

# Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission

## Minutes of July 19, 2023

Members Present: Bill Comeaux, Karen Broussard, Tammy Gordon, Henri Deshotels, Cathy Burdette  
Members Absent: Victoria Bourque (work), Lindsay Watson (dr. appointment), Angela LeBlanc (work)  
Others Present: Alison Miller, Charlene Beckett

The meeting was called to order and all in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Commission reviewed the agenda. There were no additions and the meeting proceeded.

Charlene Beckett updated the Commission on events held in downtown Abbeville. The Daylily Festival attendance was outstanding, and she distributed 500 festival fans within the first hour. She is working with the Mayor to finalize the Fall Sounds on the Square bands and dates. The Living History Cemetery Tour will be held on November 10 and Louisiana Spirits will be in Abbeville to investigate several downtown buildings for paranormal activity then host a seminar on their findings. The buildings being considered are City Hall, the Frank's Theatre, Black's and a couple others.

**A motion was made by Karen Broussard, seconded by Bill Comeaux, and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of Wednesday, March 15, 2023, as written.** No quorum was available for the May 10, 2023, meeting.

The Commission reviewed the financial statements and bills to be paid. **A motion was made by Tammy Gordon, seconded by Karen Broussard, and unanimously carried to approve the Treasurer's Report and payment of bills as presented.**

Alison Miller provided the Commission with an update on tourism activities. She has recently mailed out over 5,000 information postcards to requests for more information received from our advertising. The City of Abbeville has hired a Digital Media Assistant and she started working at the end of June. The Tourist Commission has received a \$9,985 grant from the Louisiana Office of Tourism for advertising. Mrs. Miller has contacted several individuals regarding the Abbeville Commissioner vacancy, but no one is available to serve. She has a few more people to contact.

Alison Miller informed the Commission on the status of short-term rentals and the collection of the 2 percent occupancy tax on these properties. Most of the properties listed on AirBnB and VRBO are not remitting their occupancy tax. Mrs. Miller has been in contact with the Parish Tax Department and they are waiting on a court ruling on how to proceed. In the meantime, Mrs. Miller will obtain copies of resolutions and/or agreements other CVBs have with AirBnB and VRBO to collect the occupancy tax. **A suggestion was made by the Commission to have Alison Miller send a letter to the non-paying properties explaining that they are obligated to remit the occupancy tax and what this tax pays for.** Mrs. Miller will try to obtain the addresses and contacts to send letters to.

Alison Miller informed the Commission that most of the "Welcome to Vermilion Parish" signs, that were installed in 2008, have been damaged. Each sign costs over \$1,000 to replace, the current property owners would need to be contacted to see if a new sign could be put on the property and DOTI would need to be involved to mark the areas. **After a brief discussion, the Commission decided to not replace the "Welcome to Vermilion Parish" signs and use the funds for marketing.**

Tammy Gordon provided an update on the Delcambre Seafood and Farmer's Market, handed out Delcambre Shrimp Festival brochures and offered to bring information on Vermilion Parish to the Lt. Governor's Summit at the end of August.

Bill Comeaux invited everyone to visit the Acadian Museum in Erath and informed the Commission that a genealogy group from Jennings toured the museum. He also let the Commission know that Warren and Mary Perrin were being honored at the St. Martinville Museum.

The next meeting of the Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission will be held on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at 3:30 pm at Vermilion Parish Tourist Commission office.

**There being no further business, a motion was made by Tammy Gordon, seconded by Cathy Burdette, and unanimously carried to adjourn.**

Minutes taken and respectively submitted by:



Alison Miller, VPTC Secretary