

Craven County Tourism Development Authority -
Board of Directors Meeting
Chamber of Commerce Boardroom
Wednesday, October 12, 2022
Minutes

Present

Chairman Dan Roberts
Vice-Chairman Paresh
Pankhavala
Sabrina Bengel
Commissioner Tom Mark
Matthew Paul
Gary Johnson
Nancy Figiel
Commissioner Brenda Wilson
Craig Warren, Ex-Officio
Melissa Riggle, Executive
Director

Excused

Bill Stafford

Guest

Judy Avery
Brice Connors
Matt Potts
Tammy Rodriguez
Pam Holder
Cailin Gibson
Gary Curry
Carrie Gallagher
Marrisa Moore
Melinda Mowry
Chris McGee
Carol Becton

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 September Board Meeting. Vice-Chairman Paresh Pankhavala moved to accept all the minutes in the board packet. Sabrina Bengel 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 September for hotel stays in August were \$219,684 compared to \$217,145 for the same time last year. Online travel companies made up 20% of the total collected. Fiscal YTD collections are \$476,347 compared to \$474,093 the previous year which show a slight increase. There was \$23 in penalties and \$5,269 in late receipts. Moving on to the financials, room tax revenues for September 2022 were \$69,255 compared to \$68,454 last year, showing a slight increase. Room tax is running ahead by 35.5% of 25% of the fiscal year. On the expenditure side you will see the total spent for September was \$53,849 compared to \$67,225 last year. Total expenditures are running flush with the budget at 25.8% of 25%. Total revenues collected have exceeded our expenditures by \$66,001 Looking at the balance sheet as of September 30, 2022, the cash balance is \$567,458. Adding in the net income through September of \$66,001 to the fund balance gives a total of \$627,446. Sabrina Bengel made a motion to approve the financials. Gary Johnson seconded. Motion was approved unanimously.

- V. **STR Report:** Vice-Chairman Paresh Pankhavala shared the STR report. New Bern's YTD numbers for occupancy was 70.7% compared to 70.9% in 2021. ADR was 124.84% compared to 109.85% in 2021 and RevPAR was 88.25% compared to 77.84% last year.

In Havelock YTD Occupancy was 53.9% compared to 53.5% last year. ADR was 94.19% compared to 88.89% in 2021. RevPAR was 50.75% compared to 47.59% last year.

- VI. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT:** Melissa Riggle shared visitor stats for the month of September We saw 406 walk-ins, 81 walk-ins at the Cub House (weekends), and 156 walk-ins at the Havelock Visitor Center. There were 197 emails, 762 Southern Living Leads and 20 phone calls. | Top places of origin are North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Florida. Top attractions continue to be, Walking Tours, Local Events, Tryon Palace, Trolley Tours and Dining | We are creating an employee manual that will contain a set of standard operating procedures and employee policies. | AirDNA: 268 active rentals, still seeing a strong demand | **Group Business:** Over \$300,000 sent out for the month and had \$18,000 move to contract. We did see a loss of \$170,000 due to the lack of hotel rooms. Tail to Tryon is starting to bring in hotel reservations. We currently have 138 registrants with over 60% are out of town. Volunteers are needed on Saturday November 12. The Capitol Christmas Tree will be in New Bern on November 12 as well. | Melissa attended the NC Video Mission in Durham with over 40 media partners. | There has been an increase in social media influencers (Tik Toc, YouTube) inquiring about featuring Pepsi, Tryon Palace & New Bern. All media requests should be referred to Visit New Bern's Media page on our website. | New pitch sheet has been created to be showcased on Visit NC.

Marketing: Brice Connors gave an update on the new updated pitch sheet| We had a successful fall 2022 photo shoot, which happed to be on the same day as Oktoberfest | NCTA Tourism Achievement Award nomination process has begun and will be announced in November. | The Trail of Flames ad and brochure updates are in process. | New Christmas itinerary will be added to our website | Advocacy assets are under production as well. | Matt Potts gave an update on social media ad campaigns (Google, Facebook, Instagram); Total Impressions: 1,725,524 Total Clicks: 31,563, Total Cost: \$6,870. | Havelock Chili Fest resulted in 2,069 page views, things to do saw an increase of 71% and the events page saw a 55% increase YOY | YOY increase in traffic locations: Raleigh saw 26%, Washington D.C saw 1,505%, Atlanta saw 60%, and New York saw 27%. | Ellie: Weddings & Retirement saw an increase of 4% MOM and flights saw a decrease of 1.3% MOM | Mobile use has increased by 27% | **Print:** Southern Living: half-page Try On New Bern ad in September magazine, Our State: full-page ad for December, NC Travel Guide: full page ad, Heart of NC Weddings: full page ad, New Bern Magazine: full-page Trail to Tryon ad. | New Pitch Sheet **Digital:** New e-Newsletter design. | logo design for Trail to Tryon, digital advertising campaign | Dog friendly itinerary has been added to our website. | **Digital Influencers:** Marissa out of DC was in NB last month & has created some great content to help promote Trail to Tryon and New Bern.

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

Commissioner Brenda Wilson: Successful ECAHF event on October 11, **Facility Updates:** Door frames in the main hall were painted, new banquet chairs have been ordered. | September Revenue: \$14,703.57 | **Statistics:** Visitors 156, Event Gusts 836, Total Visitors 992 Telephone: 29, Email: 9, Ellie; 0. | **Website statistics:** New Visitors 887, Total Visitors 908, Sessions 1,064, Page Views 1,678.

VIII. **NEW BUSINESS:** Chairman Dan Roberts: No New Business

IX. OLD BUSINESS: Melissa Riggle presented a plan for Advocacy and Community Relations, a great way to communicate the importance of tourism to the residents, stakeholders, city leaders and elected officials. Bring awareness of how different organizations work together for the greater good of New Bern.

X. MEMBER COMMENTS: Carol Becton: Thank you for all your support and promotion for the 100-year Great Fire. Marissa Moore: Historical Society's Ghost Walk has sold over 3,800 tickets so far with a goal of 4,000. Tickets can be purchased online, and at Mitchell's Hardware & Harris Teeter. Nancy Fiegel: Spectrum news will be doing a feature Weaving Week. Our State will have a feature on holiday traditions past and present in the December issue. In addition, they will be sending a videographer to film a video. Public art community forum will be held this evening to discuss a grant and community art project that features this historical timeframe between 1765-1835, with focus on the African American community. New fundraiser called History in Bloom. Chris McGee: won 3rd place in the Havelock Chili Festival. Tammy Rodriguez: calendar updates. Matthew Paul: Updates and improvements continue to be made to the Havelock App. Judy Avery: Trail to Tryon still needs volunteers. Sabrina Bengel: helping with Beary Merry Events, Halloween trick-or-treating in the streets, witch's ride, movie in the park. Christmas: Tree lighting, Santa House, carriage rides, live window displays, parade, flotilla, skating rink. Ambassadors are needed during these big events to help find their way around. Chairman Dan Roberts: still waiting on the repairs to the front of the building.

XI. ADJOURNMENT:

Chairman Dan Roberts made a motion to adjourn. Mathew Paul seconded the motion at 10:27 am.