



Washington Parish Tourism

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Louisiana's Toe of Adventures

Minutes of the Washington Parish Tourism Commission
Board of Commissioners
May 16, 2025 10:00am
Franklinton, LA

Vice President Ella Bickham called the meeting to order. The invocation was given by Cynthia August.

Roll call: (quorum present)

Commissioner Present	Commissioner Absent
Mark Irvine (late arrival)	Edna Kennedy
Ella Bickham	
Krystal Peterson	
Tonya Sharp	
Cynthia August	
Lorraine Hall	
Others: Patty Alford, Director of Tourism	
Attorney: Nicole Frey Boque Chitto Swamp Cabins, Angela Cott Riverbend Campground, Van Varnado EB Digital, Ellen Burford MP Accounting- Mechelle Penton	

Upon the arrival of President Mark Irvine, the meeting was opened to the public for general comments addressing the resolution for the occupancy tax for the Washington Parish Tourism Commission. Van Varnado and Angela Cott were present. Mr. Varnado addressed the Commission that only overnight stays were taxed and not all tourism destinations. He also addressed residents being taxed on stays as well. The commission members and Attorney Nicole Frey responded answers that many of his concerns were a state legislative action and were not under the control of the local tourism commission. Ella Bickham then made a motion to close the public hearing, seconded by Cynthia August, the motion carried unanimously.

Mark Irvine, then called the regular April meeting to order.

Cynthia August made a motion to dispense the reading of the April 2025 minutes due to the fact that minutes were emailed to members of the Commission prior to the meeting, the motion was seconded by Krystal Peterson. No public discussion, vote passed unanimously. Cynthia August made a motion to approve the April minutes, seconded by Lorraine Hall, no public discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

The financial statements were reviewed for April 2025.

The checking account balance \$ 71,947.44 according to the bank statement dated 04/01/2025

Summary of account from 04/01/2025-04/30/2025 follows:

Date	Credits	Debits	Amount
04/30/2025	18.12		
04/11/2025		Hancock Bank	1893.84
04/18/2025		Watson Properties, LLC	1100.00
04/09/2025		Southeast Business	51.27
04/28/2025		Patty Alford	147.40
04/01/2025		WST	47.59
04/16/2025		Town of Franklinton	75.11
04/21/2025		NEC Fin	175.92

The April 2025 statement was approved with a motion from Ella Bickham, a second from Lorraine Hall, no public discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

In old business, the first item on the agenda was the Occupancy -Tax, Cynthia August made a motion to levy an occupancy tax for the Washington Parish Tourism as allowed by Louisiana State Legislation per the Resolution 2025-001 and enter a cooperative endeavor agreement with the Washington Parish Sheriff for its collection. Ella Bickham seconded the motion, roll call vote

Mark Irvine-yes

Cynthia August-yes

Lorraine Hall-yes

Tonya Sharp-yes

Krystal Peterson-yes

Ella Bickham-yes

Edna Kennedy-absent

The motion carried. (attached find the Resolution 2025-001, and CEA)

In new business, the Office manager, Patty Alford presented the monthly manager's report, a motion to accept the report from Ella Bickham, second from Tonya Sharp, open to public discussion, the motion carried unanimously.

In other new business, Cynthia August made a motion to enter into a 12-month lease with Ray Watson Properties for the office building at 1950 Washington Street, seconded by Ella Bickham, no public discussion, the motion carried.

The May "Toe"Riffic Spotlight was Louisiana River Adventures and Tubing in the Park. All were urged to vote to help promote the Bogue Chitto in the Best River Float USA Today summer poll. Currently it was 2nd.

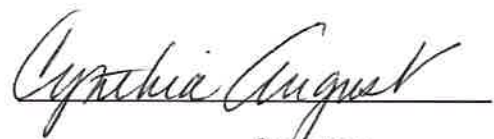
There were no other business matters, and no input from the public, next meeting is Friday, June 20, 2025, at 10 am.

A motion to adjourn from Ella Bickham, second from Tonya Sharp, no public discussion, unanimously vote, the meeting closed.

The next scheduled meeting is June 20, 2025 at 10:00.



Mark Irvine- President



Cynthia August- Secretary/Treasurer