



CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, NC

FACVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FACVB Board Room

245 Person Street

July 24, 2019

Noon

PRESENT

Subodh Thakur, Chairman
Becki Kirby
Laura Leal
Doug Hewett
Adam Collier
Sharon Lee

ABSENT

Liz Milesenko
Sanda Budic
Jim Grafstrom
Suresh Patel
Amy Cannon

OTHERS

John Meroski
Kelly Brill

Subodh Thakur called the meeting to order at 12:20pm. Mr. Thakur asked if everyone reviewed the April minutes; Doug Hewett moved to approve the minutes, Adam Collier seconded the motion.

Jim Grafstrom is not present; Mr. Meroski reviewed the Treasurer's report. John stated that the market is performing strong. He proceeded to read the Treasurer's report noting last quarter income was \$873,841 and expenses were \$677,359. Cherry Bekaert just completed their audit and the Arts Council Co-op Marketing campaign's unexpended \$16,478 was moved forward to the current FY. Occupancy collected last fiscal year was \$3,249,791.86 with net income of \$509,359.34; last year we were negative \$33,845.50. Occupancy tax collected in 2018-2019 was \$3,249,791.86; a \$1.2m increase from 2017-2018. Hopefully the trend will continue.

Mr. Thakur added that Mr. Grafstrom and Mr. Meroski have acquired some groups that will be revisiting the next several years. As discussed in previous meetings, we occasionally make contributions to get events to come to the community. We contributed \$13,000 to cheerleading events to offset Crown expenses. We are trying to compete more and it is standard operating procedure to underwrite groups. Mr. Grafstrom is the CVB treasurer and signs checks monthly along with Mr. Meroski; the CVB requires two signatures on checks. Mr. Thakur recently signed a \$13,000 check to the Crown for checks and balances purposes and wanted to inform the board. The CVB books are open and if anyone has any questions, we can discuss.

Mr. Hewett made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report and Laura Leal seconded the motion.

AIRBORNE & SPECIAL OPERATIONS MUSEUM

Liz Milesenko was not in attendance.

CROWN COLISUM

Mr. Grafstrom was not in attendance.

CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE

Mr. Hewett remarked that the baseball stadium is open. The Parks & Rec bond is moving forward with a new pool in western Fayetteville, Senior Center near Fay State in October, and Senior Center in West Fayetteville in 2020. Splashpads are opening all over the city; not drawing tourists but at least we are investing in the community. A skateboard park is going up at Rowan & Bragg at Rowan Street Park (old Nissan). Grove Street housing authority is putting mixed income housing on McArthur. Mr. Meroski is hopeful that skateboard park will draw competitions.

The City will be reaching out to Crown and John, and Cool Springs Downtown. Cool Springs Downtown is a private company that hired a new exec director. City & Arts Council have an agreement to paint crosswalks on Hay & Robeson. Mr. Hewett stated they are ready to ramp up programming acts in Stadium. There are 12 days that are open to schedule events. Mr. Hewett is hopeful that Mr. Grafstrom can help with filling dates (no charge for facility, but police, etc. will have cost). Mr. Hewett stated it will be a free partnership – using the Segra staff to setup and cleanup is about \$12,000. The 3-day Jazz festival occurring this fall (Avery Sunshine, Bryan Culberson) will hopefully come back next year. Mr. Meroski added that the Jazz Festival was awarded a TDA grant of \$25,000 for promotions.

The City is also working on a Festival Park program with backpack buddies, food drives etc. when there are no other events happening. Mr. Hewett stated that outdoor venues have a season. Ann Street ribbon cutting is scheduled for Aug 1st. NCDOT have several projects starting; Raeford Rd median has begun, and they are replacing the NC-59 bridge over 301 in Hope Mills. A lot of good things are happening for the city, although panhandling has become a serious problem. He explained that panhandlers are different than homeless. We are hoping that adding more police presence downtown will help turn the tides. Mr. Hewett discussed Vet park construction explaining that they are finishing the Rowan Street Bridge. Veteran's Park phase 2 is in design phase. Mr. Hewett elaborated on some of the challenges the park faces in phase 2.

Mr. Hewett stated that the Fayetteville Airport is limited on airlines due to connections. Fayetteville Airport is trying to restore service to Washington that we just recently lost. We would like to have a flight to Orlando, NY or Chicago although we don't have number of travelers needed. Raleigh has low cost carriers. The CVB may be able to help promote videos "Ease of Travel" showing car to plane in less than 30 minutes; Raleigh you need to plan for 3 hours. City population is roughly 208,000 to 215,000.

Mr. Thakur thanked Mr. Hewett for attending.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Amy Cannon is not present.

FACVB

Mr. Meroski presented the Program of Work highlighting some key points. He stated that the Program of Work is on the website and if anyone has any questions, he is happy to discuss today or one on one. He continued, discussing page 6&7 results explaining that we have increased our goals on improving social media engagement. Our goal was set to increase by 15,000 and we passed that goal. Our Communications Dept worked on a digital media campaign to increase visitors. Page 11 shows our sales goals to generate 130 leads and 20,000 room nights, which we overachieved. On page 21 it outlines the 31,000 visitor guides that were distributed. We print the visitor guides every couple of years. Page 22 lists our marketing partners; ¾ are local vendors and our ad agency has an office in Self Help Building. Page 27 outlines the scope of work with Republik, Martin Armes, 219 and Rubberneck; also showing prior year results. Research of visitors on page 37 taken from hotels and online data show most are

traveling from NY to Florida, with dining as the new top area of interest. Our visitors rate their experience on average 4.75% out of 5. Page 38 outlines spending with a projected \$3.2m budget. This includes \$1.6m spent on marketing, along with \$500,000 in unspent income from last year bringing marketing dollars this year close to \$2m. Page 40-50 outline what we plan to do with the funds should you approve. As in the past, we will be attending tradeshow, marketing with advertising, digital marketing, public relations, social media efforts and servicing events. Pages 51-89 show all the products we developed and use to promote the county, including print material, videos, banners, social media, and GoFay. Pages 90-91 show all the info that we post online including research, meetings, occupancy reports, Program of Work, results, TDA grants, etc. Mr. Meroski stated that he would be happy to discuss any concerns today, by email or phone.

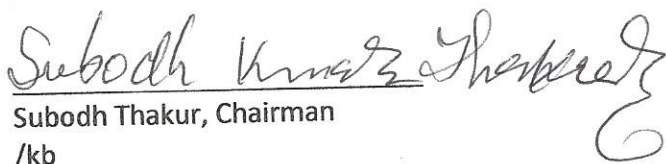
Mr. Collier motioned to approve the Program of Work and Sharon Lee seconded the motion.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Leal motioned to adjourn, and Mr. Collier seconded the motion.

NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on October 23, 2019 at noon in the FACVB boardroom.


Subodh Thakur, Chairman
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