



Minutes for Beloit Convention and Visitors Bureau Charitable Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors September 2023 Meeting

09/26/2023 | 08:00 AM - (GMT-06:00) Central Time (US & Canada)

Visit Beloit

Attendees (6)

Danielle Marx; Mr. Celestino Ruffini; Jessica Santillan-Reyes; Mr. Spencer Waite; Erick Williams; Pamela Garland-Gjestson

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m.

Establishment of Quorum

A quorum was established. Whitley was the only board member absent. Ruffini served as the chair of the meeting.

Consent Agenda

- **BCVBCF, Inc. meeting minutes**
 - **March 21, 2023 meeting minutes**
 - **Minutes for Beloit Convention and Visitors Bureau Charitable Foundation, Inc. Board of Directors March 2023 Meeting**

There were no changes to be made to the March 21, 2023 meeting minutes.

- **FY2022 audit**
 - **Visit Beloit, Inc. and Subsidiary 2022 Audit Committee Letter**
 - **Visit Beloit, Inc. and Subsidiary 2022 Financial Statements**
 - **Visit Beloit, Inc. and Subsidiary 2022 Internal Control Letter**
 - **Visit Beloit, Inc. and Subsidiary 2022 Management Letter**

Ruffini reviewed the 2022 audit. The audit is for both of the organizations. It stated that a clean opinion was given by the auditors. The only point issued in the audit was regarding a

journal entry that was not entered, therefore the starting balance for the audit was incorrect and needed changed.

A motion to approve the consent agenda was made by Marx and seconded by Williams. The motion passed unanimously.

New Business

Joint Effort in Tourism grants

- **2023 recap**

Garland-Gjestson summarized the 2023 grants, which only consisted of a \$2,500 grant to YWCA Rock County for their Juneteenth Celebration. Ruffini noted that the Beloit Janesville Symphony Orchestra has an upcoming deadline to submit expenses for their \$500 grant from 2022. There is approximately \$10,000 still left in the 2023 budget that did not get expended. The grant workshops in 2023 had a lot of attendees but resulted in more sponsorship requests than grant applications. Waite suggested doing a sponsorship rather than a grant next year for the YWCA Rock County Juneteenth event, similar to what is done for the Rising Queens Juneteenth event.

- **2024 Grant Application**

- **Tourism Development Grant Guidelines - DRAFT 092123**

Ruffini explained his proposed plan for the grant program. It has become a greater challenge with the Joint Effort in Tourism grant to provide other organizations money to market their events, especially when that is our organization's focus. Instead, he proposes funding things that create a tangible effect on the destination to increase visitation. The new grant would focus on developing new attractions, capital construction, high-profile events and traveling exhibitions.

Ruffini reviewed the new grant guidelines. Questions within the application will focus on tourism and operational criteria. Applications that are for non-high-profile festivals and events, marketing, or operational costs wouldn't be applicable. The grant process would be a little different as it would involve the board more and would require a presentation to the board by the applicant. The grant would fund no more than 50% of the total expenses applied for with applications up to \$15,000 in 2024.

Marx asked how we would promote the grant. Ruffini said press releases, newsletters, and e-mails to non-profits and tourism-related businesses is the standard process. This type of grant will narrow down the potential applicants which should make it easier to promote.

Ruffini also noted that Visit Beloit, Inc. has paid out nearly \$30,000 in sponsorships this year.

A motion to approve the Tourism Development Grant Guidelines - DRAFT 092123 was made by Waite and seconded by Marx. The motion passed unanimously.

- **FY2024 budget**
 - **FY2024 501C3 Final Budget - 092123**

Ruffini reviewed the proposed 2024 budget. It includes funds for the Legacy Program Sponsorship Fund payments to the Beloit International Film Festival, Beloit Sky Carp, and Friends of RiverFront. There is \$15,000 budgeted for the new tourism development grant and \$5,000 budgeted to a potential arts program, which will hopefully be matched by other grants and donations. Additional budgeted expenses are predominantly related to administrative costs of operating the 501(c)(3) organization.

A motion to approve the FY2024 501C3 Final Budget - 092123 was made by Santillan-Reyes and seconded by Waite. The motion passed unanimously.

Informational Updates

- **Board Chair**

Not present.

- **CEO**

Ruffini spoke about current board terms. Waite serves in a permanent seat as the board chair of Visit Beloit, Inc. Williams and Marx have terms expiring at the end of 2023 and can choose to take a second three-year term, or not. Santillan-Reyes has a term until the end of 2024. The tourism seat is vacant. Whitley's term ended last year and he will need to confirm his second term which would have him serving until the end of 2025.

The Visit Beloit, Inc. board meets tomorrow. They will be reviewing their 2024 budget, the 2022 audit, strategic plan projects, and a diversity statement and policy.

- **Board of Directors**

No additional updates.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 a.m.