

Tourism Advisory Board: JLOSC Meeting

February 21, 2023

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VisitDelaware.com

Mission of DTO

Attract large volumes of out-of-state visitors to Delaware

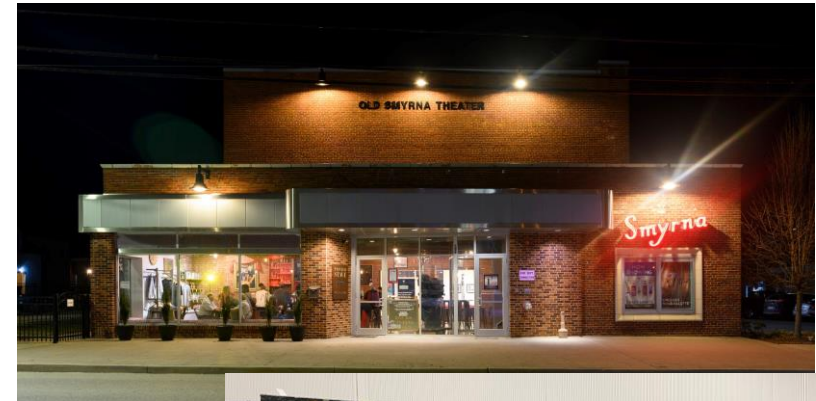
Promote the growth and prosperity of existing tourism businesses

Market and promote Delaware as a preferred tourist destination



FY22 Successes

- Sales team generated \$22 million in economic impact in the Sports, Group Tour, and Leisure markets.
- Secured several high-profile sports tourism events including A-10 Women's Basketball Competition (three-year commitment) and USA Lacrosse Men's and Women's National Teams Championship.
- Completed several successful marketing campaigns including online video and display ads, as well as ads with TripAdvisor, Southern Living, and Good Housekeeping.
- Attended national trade shows to market Delaware as a sports, group, and leisure travel destination – in partnership with county CVBs.
- Hosted the Delaware Tourism Summit in December 2021 with more than 100 attendees from the industry.
- Relunched the Delaware History Trail with additional locations in May 2022.



FY23 Successes

- To date, the sales team has generated about \$13 million in economic impact.
- Worked in collaboration with Wilmington Country Club, GWCVB and NCC to bring BMW Championship to Wilmington in August 2022. (First PGA Tour event in Delaware - 126K attended, \$30M impact)
- Attended several travel shows to encourage Group Tour, Sports, and Leisure travel to the state, including shows in Boston, Chicago, New York, Detroit, Ontario, Georgia, and Oklahoma.
- Currently working on a new marketing campaign including online video and display ads, social media ads, featured pages on Atlas Obscura.
- To date, distributed more than 114,000 travel guides and had at least 1 million visits to our website.



Tourism Advisory Board

- **Formed in 1981** to serve in an advisory role to the Delaware Tourism Office with the purpose of advocating and promoting tourism in Delaware.
- The Board was once heavily involved in providing advice and support to DTO, but **by 2013, the need for advice and support decreased** as DTO created a better staffing and funding structure under the newly created Delaware Economic Development Office.
- **The last research project the Board did independently occurred in 2013.** Since then, the Board has not conducted research.
- **The Board did not take any action or hold a meeting for 3 years.**
- The Board did hold a meeting on April 27, 2022. **No action plan or next steps were established before the meeting adjourned.**

The Delaware Tourism Office supports the Tourism Advisory Board by:

- Scheduling and providing administrative support for meetings.
 - Coordinating member schedules and attendance
 - Drafting agenda and posting meeting information to Public Meeting Calendar
 - Recording minutes during meetings
 - Posting minutes to Public Meeting Calendar after meetings
- Providing Delaware Tourism Office program updates regarding:
 - Marketing Initiatives
 - Tourism Data
 - Trade Show Attendance
 - Sales Information

Tourism Advisory Board Challenges

In recent years, the Tourism Advisory Board has experienced the following challenges:

- Membership – majority of the current members have served 3 or more terms.
- Lack of board member interest in holding regular meetings – only 4 meetings held since 2018; has not met more than 2 times in a CY since 2012.
- Lack of regular board member attendance or availability for meetings.
- Difficulty in finding discussion topics.
- No action items discussed at meetings.
- No research conducted in at least 10 years.

Findings & Recommendations

- **DTO and the Tourism Advisory Board chair agree with the recommendation to sunset the Tourism Advisory Board** for the reasons outlined in the report.
 - The Delaware Tourism Office oversees a functioning and award-winning tourism program without support from the Tourism Advisory Board;
 - The Tourism Advisory Board has only held 4 meetings since January 1, 2018, and did not meet at all during 2020 and 2021; and
 - The Tourism Advisory Board has not conducted independent research, been involved with any ongoing projects, or offered advice to the Delaware Tourism Office in at least a decade.
- **We agree that the Tourism Advisory Board has outlived its original intent and feel there will be no detrimental impact on the Delaware Tourism Office if the Committee sunsets the Board.**

Thank you!



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