

Craven County Tourism Development Authority -
Board of Directors Meeting
Chamber of Commerce Boardroom
Wednesday, July 14, 2021
Minutes

Present

Chairman Dan Roberts
Alderman Sabrina Bengel
Alderman Jeffery Odum
Commissioner Brenda Wilson
Cindy King
Nancy Figiel
Craig Warren, Ex-Officio
Melissa Riggle, Executive
Director

Excused

Gary Johnson
Commissioner Danny Walsh
Vice-Chairman Paresch Pankhaval

Unexcused

Commissioner Tom Mark

Guest

Judy Avery
Pam Holder
Erin Knight
Brice Connors
Matt Potts
Tammy Rodriguez
Julia Masters
Tarshi McCoy
Chris Segal
Michael Gleason

I. CALL TO ORDER-ROLL CALL:

Chairman Dan Roberts called the Craven County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. and thanked everyone for being there. Conducted roll call.

WELCOME/INTRODUCTIONS NEW MEMMBERS:

Chairman Dan Roberts welcomed new board members Alderman Jeffery Odum and Commissioner Brenda Wilson.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Chairman Dan Roberts asked for any questions in-regards to the minutes for the June Board Meeting. Alderman Sabrian Bangel moved to accept all the minutes in the board packet. Cindy King seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

III. FINANCIAL REPORT: Craig Warren started with the Occupancy Tax Collection Report noting taxes collected in the month of June for hotel stays in May were \$204,433 compared to \$88,000 for the same time period last year. That represents an increase of \$116,433, which is 132% compared to last year's collections for that month. This is a record high for May. Fiscal YTD collections are \$1,517,670 compared to \$1,579,768 the previous year which represents a decrease of \$62,098 or 3.9%. Of that total online travel companies made up roughly 19.6%. No penalties collected. Moving on to the financials, room tax revenues for June 2021 were \$64,447 compared to \$27,730 last year, increase of 132%. YTD income is \$554,245 compared to \$556,707 last year, decrease of less than 1%. On the expenditure side you will see the total spent for May was \$559,940 compared to \$469,377 last year. Total expenditures YTD are 100% of the budgets through 100% of the year. Overture of \$25,578. Looking at the balance sheet as of June 30 the cash balance is \$410,999. Adding in the net income through June of -\$25,578 to the fund balance gives a total of \$466,287. Chairman Dan Roberts asked for a motion to move; Cindy King motioned to approve; Alderman Sabrina Bengel seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. STR Report: Cindy King shared the STR report. New Bern's YTD numbers for occupancy was 77.9% compared to 47.1% in 2020. ADR was 109.41% compared to 86.95% in 2020 and RevPAR was 85.21% compared to 40.94% last year. Year to Date RevPAR was 64.37% compared to 53.32% in 2020.

In Havelock YTD Occupancy was 59.7% compared to 44.9% last year. ADR was 89.7% compared to 73.35% in 2020. RevPAR was 53.17% compared to 32.95% last year. Year to Date RevPAR was 38.94% compared to 36.14% in 2020.

V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT: Melissa Riggle updated the board on the progress of our new CRM system that has been added. The system helps streamline our daily record keeping and helps generate accurate reports and improves the communication between the visitor center and the hospitality partners. The visitor log for June 2021 that showed 692 walk-ins and 231 walk-ins at the Cub House (weekends). There were 286 emails and 58 phone calls. | Stays and Getaways Travel Blog: June 18-20, CVB assisted Jarvis 220 with accommodating a travel blogger. In addition to the article, posts will be made on IG, FB and Tik Tok. Juneteenth: Worked with Blueprint to bring in a Tik Tok influencer who attended the dedication of the Signs of History. Total posts yielded over 100,000 online impressions, driving Juneteenth to one of the top 10 searches on the VNB website. Babe Ruth Tournament: photoshoot successfully executed June 26-30. | **Large Groups and Events:** Generated 5 new leads for Convention/Groups. Conducted 1 site visit with NBRFCC. AENC Annual Conference: Will be held July 18-20 in Wilmington. East coast Greenway: Signage to be installed beginning July 16. African American Heritage Trail Signage: Collaboration with the NB Historical Society to develop a new walking tour. **News from the State:** The CVB will attend a PR/Social Media session on Influencer Marketing – June 24 The African American Heritage & Culture Center will host a webinar on the NC Civil Rights Trail, the CVB will attend June 10 **Press/PR/Media:** Our State Magazine: Hosted 2 photographers doing a featured piece on marinas and boating communities. Our State Magazine: Successfully booked the Editor in Chief with 2 writers for a visit to NB July 28-30. Possible features include; Bakery/Deli, Best Burger, Our Coast Looking In, Hidden Gems. Southern Living Magazine: Feature article will be published in the August edition.

Marketing: Brice Connors gave an update on a strategically placed PPC campaign that targeted the Big Rock Blue Marlin Tournament. In two weeks, the campaign generated; 1,000+ clicks, 200,000 + impressions, \$0.27 CPC and 0.68% CTR. Matt Potts gave an update on social media ad campaigns (Google, Facebook, Instagram); Total Impressions: 1,469,808 Total Clicks: 27,910 Total Costs: \$7,582.39. Print ad placements for June, July and August will include Southern Living: 2-page spread that features an article penned by the travel writer that Melissa hosted in May. Our State: 2 full page "Try On New Bern" ads, Convention South: Half-page "Try On New Bern" ad was placed in the annual directory issue, Ideal Living: A listing directory ad was placed that is circulating throughout the summer, AARP: One of two North Carolina DMO's highlighted in spring and summer. VNB has entered a 12-month agreement with Meeting Planners International and renewed our agreement with the Heart of NC Weddings.

VI. HAVELOCK TOURISM & EVENT CENTER DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Pam Holder stated that they June events are picking back up. ECAHF Development Committee, celebration of life for Megan McGaery, Retirement service for Fire Chief Rick Zaccardelli. June revenue: \$13,506.70. Upcoming Events: Salute to the Vets: August 10, ECAHF Family Fly-In: August 13. June States: 20 phone inquiries, 6 email, 7 ellie, 275 visitors, 704 event guests, 979 total visitors.

VII. NEW BUSINESS:

Melissa Riggle updated the progress of the Hospitality program at the college to provide training in customer service and hospitality (housekeeping, front-end staff, etc.). Next meeting on July 21. New wayfinding signs to be updated, addition of QR codes, and possible landing page.

Chairman Dan Roberts thanked Cindy King for her service as Chairman and presented her with a token of appreciation.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS: No Comments

IX. MEMBER COMMENTS:

Chairman Dan Roberts: Invited the board to join Blueprint at Tonic for their business after hours events. Improvements needed to the front of Chamber building, new signs, awning. Craig Warren: welcome to the new board members. Nancy Figiel: New Bern Academy has been renovated and is now open Fri-Sun. Plans to reopen Stanly house. New tours: The Lesser Stairs. Live and Local on August 21. Outlander tours continue to sell out. Palace traffic is up. Candlelight on Dec 11 & 18. Our State ad to feature Mumfest & Candlelight. New website! Alderman Odum: Glad to be a part of the board. Commissioner Brenda Willis: August 3 Havelock National Night Out with the 2nd Marine Band. Havelock will have a new web design. Tammy Rodriguez: visitor traffic is still busy. New Bern events Sammy Kershaw July 23, Travis Tritt August 15, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band Sept 3. Cherry Point will be hosing the Air Show Sept 25 & 26. Havelock Chili Festival has been cancelled. Sabrina Bangel inquired about Cub House traffic. Melissa Riggle stated that we will be having Nabia stop over to the cub house during the week to gauge traffic. Happy Birthday to Tarshi McCoy! Tarshi McCoy: convention center has been busy with back-to-back events. Chris Segal: Introduced new reporter Julie Masters to the area. Chairman Dan Roberts: Thank you to Tammy for her hard work.

X. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Dan Roberts asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Sabrina Bangel made the motion to adjourn, Cindy King seconded the motion at 10:29 am.