



November 20, 2018

Mr. James Barber, Executive Director  
Joint Legislative Committee on Performance Evaluation and Expenditure Review  
501 North West Street, Suite 301-A  
Jackson, Mississippi 39201 United States

Dr. Mr. Barber,

**OPPORTUNITY!** That is our first reaction to the final report you have compiled in reference to the Jackson Convention and Visitor's Bureau *dba* Visit Jackson. The Board of Directors and Visit Jackson Executive Staff are in unanimous alignment in the belief that this report provides the impetus for much needed institutional change which will help the Bureau better evolve into a more efficient and effective destination marketing organization.

As you are aware, JCVB has undergone recent and significant changes in executive leadership, even as the PEER Committee report was being finalized. This marks the first steps in working toward deploying the recommendations set forth in the report.

Tactics implemented prior to receipt of the PEER Report:

- Interim President/CEO met with Mayor Chokwe A. Lumumba regarding board appointments;
- Streamlined human capital structure resulting in the reduction of the personnel services budget line within identified Destination International standards, reduction from 43% to 40% (currently).  
Projected personnel services for FY 2020 is 38%.
  - Allocated human capital with research and stakeholder engagement focus;
  - Challenged staff, and provided resources, to attain professional certifications and continuing education;
- Implementation of a 360<sup>o</sup> vertical communication strategy;
- Re-evaluation of the sales market mix and goals;
- Redefined employee goals and departmental budgets accompanied with resources including training, performance-based employee evaluations and accountability;

Tactical opportunities that will be implemented by Visit Jackson:

- Engagement of a consultant to execute a revised Strategic Planning Process, March 2019;
  - Preparation and discussion with the industry regarding implementing a Jackson Tourism Master Plan;
  - Conduct destination research to provide framework for updated FY 2019 Marketing Plan;
  - Research to update Estimated Economic Impact (EEI) calculations;
  - Calculate and report Return on Investment (ROI) for all business operations;
  - Discussions with surrounding tourism officials to include Regional Tourism Partnerships and opportunities to attract larger conferences and events to the Greater Jackson Area;



Follow us on social media @visitjacksonms    

111 E. Capitol Street, Suite 102  
Jackson, MS 39201  
601.960.1891  
1.800.354.7695  
601.960.1827 FAX  
[www.visitjackson.com](http://www.visitjackson.com)

- Re-evaluate all Visit Jackson financial underwriting, grant, sponsorship, and quality of life participation protocols, June 2019;
- Development and adoption of a budget reserve policy, October 2019;
- Formation of Industry Advisory Committees & Focus Groups, January 2019;
  - Sales, Marketing, Signature Projects/Events, and Advocacy;
- Joint Staff Retreat with the Jackson Convention Complex, February 2019
- Development of a collaborative sales Strategic Plan with the Jackson Convention Complex to successfully identify “city-wide” conferences/meetings, October 2019;
- Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system training and adherence to national industry best practices, January 2019;
- Enhance partnerships with local event professionals/promoters;
  - The industry advisory committees will assist in grant and sponsorship policy;
- Execution of impactful partner support initiatives, January 2019;
- Visit Jackson President & CEO will, three months prior to the expiration of any Board appointment, submit in writing, a letter to the Mayor and the appropriate constituency group notifying them of such and advise them of appropriate actions, December 2018.

As you are aware, the manner in which travelers - business, leisure, group, or otherwise - approach the concept of “travel” has evolved radically over the last ten years. The proliferation of interactive tools and the democratization of information have been at the forefront of this “travel revolution.” Moreover, just in the past few years we have witnessed the proverbial passing of the torch regarding generational spending on travel and tourism. Millennials, the most significant American generation since the Baby Boomers, now accounts for the plurality of travel dollars spent. With a new generation comes a new set of decision drivers, new interests, and new expectations. Fortunately, the city of Jackson’s tourism assets align well with this new generation. Further developments - recently completed, underway, and planned - are also set to boost our tourism portfolio. Successful implementation of the recommendations outlined in the recent PEER Committee report will assist Visit Jackson in optimizing its marketing efforts, streamline its operations, and fully capitalize on the strengths of the City with Soul, making Jackson a true destination market.

**Opportunity!** The PEER Committee report recognized it. So, do we. **The Board of Directors and executive leadership of JCVB are committed to realizing it.**

Sincerely,

**Robert L. Gibbs, Esq.**  
Chairman

**Rickey L. Thigpen, MLS**  
*Interim* President & CEO