



# CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, NC

## FACVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

FACVB Board Room

245 Person Street

October 24, 2018

Noon

### PRESENT

Subodh Thakur, Chairman  
Olivia Garner, ASOM (attending for Jim Soffe, ASOM)  
Amy Cannon  
Laura Leal  
James Grafstrom  
Becki Kirby

### ABSENT

Doug Hewett  
Sharon Lee  
Sanda Budic  
Adam Collier  
Suresh Patel

### OTHERS

John Meroski  
Kelly Brill  
Linda Suggs, Cherry Bekaert

Mr. Thakur spoke about passing of Henry Holt stating that he was a great soul and huge loss to our community. He was a great liaison between Fayetteville and the military and it is hard to find people like that. He was a kind person, who would listen and help anyone; he was never negative. He was one of a kind; a simple man that will be missed by many. May God put his soul to rest.

The meeting was called to order at 12:20pm by Subodh Thakur.

Mr. Thakur introduced Linda Suggs with Cherry Bekaert, who will be presenting the results of our audit report. He asked everyone to ask questions.

Linda Suggs stated that she was pleased to be here and will review the presentation. Ms. Suggs reviewed the agenda stating that the audit was conducted by the same people that conducted it last year. Cherry Bekaert has concluded with an Unmodified opinion or a clean opinion as a result of the audit. There were no issues found with internal controls and there were no uncorrected or corrected journal entries. This shows that management is giving the board good information since there were no changes made by Cherry Bekaert at year end. Various analytics were performed, including the search for unrecorded liabilities that should have been recorded in the prior year. Capital assets were up due to equipment purchases, Accounts Payable was down because end of year prepaids were down. She explained that deferred liability is money that was received in one year but has not been expensed. Overall revenue was down due to Occupancy tax collections. Salaries and personnel expenses were flat, which shows costs were controlled based on revenue. Cherry Bekaert reports a clean opinion for 2018, no deficiencies or journal entries due to the audit. She appreciated John and Kelly for their cooperation and asked if anyone had any questions. John Meroski noted that this is the 18<sup>th</sup> clean opinion he has been a part of. There were no questions and Mr. Thakur thanked Ms. Suggs for scrutinizing our books to discover if there were any findings. Amy Cannon motioned to approve, and Ms. Garner and Becki Kirby seconded the motion. Ms. Suggs departed.

Mr. Thakur asked if there were any corrects to the July 2018 minutes; Laura Leal motioned to approve July 2018 minutes and Ms. Cannon seconded the motion.

James Grafstrom read the Treasurer's report, noting an error in the numbers reported for July 2018 Occupancy tax collected; correct amount \$251,888.39, with \$54,830.44 at end of 3 months on Income and Expense reports. Mr. Meroski noted that Occupancy for October and November will be strong due to the Hurricane and we are hoping an upward trend will continue. Mr. Meroski thanked Amy for her department separating the tax by district and showing total sales reported. Amy motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report and Ms. Garner seconded the motion.

### **CROWN COLISUM**

Mr. Grafstrom stated they had \$7000 in damage from Hurricane Florence, and Hurricane Matthew's damage is much worse. Ms. Cannon stated that the county had more time to prepare with Matthew and FEMA was prepared this time.

Mr. Grafstrom said he and John have worked hard together on some ventures. They have had many joint presentations including Cheerleaders and Big South Conference, both with competitive markets. Big South Conference signed baseball and were trying to get men's and women's basketball. We had previous contract with Cheerleaders and there was a one-year overlap. We tried to move the Cheerleaders, so we can have both. Cheerleaders wouldn't take buyout and we lost Big South. Appreciate the collaboration; they worked a lot of hours to present and dates were too much to overcome. Big South pulled out although they wanted Fayetteville. US Weight Lifting is looking for prospective locations for their competition; we may not be their primary location this year, but we are trying to propose future dates. Mr. Grafstrom stated that presenting jointly to prospective groups would hopefully catch bigger fish. He added that the relationship with CVB is great.

Mr. Grafstrom stated that there was damage due to the hurricanes and repairs are almost done. The theatre had roof damage. Oct 18<sup>th</sup> the County Commissions suspended all capital improvement funds to the Crown. The county is focusing on the feasibility study to determine if renovations should be done, rebuild on current location or rebuild at another location. He agrees that continuing to spend money to get ADA codes in compliance is irresponsible, especially with the new feasibility study for the new Performing Arts Center.

Ms. Cannon stated that the County budget adjusted from 2020 to 2019 for feasibility study. Commissioners have goal of 2020 and are trying for no down time. Ms. Cannon added that they moved the feasibility study to 2019 budget to get process started for a theatre venue and it times well with baseball; she feels it was a good decision to move it to 2019. The City and County are growing, and the commissioners recognize the vision of the community.

### **AIRBORNE & SPECIAL OPERATIONS MUSEUM**

Ms. Garner stated that she was attending on behalf of ASOM. Mr. Thakur stated that he was sorry to hear of Jim's mother passing. Ms. Garner stated that Downtown is growing. She stated that the galleries will be renovated at a cost of \$8.5 million; fundraising has started. They are now maintained by the US Army Center of Military History. The lobby is back open, and more evening and private events will be held there.

### **CITY OF FAYETTEVILLE**

Doug Hewett was not in attendance.

### **CUMBERLAND COUNTY**

Ms. Cannon stated that the performing arts center will be a great opportunity for growth in the community. They are working on a long-term capital model to avoid creating a debt burden for community. The court system is busy and have asked Administration to move out of the courthouse; plans are being made to organize the county administration offices and court system to enhance community services in 2020-2021.

Glen Adams is asking for collaboration with marketing with CVB, TDA, County, Arts Center and Crown. The goal is to market the community in unity. The TDA is spending \$50,000 for a study. John and Jim are leaders in the initial talks and she thanked them for their willingness to collaborate and set the tone. Mr. Thakur added that everyone should be involved, and we should stand united. Mr. Grafstrom stated he was meeting with a small group today and with all leaders together it is really amazing the depth that can be accomplished.

#### FACVB

Mr. Thakur stated that John is doing a good job. With baseball coming and downtown growing Fayetteville continues to grow. He heard today that Durham CVB is changing name to Discover Durham to compete with Raleigh.

Mr. Thakur asked John to update the board with happenings and passing's of people of interest to the board.

Mr. Thakur stated that Laura Leal and Becki Kirby are eligible for a 2<sup>nd</sup> term and it is being presented to the Commissioners for their approval. Mr. Meroski thanked Ms. Leal and Ms. Kirby for their past and ongoing service. The structure of our board was looked at 3-4 years ago.

Mr. Meroski stated that his relationship with the Crown is the best since he came to Fayetteville. They sit down when a group is looking and work together. Private management firms go after the bottom line, we look to put heads in beds and if we don't work together it could hurt both. Cheerleaders would put heads in beds; Big South fills seats, but not overnight stays. Overall impact is probably larger with heads in beds and ultimately, we want it all.

Mr. Meroski passed two items out – Heroes Homecoming Calendar of Events and our 3-month scorecard.

This year with Heroes Homecoming we are celebrating 100 years of service; Armistead Day, Veterans Day and Ft. Bragg anniversary. We invited all municipalities to be a part of the celebration, Spring Lake, Eastover, Hope Mills and Stedman. It has taken off nicely. We have the first annual All American Heroes award. We have three speakers including EJ Snyder, a 25-year vet and star of Naked & Afraid, journalist Jim Mauer, and founder of Operation Tattooing Freedom, Lewis Hunt. At 11am doves will be released at the Hope Mills Lake. There will be a lot of symbolism around Cumberland County over a few days.

Mr. Meroski also reviewed the CVBs scorecard. There is a Research section on our website under "About Us" that houses several documents including Board minutes, Program of Work, financials, TDA Event Summary Reports, Occupancy Tax reports. Spring Lake's Facebook page is on track and we hope it will be a great source for information. Mr. Meroski continued to review results, noting 13 out of market news stories and 7600 visitor guides were distributed.

#### ADJOURNMENT:

Mr. Thakur stated that he appreciated everyone's input and time. Mr. Grafstrom motioned to adjourn, and Amy seconded the motion.

#### NEXT MEETING

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

  
Subodh Thakur, Chairman

/kb