

Craven County Tourism Development Authority -  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Chamber of Commerce Boardroom  
Wednesday, May 11, 2022  
Minutes

**Present**

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

**Excused**

Vice-Chairman Paresch Pankhavalala  
Gary Johnson

**Guest**

Judy Avery  
Brice Connors  
Matt Potts  
Tammy Rodriguez  
Erin Knight  
Pam Holder  
Gary Curry  
John Blackwater

**I. CALL TO ORDER-ROLL CALL:**

Chairman Dan Roberts called the Craven County Tourism Development Authority Board Meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and thanked everyone for being there.

**II. ROLL CALL:** Tammy Rodriguez conducted roll call. (A quorum was present.)

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

Chairman Dan Roberts asked for any questions in-regards to the minutes for the April Board Meeting. Alderman Sabrina Bengel moved to accept all the minutes in the board packet. Commissioner Brenda Wilson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**IV. FINANCIAL REPORT:** Craig Warren started with the Occupancy Tax Collection Report noting taxes collected in the month of April for hotel stays in March were \$193,551 compared to \$154,006 for the same time period last year. That represents an increase of \$39,545 which is 25.6% compared to last year's collections for that month. Highest March! Fiscal YTD collections are \$1,643,046 compared to \$1,125,750 the previous year which represents an increase of \$570,033 or 45%. Of that total online travel companies made up roughly 19.1%. There was no in penalties and \$1,904 in late receipts. Moving on to the financials, room tax revenues for April 2022 were \$61,017 compared to \$48,550 last year, increase of 25.6%. Room tax is running ahead by 121.7% of 83.3% of the fiscal year. On the expenditure side you will see the total spent for April was \$82,829 compared to \$56,567 last year. Total expenditures are running slightly below the budget at 81.5% of 83.3%. Total revenues collected have exceeded our expenditures by \$74,798. Looking at the balance sheet as of April 30, 2022, the cash balance is \$476,739. Adding in the net income through April of \$74,798 to the fund balance gives a total of \$535,883 Alderman Sabrina Bengel made a motion to approve the financials. Commissioner Brenda Wilson seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

- V. **STR Report:** Cindy King shared the STR report. New Bern's YTD numbers for occupancy was 64.8% compared to 57.2% in 2021. ADR was 110.00% compared to 89.60% in 2021 and RevPAR was 71.24% compared to 51.28% last year.

In Havelock YTD Occupancy was 45.3% compared to 43.3% last year. ADR was 81.93% compared to 71.46% in 2021. RevPAR was 37.09% compared to 30.98% last year.

- VI. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:** Melissa Riggle updated the board on the visitor traffic. The visitor log for April 2022 that showed 600 walk-ins and 179 walk-ins at the Cub House (weekends). There were 232 emails, 111 Southern Living Leads and 18 phone calls. We will be adding Havelock visitor stats to our monthly report. We plan to customize some of the fields to reflect Havelock's tourist patterns. | Top places of origin are North Carolina, Virginia, New York, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Top attractions continue to be Walking Tours, Tryon Palace and Trolley Tours. Online booking of trolley helps to enhance the visitor's experience. Tryon Palace is now offering online tickets as well. | Tammy and Pam have begun the Welcome Aboard Briefs at Cherry Point. There were about 100 Marines present. A great way to promote Craven County. We will be attending 3 briefs during the spring/summer season. | Craven Community College and the Volt Center are getting ready to launch their hospitality program July 1 | Airbnb/Vrbo: Continuing to be strong with 146 active rentals. **Large Groups and Events:** We have over \$700,000 in potential groups in April. \$161,000 in confirmed groups and a loss of \$200,000. Top reasons for loss were rate sensitivity and lack of hotel inventory. | ANEC registration has opened, and we are almost booked up. | Trail to Tryon marathon will be held in November. **Media Contributions:** National Geographic writer is in town this week focusing on foods that we're known for. | **News from The State:** NCAA Governor Copper released state tourism numbers showing that we are nearing recovery levels for pre pandemic tourism.

**Marketing:** Brice Connors introduced a print friendly version of our calendar of events page that can be shared with our business partners around downtown. | Promotional video was created for AENC and will start airing at all their meetings leading up to the July event. | Matt Potts gave an update on social media ad campaigns (Google, Facebook, Instagram); Total Impressions: 1,470,736 Total Clicks: 24,409 Total Costs: \$6,121.36. | Ellie: Engagement rate: 14.43%, Flights saw a 1.4% increase MOM, Accommodations increased by 7.3%. | Charlotte saw a 25.49% increase in users and Washington D.C. saw a 75.54% increase | Print ad placements include Northern Virginia Magazine: full page Heart of NC Weddings: 2 full-page ad collaboration with Tryon Palace | Digital Influencers: Shay Farrell will be returning to highlight our Juneteenth festivities. Katy Vale is an Army veteran who will be bringing her family from Washington D.C. in June to showcase New Bern & Havelock. We will be highlighting our vacation rental options by providing accommodations for Katy Vale and her family at the William Gaskins house.

VII. **HAVELOCK TOURISM & EVENT CENTER DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

Pam Holder: Parking Lot has been repaved. Upcoming events: Memorial Day Service, Registration for the ECAHF Elementary School Summer Camp is open for grades 4-6. Camp dates are July 25-29 | April Revenue: \$15,911.30 | Statistics: Visitors 238, Event Gusts 1,890, Total Visitors 2,128, Telephone: 112, Email: 47, Ellie; 5. | Website statistics: New Visitors 1,079, Total Visitors 1,200, Sessions 1,288, Page Views 1,945.

- VIII. NEW BUSINESS:** Budget Committee: Chairman Dan Roberts provided a copy of the budget. Asked to address the issue of benefits which include workman's compensation, disability, cost of living increase. Melissa Riggle: Havelock contract – small revisions needed to be made. Current copy has been provided
- IX. OLD BUSINESS:** Melissa Riggle: Social Districts – 2 public forms generated a lot of good discussion and brought up a few concerns. The issues that were brought up did not pertain to the social districts, but current issues that need to be addressed before we can move forward. Committee released a statement that they will put the social districts on hold.
- X. MEMBER COMMENTS:** Commissioner Tom Mark: New nature park going in James City. Commissioner Brenda Wilson: Embers will be performing at our new stage in the city park. Gary Curry: Shriners Summer Ceremony. Nancy Figiel: Construction on the front entrance, return of school groups, weddings are in high demand as well. Underground Railroad Symposium. Filming new content that we add to our collection. Gearing up for Candlelight Celebration. Tryon Palace will be doing a sponsored article in Out State for June. Cindy King: Havelock hotels are doing very well. Alderman Jeffery Odham: Elections are on May 17. Tammy Rodriguez: calendar updates. Chairman Dan Roberts: front of building repair should begin in late summer.
- XI. ADJOURNMENT:**  
Chairman Dan Roberts asked for a motion to adjourn. Alderman Sabrina Bengal made the motion to adjourn, Cindy King seconded the motion at 10:59 am.