

Lorain Port and Finance Authority
Board of Directors
Marketing and Public Affairs Committee Meeting
Port Office
Tuesday, April 11, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.

Committee Members: Ms. Kiraly; Messrs. Nielsen, Scott and Veard (6:26 p.m.) (4)

Board of Directors: Mrs. Silva Arredondo (6:51 p.m.); Messrs. Zellers and Mr. Zgonc (6:58 p.m.)

Staff: Tom Brown, Executive Director
Tiffany McClelland, Assistant Director
Yvonne Smith, Accountant
Kelsey Leyva-Smith, Office Manager
Michael Brosky, Esq., Port Attorney (6:47 p.m.)

Guests:

I. Roll Call

A. The Marketing and Public Affairs Committee Meeting was called to order at 6:07 p.m. by Chairman Carl Nielsen with a roll call indicating a quorum present.

II. Report of Chairman

A. Bockin' on the River – Oktoberfest Event: Mr. Nielsen wants to enhance our brand to continue to pass the levy. Mr. Scott asked how much the levy generates? Mrs. Smith said about \$850,000. Ms. McClelland said we wouldn't survive without it. Mr. Scott asked how long it's been on the ballot? Since the 80s. It has never failed. Mr. Nielsen said it last passed with 65 percent and he wants it to pass with 75 percent approval. Mr. Scott asked when it would go on the ballot? Mr. Brown said May 2024 is the earliest we could go on the ballot. He said we've gotten calls about having an Oktoberfest event. They've talked about a play on Rockin' on the River called Bockin' on the River since bock is German beer. It would be a low-budget, 12-6p Saturday afternoon. We're thinking Sept. 30. We would collect a fee from food vendors and have German food, negotiate with Heidelberg distributing for German beers, and charge a small ticket fee. Mr. Brown also mentioned creating a lederhosen t-shirt with six sponsorship opportunities on the back of the shirt. We could sell them at ROTR over the

summer. We would pre-sell mugs, too. WOBL/WDLW wants to partner and be a sponsor. We'd also try to get some polka bands in here. Mr. Brown said we wouldn't be trying to have 10,000 people; we just want to add another event to the fall schedule. We'll have two gates. Mr. Nielsen said we'll have to price out security and insurance. Ms. Kiraly asked if there was an estimate for total cost? Mr. Brown said no, he's still waiting to hear back on a few items. He's guessing a couple thousand for a polka band. With Heidelberg, we'd only pay for what we use. He thinks it will be minimal exposure. Mr. Mullins asked about the time? Mr. Brown said he was thinking 12-6p like BrewFest, but we can adjust that to whatever we want. Mr. Mullins thinks some people like to come out in the evening hours. Mr. Nielsen said he knew someone that had a similar event with a \$15,00 budget, and he imagines it would be around that. Mr. Brown said he wanted to gauge interest, but he should have prices soon. Mr. Scott wondered if we could do more than just an event? Mr. Nielsen said he wants to develop our brand image. Mr. Brown said we can have t-shirts and mugs to sell at our tent at Rockin' on the River, and at BrewFest. Mr. Mullins thinks our partners like Oasis would like to get involved. Mr. Nielsen said it's a gamble, but he doesn't see a lot of exposure either. Ms. Kiraly thinks it's a good idea, too. Mr. Scott wants to move forward, but also think about ways to maximize the event. WOBL/WDLW wants to be more present in Lorain. They want to do a podcast with us. We're looking for office space for them in Lorain. Mr. Nielsen said they'll be back in May with better numbers. Mr. Zellers asked about food. Mr. Brown said we'd charge the food vendors up front. Mr. Scott asked if we needed the liquor permit to do the event? Mr. Brown said no, we would get an F2 permit.

- B. 4/08/2024 Solar Eclipse Event (Black Out):** Mr. Nielsen said we should use our site to have a Black Out Party. Mr. Brown said we're in the path of totality, and hundreds of thousands of people will be in the area. We have to protect our site so they don't camp out overnight. We should also capitalize on this. Mr. Nielsen said it will be a month before the levy. Monday, April 8, 2024 at about 3:20 p.m. Mr. Brown said the Ariel hotel is already starting to book up as well as hotels in the region. He said it might be a free event, but we should charge food trucks

and vendors to be here and serve beer. We'll have to pay for bathroom attendants and security, so there will be costs that day no matter what. The Lorain County Metro Parks might bring a projector to show the NASA footage. Mr. Scott said last year on April 18 we had two inches of snow. Mr. Brown said another expense would be if we get a DJ. He wants to try to get back what we'll spend hosting. Mr. Scott said he remembered people stopping on the turnpike to look during the last eclipse. Ms. McClelland said we're expecting the same. Mr. Brown said officials are coming up with a traffic plan. We envision an event until 5 p.m. or 6 p.m. Mr. Scott asked about a pre-party the night before? Ms. McClelland said we're behind the curve compared to others planning. Mr. Brown said FireFish asked to have a party on our site, but we declined as we aren't accepting any proposals until we establish our plan. Mr. Nielsen said the people might not vacate in time. Mr. Brown is getting prices on the glasses you can wear to watch it. We could create a t-shirt. Mr. Scott asked where we'll be in the stage planning at this time? Mr. Brown said we don't know. He has cautioned our partners about our site potentially being under construction. The entry fee goes toward the stage. Mr. Scott said we need the glasses and could make a killing. Mr. Brown said he'll get a price on the glasses with our logo. We can then set a price point, do some t-shirt design mockups. If someone wants to sell twinkling lights, we charge a certain amount. Mr. Scott wants to help generate more business for the downtown businesses, too. Ms. McClelland said the hotel will fill quickly and that should benefit the downtown businesses.

- C. ROTR marketing plans for this season: Mr. Brown said we have the tent from last year. He's getting pricing on the t-shirts that were popular. We'll get two new colors to throw out during intermission. Do we want to do anything other than Rockin' on the River t-shirts? Last year we did a stage blueprint. We could even do more of those. Ms. Kiraly suggested a t-shirt with the logo or design on the back. Ms. McClelland said we do have blueprint shirts left. Mr. Scott asked what we do with the emails we collect? Mr. Brown said they get loaded into the marketing and newsletter list. Mr. Nielsen said board members are encouraged to volunteer at the Port tent. It's a good location and fun volunteer opportunity.

Mr. Brown said we'll mockup more t-shirts. Ms. Kiraly likes the black design from a few years ago and suggested black. Mr. Nielsen said the first concert is on Friday, Memorial Day weekend. We'll be pouring sometime in July. Mr. Scott asked about raffle tickets for our boat tours or a 50/50? Mr. Brown said it would depend on how many people we had volunteering. We'll have Mr. Brosky look into the restrictions.

- D. 2023 Rental Calendar and future rates:** Mr. Nielsen said we have an old set of rules. We need to take a hard dive and totally rewrite them. He thinks we're getting interest from people because it's such a great value for Black River Landing. He wants to stop renting until we get new guidelines in place. Mr. Brown said what we charge is pennies. There's so much exposure, we need to raise our rates. We spend a lot of staff time trying to determine if the pie in the sky ideas we get are feasible. Mr. Scott asked what we're thinking? Ms. McClelland said she's breaking everything down to build it back up. Mr. Nielsen said we're not taking any more applications. Ms. Kiraly asked what the rates are today? Ms. McClelland said \$2,600 for a Black River Landing. Mrs. Leyva Smith said that doesn't include the \$1,000 deposit, which is refundable if there's no damage or anything left behind. Ms. McClelland said we also have a nonprofit rate, which is \$1,400. Mr. Nielsen asked for a motion to present to the full board. Mr. Zellers said he wants to set a date. Mr. Brown said he'll be the bad guy. Mr. Zellers said we also need to revisit who we donate the site to and if we want to do that moving forward. Mr. Nielsen said we need to rewrite how we rent the site. Ms. McClelland said this is proactive, so when the new stage is ready, we have a new structure in place. Ms. McClelland said we rent year to year. Our policy is to field any idea from anyone. We just don't want to rent in the meantime while we're getting ready for next year, so just closing the calendar for the rest of the year. Mr. Brown said the issue is everyone wants a Saturday. We have Friday night events, and then have to flip the site. It's difficult to do that. Mr. Mullins said he doesn't want to not rent. He wants to raise the fees. Ms. McClelland said that would fix one problem, but we need to restructure all together. Mr. Mullins wants to raise our prices in the meantime. Mr. Nielsen said it's more than a dollars and

cents issue. We need a policy manual, too. Mr. Zellers asked what is generated by the site. Mrs. Smith said about \$15,000. Mr. Zellers said we might need a part time event coordinator. Ms. McClelland said a site manager will likely be needed. Mr. Brown will handle all future requests to rent Black River Landing.

III. Other Business

A. None.

IV. Adjournment

A. There being no further business to come before the Marketing and Public Affairs Committee, Ms. Kiraly moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Mr. Scott. The motion carried, and the meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.



Carl Nielsen, Chairman



Tom Brown, Executive Director