

Bayou Vermilion District Communications Committee

Monthly Meeting Minutes

Call to Order

A Communications Committee meeting was held on Friday, January 15, 2021 virtually via Zoom. It began at 10AM, and was presided over by Bayou Vermilion District (BVD) Commissioner, Calvin Léger.

Attendees

Commissioners in attendance included: N/A.

Commissioners in attendance virtually included: Calvin Léger and Mark Wiltz.

Staff in attendance included: N/A.

Staff in attendance virtually included: Chris Benoit, Gift Shop Manager; David Cheramie, CEO; Charissa Helluin, Director of Outreach; Brady McKellar, Director of Museum Operations; Millicent Norbert, Director of Hospitality Staff not in attendance included: N/A.

Topics Discussed

Mr. Léger posed the question: What do we need to be able to accomplish our goals for 2021?

Outreach

Charissa Helluin, Director of Outreach: Communications, Membership and Volunteer Programs, Liaison with IT/AV Contractors, and assists non-profit foundation with special projects

Museum Operations (Brady) and Outreach (Charissa) have taken over Communications responsibilities and are assessing and reviewing spending and current plans to determine effectiveness and what can be cut and what can be improved. Pivoting print advertising to digital. Reviewing analytics and aligning strategies to generate revenue.

Mr. Léger: Would like for us to consider PSAs, generating a media list, determining which are most effective, and then pooling our resources into those more effective strategies. He would also like for us to show up on internet browse searches of “top 10 things to do...”

Millicent: Would like for us to use a variety of media as not to leave our mature audiences.

Brady: Is looking out for ways to connect and create content to attract all demographic, especially younger audience.

Charissa: Is targeting locals during the pandemic, collaborating with Burning Stick Creative to find effective strategies. Membership mailings have been the most successful campaigns in the past.

Gift Shop

Christine Benoit, Gift Shop Manager - Retail management: Purchasing, sales, scheduling and training staff, reporting

Chris: Relying on local consignment vendors to keep spending down, but needs to purchase inventory. She is also tracking how visitors have heard from us. The top 3 sources are: Google, Trip Advisor, and Harvest Hosts. Also, working with Brady to add sale items to the online store.

Calvin: Are we attracting people from the bayou? Advertising, sign at our dock indicating that people can purchase beverages and dine in our restaurants.

Issue: Parking and access.

Solution: Better places to park and dock.

Brady: The corridor initiative might bring in more traffic and bayou side development as well.

Museum Operations

Brady McKellar, Director of Museum Operations: programming and musical events, village operations, interpretation and historical accuracy for artisans, and village tours.

Brady: Assessing communications and marketing. Working to make the website more functional and correct. Updated weddings and event rentals page with new photos and accurate information. Adding a webpage with mission statement, strategic plan, etc. Managing all social media. New ideas to attract visitors: partnering with museums to offer museum packages. Partnering with Acadian village to offer combined tickets, visit Vermilionville during the day, then visit Acadian village in the evening. Jean LaFitte currently refers all of their visitors to see us.

Hospitality

Millicent Norbert, Director of Hospitality – Food and beverage: catered events, cooking school, restaurant, and facility rentals.

Millicent: Carnival season. Mardi Gras Mambo special - \$5 for sample of Mardi Gras brew and kingcake. Mardi Gras floats (photo opportunity) on display in the parking lot. Mardi Gras Mamba virtual event on Feb. 13th with Terrence Simien. Festival international hosting watch party here on April 23, 24, 25th,

virtual event. Chubby Carrier on standby for when restrictions end. Preparing for change in restrictions in the Feb. 10th announcement. Put events on LCVC calendar.

Calvin: Getting events and ads on the radio. Building connections with Mardi Gras crews.

April event for BVD commissioners – paddle – put in at North end – purpose to see the bayou and understanding its potential. Investing in infrastructure on the North end to drive traffic down to Vermilionville.