



BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

**Shay Danzy
Sheryl Bowman
Alisha Gamble
Leslie Wilder
Dena Bosten**

**Laurie Puckett
Tina Wetherford
Amy Bennett
Jennifer Fricks**

COMMITTEE CHAIRS PRESENT:

**Linda Cook
Ramona Carver
Anna Payne
Carlos Encinas**

**John Hulsey
Susan Van Nus
Judy Smith
Angie Sorrow**

CVIOG SR. EVENT COORDINATOR:

Melanie Kearns

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Cindy West

COMMITTEE CHAIRS ABSENT:

Ashland Troutman Peter Floyd

CALL TO ORDER

President Shay Danzy called the meeting to order at 2:00 pm.

NEW BUSINESS

Chateau Meeting

- Melanie Kearns stated she and John Hulsey had a meeting on Tuesday with Chateau to get an idea on what things are going to be like for the conference in October. In the meeting they discussed what Chateau's other clients were doing and if we decided to cancel, what negotiations could be made to mitigate the impact financially to us. Melanie Kearns stated Chateau was having a grand opening on May 21, 2020 and she encouraged the board to look at the website. She stated Chateau was taking steps to help with Covid-19, such as spacing, self-sanitizing stations, spraying areas, and having employees wear masks. She stated Chateau invited the board to visit in early June to see some of the precautions they are implementing. Chateau stated about 70% of their clients who had spring events had rescheduled their event in the fall with no penalties imposed. Chateau stated that 20% of their clients postponed their events until 2021 and were subject to 50% penalty of their contractual cancellation charges.



Chateau stated that 10% of their clients cancelled all together and were penalized in full. Melanie Kearns stated our contract states that if we were to cancel right now, we would be subject to a \$99,844 penalty. She stated there was a jump originally in the contract that stated if we cancelled by June 3rd, then we would have been subject to a \$149,766 penalty. Chateau expanded that date to June 30th. She also talked about negotiating the hotel attrition charge, which is also contractual. If we do not meet our room block, which is 95%, then we are responsible for the difference between 95% and what we actual need for the hotel attrition charge.

- Melanie Kearns stated not knowing what social distancing guidelines would be in place at the time would impact our ability to meet our nutrition clause and what those penalties would be.
- John Hulsey stated given the shelter in place order has been lifted it would be in our best interest to stay on course in holding the conference in October. If it should become necessary to cancel, we could exercise the unforeseeable event clause in the contract. Since we will have acted in good faith, we potentially would not be obligated to pay out of pocket any money. If they refuse to honor the unforeseen circumstances, then the hotel would be expected to ensure the safety and health of our members. Further, the hotel might have to work with us on the attrition clause. We could also put on the table the option to hold the conference in 2022.
- Melanie Kearns stated as of now we do not have a good position of argument. But as we get closer to the time for the event and things still have not lifted and large gatherings are still frowned upon, we would then have a better position.

Sponsorship

- Linda Cook stated so far, we have four sponsors who decided not to sponsor at all. We have one sponsor who increased their package from silver to platinum and another sponsor has decreased from a diamond to platinum. We are approximately \$10,000 under the original budget. Linda shared an excel spreadsheet comparing conference budget with a virtual conference with the board. Linda Cook stated Kevin Schaeffer, our exhibitor has not responded to any of her emails and she is hoping he will be attending the conference. Linda Cook stated she has been running budget figures, such as reducing the meals, alcohol, and some of the activities. She feels we are in a good position due to a surplus from last year.

Conference Discussion and Ideas

- Shay Danzy stated she wanted to open discussion for the conference and visiting Chateau June 12, 2020.
- Laurie Puckett stated she did not feel comfortable having the conference in person since there is still so much unknown about Covid-19. She asked if anyone was attending the GFOA virtual conference. Laurie Puckett asked John Hulsey how long it would take to put together a virtual conference. John Hulsey responded it would take at least four weeks. He stated we are in the



process of converting the GMA conference to a virtual platform. He stated we would need to train the speakers to use the Zoom platform, and since the sessions are already planned, we just need to decide how many weeks we want to offer the conference. He stated we could offer morning sessions at 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. and afternoon sessions at 1 p.m. or 2 p.m. John Hulsey stated we could probably do a similar virtual conference that GFOA is currently doing. Laurie Puckett stated we would still charge a fee for a virtual conference, although it would not be as much as a face-to-face conference.

- Anna Payne discussed answers from the survey. Anna mentioned several people asked if we could offer the conference live and virtually. Anna suggested for the live sessions to be recorded. Anna Payne also stated there were other concerns relating to individuals getting their CPE credits. Jennifer Fricks agreed it would help for high attendance and recoup some of the conference budget money. Dena Bosten also agreed with Anna and Jennifer and stated she believe more people would feel comfortable doing a virtual conference, which would be cheaper, and it will be nice to have the recorded sessions available at other times. Anna Payne also suggested not offering more classes for a virtual conference. John Hulsey stated we would not be able to offer CPE credits for the recorded version of the session and neither was GFOA offering it. John Hulsey also stated live sessions would drive up the technology costs.
- Laurie Puckett asked John Hulsey if the CPE requirement deadline would be extended. John Hulsey responded if we go virtually, we could offer everything on the agenda and change up some of the topics. He stated we would also work with people on their CPE requirements as well.
- Dena Bosten stated a virtual conference would be more budget friendly and you would not have to worry about the health risk associated with going.
- Melanie Kearns stated some of the advantages of going virtual is being able to have more flexibility in the schedule and give the sponsors and speakers a chance to meet with people.
- John Hulsey mentioned we could get Joel Black to address the membership or host GFOA representatives or other speakers. John also suggested having breakout sessions which would provide more opportunity for engagement among other participants. Laurie Puckett agreed and stated if we have the conference in person it will not be nearly as big of a turn out as we normally have.

Travel Restriction Concerns

- John Hulsey asked the board if any of our governments have any travel or training restrictions in place.
- Laurie Puckett stated Gwinnett County has placed an immediate ban on all non-essential travel.
- Sheryl Bowman stated Macon-Bibb County also has a ban on non-essential travel.
- Angie Sorrow stated their commissioners are concerned the state will reduce their FY2021 budget by 14%, in which their travel and training will be one of the first thing to go.



- Susan Van Nus stated their travel and education has been cut by 50% for FY2021 which starts July 1st.
- Shay Danzy wanted to thank Melanie, John, and Linda for researching and trying to find the best solutions for the conference. She stated we have until June 30th to come up with a decision. Shay suggested we have another meeting a couple days before June 30th to come up with a concrete answer. She suggested the board to email her with any other ideas.
- Susan Van Nus stated she had concerns about the scholarship raffle and asked the board their opinion regarding that. Alisha Gamble suggested doing it online if we have the virtual conference. John Hulseley agreed. Jennifer Fricks suggested still giving out tickets the way we have done in the past.
- Alisha Gamble asked the board who still wanted to attend the conference in person and that she also has a high-risk person in her household.
- Anna Payne responded that for her it would be more of a month before decision and it is hard to say not knowing how the risks would be at that time for the conference. Alisha Gamble also had concerns regarding a refund policy.
- Shay Danzy asked the board if everyone agrees with coming back either June 22nd or June 23rd to decide.
- Melanie wanted to know who was interested in meeting with Chateau on June 12th. Laurie Puckett, Shay Danzy, and Linda Cook were interested.

ADJOURNMENT

Shay Danzy called for a motion to adjourn. Tina Wetherford made the motion to adjourn and Dena Bosten seconded it. **The motion passed** and the meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.