignments:*
 - a. *Outreach/Legislative*
 - b. *Development*
 - c. *Sports & Recreational Development*
- X. *Other Business:*
 - a. *Old Business*
 - b. *New Business*
 - c. *General Announcements*
- XI. *Adjournment*

**Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau
Board of Directors Board Meeting
Aerie's Resort – Grafton, Illinois
Thursday, April 21, 2022**

8:00 a.m.

Present: Mike McCormick, Kristi Hyten, JD Lorton, Tom Guarino, Sandy Hefner, Linda Jun, Patty Rotermond, John Hopkins, Lauren Patten, Mitch Bair, Daniel Belmont, Jamie Lane, Jennifer Floyd, and Betsy Allen

Absent: Michael Barker, Yvonne Campbell, Cameo Holland, Karen Brncic

Staff: Cory Jobe, Stephanie Tate, Cathy Jo Meininger, Joey Naples, Jason Troop, Kayla Howland, and Kim Grizzell

Guest: Mary Lillesve, City of Grafton, Daniel Flynn of Neil F. Flynn & Associates of Springfield, IL.

Call to order: The meeting was called to order at 8:15am by Laura Patten. Lauren welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked JD Lorton with Aerie's Resort for hosting the meeting with breakfast.

President opening remarks: Cory welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked JD Lorton and his family for the wonderful view and hosting us with breakfast at Aerie's Resort. He asked that everyone introduce themselves as we have some new talents to the Bureau. He also asked that everyone put the next board meeting on their calendars that is set for June 16, 2022 at Alton City Hall, Alton, IL.

Approval of last Board Minutes: Lauren asked the board to review the October board minutes. JD Lorton made the motion to approve the October board minutes. Kristi Hyten seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

Financial Updates: Kim Grizzell, Finance Director, gave the finance report. It was mentioned that the PPP funds was in this fiscal year and it should have been in last fiscal year. We have been very aggressive with marketing our brand. Keeping a close eye on the checkbook. Good news is we have a healthy cash reserve and we hope to renew a CD and put money on investment. Lauren asked the board to review the finance report. Mitch Bair made a motion to approve the finance report. Mike McCormick and Sandy Hefner seconded the motion. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

Daniel Belmont asked if any position were brought back since Covid. It was stated that we were grateful to be fully staffed and going strong.

FY2021 Audit Report: Auditors were scheduled to come to this meeting but didn't make it. They are set to be at the June 16th, 2022 meeting in Alton. Kim did say that the Auditors went through all books in detail.

Tourism Bureau Report: See attached report and Cory's notes. Daniel Flynn of Neil F. Flynn & Associates of Springfield, IL gave a report on the legislative session in Springfield. It was announced

that the Byway received \$10 million grant to fund projects for Hartford & Alton.

Committee Report: Lauren mentioned that the committees will resume their meetings in July. If you are on a committee expect to get a call or email to meet up and discuss your committee's roles.

Committee Assignments:

Board Nominating Committee: John Hopkins, Kristi Hyten, Lauren Patten, Mitch Bair, and JD Lorton. Dave Miller's term was up and John Hopkins extended his appreciation that Dave has given the Bureau over his 10(+) years of service. Out of appreciation for his service a donation will be made in his name to the Wild Mustang Sanctuary. Doug Stotler and Cathy Luttrell's terms has ended as well. We welcome the new board members of Edwardsville, Jason Coomer of SIUE, Jean Brunier, Jacinto of Litchfield. Mitch Bair, Karen Brncic, Tom Guarino, and Jamie Lane are to be voted on in June to start a three-year term in July 2022-2023.

Outreach/Legislative: John Hopkins stated a Madison County presentation requesting funding from county ARPA was favorably received. The request has passed 2 rounds of approval. It was stated that tourism is an investment.

Development: JD Lorton, meeting is set for 2nd week in July.

Sports & Recreational Development:

Old Business: None

New Business: None

General Announcement: JD Lorton thanked Cory and the Bureau staff for everything they do. JD also mentioned that the Alpine Coaster main building is in progress. The equipment is expected to be delivered by June 1st. Mary Lillesve stated that we need to be working with Pere Marquette State Park to bring more people to Grafton. Spend the day in Grafton May 21st for SIP, Sample and Stroll. June 4, is the Dinky Dedication at the Grafton Visitor's Center. Sandy Hefner, Jerseyville is working on rail transit park. It has slowed down due to Ameren. Jerseyville will be hosting Rock the Block concert series. Linda Jun, we need to work hard making people realize this area is the place to come to. Jennifer Floyd, one day at SIUE to come together recognize the impact that the college has on the region.

Executive Session: took place directly after the board meeting.

Adjourn: A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by JD Lorton and seconded by Mitch Bair. All members were in favor and the motion carried.

Respectfully submitted by,


Cory Jobe
President/CEO


JD Lorton
Secretary/Treasurer

Print is still important, and I want to thank our advertisers as we continue to push rich content to travelers with 30,000 copies of our new Go Guide.

Speaking of online, we recently launched a new way to advertise with the bureau via our website.

The Destination Signals program is an effective way to reach a targeted audience with reach and metrics on our website at riversandroutes.com

Later today, Senator Rachelle Crowe will announce that we will receive \$10 million dollars for projects along the Meeting of the Great Rivers National Scenic Byway for development projects in Hartford and Alton along our byway.

The announcement comes after months of meetings and work to fund phase one of a three phase approach to activating our byway for development to enhance our regions livability and growth of nature based and outdoor recreation projects.

You will be hearing more about the projects over the coming weeks and months ahead once the FY 2023 budget goes into effect on July 1.

I don't want to steal all of Daniel Flynn's thunder with his legislative report – but we had a very successful spring legislative session in Springfield and millions of dollars will be coming to southwest Illinois to support our efforts along the byway and Route 66.

With that, I will take any questions, and if none, please let me introduce our lobbyist, Daniel Flynn.

Our mobile visitor Center...the Traveler-will be popping up all throughout the region the week of May 1-8 to surprise residents and visitors with a chance to win \$1,000 of gas cards and much more.

Remember to register and take part in EPIC FOOD MONTH that will take place the entire month of June.

The team is working really hard to encourage businesses in the region to participate in Epic Burger Week, Epic Ice Cream Week, Epic Pizza Week, and Epic Wing Week. Let's make the month of June EPIC...in southwest Illinois.

Then shortly after, our annual restaurant weeks for the Alton Area and Collinsville will return.

Restaurant Week will be held from July 12-19. The cost to participate is \$100 per restaurant. The popular beer glasses will return for the Alton Area Week and for the first time in Collinsville.

Joey Naples is handling registration for both, and you can register on our website at riversandroutes.com

The Spring/Summer Go Guide is out and has an all-new look and feel. We have enlarged the size of the publication but reduced the page count. The Fall/Winter edition will increase in page count to 28.

As we continue to see an increase in online searches from mobile devices, we need to look to the future in how we communicate with our visitors.

The Great Outdoors Inside the Midwest campaign will run in 6 markets with Connected TV, digital display, online & pre roll videos, YouTube advertising, and in major magazine publications.

In addition to our leisure domestic brand campaign, we will be running a targeted geofence digital campaign welcoming NASCAR race fans to southwest Illinois the week leading up to the big race at World Wide Technology Raceway.

We know that thousands of race fans will make their way to the St Louis region, and we will hit their mobile devices, laptops, and I pads with a NASCAR ad that will take visitors to our website at riversandroutes.com where they can download trip itineraries and register to win a \$500 Gas Gift Card!

We will support the campaign with window posters and information cards that we will get to hotels and businesses within the region.

Earlier this week, the Illinois Office of Tourism launched its new brand campaign...The Middle of Everything.

The Middle of Everything features Aerie's Resort and the Great River Road. We could not be prouder of this new \$30 million marketing campaign that is running in 20 markets across the country.

In addition to the brand campaign. The cover of the Summer Enjoy Illinois magazine features Aerie's Resort.

National Travel & Tourism Week is just around the corner. We are doing something much different this year.

During the Summit, we announced our economic impact numbers, reviewed our digital campaigns from last summer and fall, introduced our new mobile visitor center...the “Traveler”, launched Madison County Made, and the Last 100 Miles of Route 66 initiative.

January and February we saw an increase in hotel/motel tax revenues over the previous year. Much of that demand had to do with our eagle season and return to in person events like the Alton Eagle Ice Festival and our popular Alton and Grafton Eagle Shuttle Tours. Both tours sold out for 4 weeks in January. Plans are already underway for both the festival and an extended shuttle tour schedule for 2023.

To support the eagle shoulder season, we allocated \$25,000 in digital media advertising targeting consumers in the St Louis DMA, Central Illinois, and Indiana.

We continue to see growth and opportunity throughout the region as we head into the summer travel season.

Yes, gas prices and inflation have us concerned-could a recession be on the horizon.... I am not sure...but one thing I am certain of today is that the travel trend will continue with families and travelers taking more road trips, discovering the great outdoors, and experiencing rural tourism-we should have a very positive summer travel season in southwest Illinois.

To support summer travel to the region, we have many campaigns planned to run in our target markets starting May 5 and running through late August.

Good morning and great to see all of you in person this morning.

I want to first thank JD and the Lorton family for hosting us this morning. You cannot beat this view. The best view in the Midwest!

Your bureau has been very busy this past quarter. Before I launch into my formal remarks, I would like to take time to welcome the newest members to our bureau team.

Jason Troop

Laura Scarborough

Kayla Howland

And joining us on May 1 will be Beth Bear of JCBA. Beth will be leading a new role at the bureau as our Economic Development Specialist. We are delighted to have Beth join us and bring her expertise in business development to the bureau as we look to build new product to support our growing regional tourism destination.

It was great to see so many of you at our Annual Tourism Summit back in January. The team at the Gateway Convention Center did an outstanding job.

So much so, we have already booked our 2023 Annual Summit for February and this time it will be a lunch time event. More details will be coming later in the year.

We hosted nearly 250 partners in person, and it was a very successful event.

GREAT RIVERS & ROUTES TOURISM BUREAU

BALANCE SHEET

05/31/2022

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Carrollton #3987 Ops	(15,223)	
Carrollton #6238 Bldg	28,439	Interest Bearing
Carrollton #7533 City of Alton	842,339	Interest Bearing
CD Held at Carrollton Bank	-	Matured 3/2022 Moved to #7533
Liberty Bank #1001	276,180	Interest Bearing
Foundation #9411	270,648	
Petty Cash	180	

Total Checking/Savings	<u>1,402,561</u>	
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Accounts Receivable	<u>131,171</u>	
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Inventory	<u>18,888</u>	
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Prepaid	<u>93,346</u>	
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Fixed Assets

Accumulated Depreciation	(8,384)	
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Fixed Assets	<u>136,362</u>	
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Total Fixed Assets	<u>127,978</u>	
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TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>1,773,945</u></u>	
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LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	83,734	
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Credit Cards	8,401	
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Payroll Liabilities	<u>3,137</u>	
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Total Liabilities	<u>95,272</u>	
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Equity

Opening Balance Equity	1,604,098	
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Net Income	<u>74,574</u>	
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Total Equity	<u>1,678,672</u>	
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TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>1,773,945</u></u>	
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GREAT RIVERS & ROUTES TOURISM BUREAU

PROFIT & LOSS VS BUDGET

July 2021 - May 2022 (11 Month Period)

	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>VARIANCE</u>
INCOME			
Alton Food/Bev Tax	243,296	210,000	33,296
Alton Hotel/Motel Tax	225,825	175,000	50,825
Argosy Casino	4,750	-	4,750
Collinsville Partnership	104,167	100,000	4,167
Edwardsville Partnership	68,750	75,000	(6,250)
Glen Carbon Partnership	20,833	25,000	(4,167)
Godfrey Partnership	20,000	20,000	-
Grafton Partnership	37,500	45,000	(7,500)
Hartford Tower Contract	32,343	-	32,343
Jersey County Hotel/Motel Tax	36,574	40,000	(3,426)
Litchfield Partnership	6,667		
Madison County Hotel/Motel Tax	2,660	1,800	860
Grant - IDOT Byway	24,750	24,750	-
Grant - LTCB IBOT	587,950	284,000	303,950
Advertising	60,289	75,000	(14,711)
Building Maintenance Fund	2,000	2,000	-
Cruises & Tours	73,974	33,600	40,374
Gift Shop	9,525	5,000	4,525
Interest Earned	4,387	2,500	1,887
Miscellaneous Income	12,372	28,000	(15,628)
Sponsorship / Donations	2,500	50,000	(47,500)
Summit	14,984	-	14,984
PPP Income	-	101,075	(101,075)
Total Income	1,596,096	1,297,725	291,704

EXPENSES

Advertising & Marketing	400,868	253,455	147,413
Bank & Processing Fees	4,017	200	3,817
Conference & Trade Shows	19,020	37,000	(17,980)
Contract / Professional	119,828	8,700	111,128
Contributed Facility	-	13,500	(13,500)
Cruise & Tours	58,599	27,200	31,399
Depreciation	-	373	(373)
Dues & Subscriptions	22,216	10,000	12,216
Entertainment	7,290	-	7,290
FAMS	456	10,000	(9,544)
Gift Shop	-	2,500	(2,500)
Insurance	14,456	8,200	6,256
Maintenance Office & Bldg	1,672	9,000	(7,328)
Office Equipment	12,014	15,000	(2,986)
Payroll (Employee) Benefits	32,698	78,000	(45,302)
Payroll Wages	339,220	448,000	(108,780)
Payroll Taxes	25,186	35,000	(9,814)
Postage	14,029	11,000	3,029
Production & Print	184,712	123,000	61,712
Promotional Events	105,478	34,000	71,478

GREAT RIVERS & ROUTES TOURISM BUREAU

PROFIT & LOSS VS BUDGET

July 2021 - May 2022 (11 Month Period)

	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGET</u>	<u>VARIANCE</u>
Public Relations	-	5,000	(5,000)
Rent	35,563	38,796	(3,233)
Research	31,950	27,200	4,750
Staff Retreat & Training	2,053	5,000	(2,947)
Supplies Office	4,602	10,000	(5,398)
Taxes, License & Fees	1,819	-	1,819
Telephone	13,856	19,000	(5,144)
Travel	11,505	14,000	(2,495)
Utilities	6,196	5,000	1,196
VC Building Lease	2,001	2,001	-
Website	49,172	47,600	1,572
Foundation Expenses	1,046	-	1,046
Total Expense	1,521,522	1,297,725	223,797
Net Income	74,574	-	67,908

**GREAT RIVES & ROUTES TOURISM BUREAU
PROPOSED FY23 BUDGET**

	BUDGET
INCOME	
Partnerships:	
Alton Hotel/Motel Tax	235,000
Alton Food/Bev Tax	250,000
Collinsville Partnership	125,000
Edwardsville Partnership	75,000
Glen Carbon Partnership	25,000
Godfrey Partnership	20,000
Grafton Partnership	45,000
Hartford Tower	20,000
Jersey County Hotel/Motel Tax	40,000
Litchfield Partnership	40,000
Madison County Hotel/Motel Tax	4,000
Grants:	
Grant: LTCB	685,308
Grant: IOT Marketing Partnership	50,000
Grant: IDOT Byway	24,750
Other:	
Advertising	85,896
Building Maintenance Fund	2,000
Group Tours	15,000
Sponsorship & Donations	15,000
Summit	20,000
Interest Income	2,700
Misc Income - Budget	200
Add'l Funding Anticipated / Not Awarded Yet:	
Madison County ARPA	
International Grant	
TOTAL INCOME	1,779,854
EXPENSES	
Payroll Gross Wages	496,777
Payroll Taxes	41,005
Payroll Employee Benefits	58,680
Advertising	442,020
Bank & Processing Fees	2,800
Building Lease - Visitor Center	2,001
Conference & Trade Shows	110,700
Contracted Services	189,195
Depreciation Expense	500
Dues & Subscriptions	28,458
Entertainment	15,000
FAMS / Travel Writer	14,000

BUDGET

GREAT RIVES & ROUTES TOURISM BUREAU**PROPOSED FY23 BUDGET (Page 2 of 2)**

Group Tours	15,000
Insurance - Work Comp	1,000
Insurance/Bldg/D&O/Liability	8,200
Maintenance Office & Building	2,390
Office Equip/Maint Agreements	14,444
Postage-Shipping-Lease	12,682
Print / Production	91,846
Promotional Events	59,700
Rent Office	39,948
Research	47,600
Staff Retreat & Appreciation	1,825
Supplies - Office, Visitor Center, Tower	3,600
Telephone/In-Out/Cell/Internet	16,200
Travel	8,000
Utilities	7,683
Website / SEO	48,600

TOTAL EXPENSES	1,779,854
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(OVER) UNDER BUDGET	0
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