

CUMBERLAND COUNTY, NC
FAYETTEVILLE
AREA
CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

FACVB BOARD OF DIRECTORS
July 28, 2021

Present:

Amy Cannon, County of Cumberland
Adam Collier, Fairfield Inn & Suites
Becki Kirby
Doug Hewett, City of Fayetteville
Renee Lane, Airborne & Special Operations Museum Foundation – by telephone
James Grafstrom, Crown Center – by telephone

Absent:

Laura Leal, Hampton Inn
Sharon Lee, Ambassador Inn

Randall Fiveash, FACVB
Myron Jones, FACVB
Kelly Brill, FACVB
Amy Karpinski, FACVB
Angie Brady, FACVB
Melody Foote, FACVB
David Nash, FACVB

There were sufficient members present for a quorum. There were two-thirds (2/3) of the Board of Directors present to address changes to the Bylaws.

CALL TO ORDER

The Board meeting of the FACVB Board of Directors was called to order by Amy Cannon, Secretary, in the absence of a Chairman and Vice Chair, at 12:20pm on July 28, 2021. The meeting was held at the FACVB 2nd floor boardroom at 245 Person Street, Fayetteville, NC.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Cannon asked if there were any changes to or questions regarding the June 29, 2021 minutes. No questions. Doug Hewett motioned to approve the minutes; James Grafstrom seconded the motion. All in favor said Aye, no Nays were counted. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT

James Grafstrom reviewed the Treasurer's report. Mr. Hewett motioned to approve the Treasurer's Report and Adam Collier seconded the motion. All were in favor; Motion carried.

OPEN BUSINESS

A. Bylaws

Ms. Cannon asked if there were any questions to the changes to the amended bylaws discussed in the June 28, 2021 meeting. There were no questions. Renee Lane noted that having the option of electronic meetings is good; it encourages members to be prepared and stay engaged. Ms. Cannon asked all in favor to say aye, nay. All were in favor, no Nays were counted. Majority voted to amend Bylaws. Bylaws will be presented to the Board of Commissioners for approval of Section IV.

B. Board Members

New positions noted in amended Bylaws will not be acted on until Bylaws are approved by Board of Commissioners. Positions open are Representative from Hotel/Motel with 6000+ meeting space, a hotel/motel representative and a local Tourism business representative. The FACVB Team suggests Byron McNeill with Hampton Inn & Suites, Cedar Creek Road for the Hotel/Motel representative and Fred Surgeon, President of Sweet Valley Ranch, Merry Maids and Surgeon & Associates and would like to recommend Chef Judy (Judith Cage) owner of Let Me Cater to You, Upton Chicken & Waffles and Riverside Seafood for the Board of Commissioners local Tourism business representative. Mr. Hewett asked if there were limited options for the hotel/motel representative with 6000+ meeting space; there are four options in Cumberland County (Embassy Suites, Doubletree, Clarion, Ramada). Mr. Hewett recommends the board appointees be an active part of the board, not only attend meetings. Mr. Hewett suggested posting openings to our website; Ms. Cannon stated the county has an online process to submit applications for board positions. The FACVB will recommend Chef Judy apply online through the County for the position appointed by the Commissioners. Mr. Hewett suggested having a zoom meeting for community to meet staff. Mr. Hewett had meetings held here in the past, NC League of Municipalities, that were not positive. Mr. Hewett would like to meet with the large hotels. Mr. Collier stated Fayetteville Area Hospitality Association disbanded. Mr. Hewett would like decisions of board to be consequential. Mr. Fiveash stated that this organization needs to take a leadership role. We represent more in this community than anyone else (hotels, restaurants, shopping, attractions, sporting venues) who contributes to Sales tax, Meals and Beverage tax and Occupancy tax. It is detrimental to the community if we aren't successful. We have to know everyone that you know, city managers associations, finance directors associations. Mr. Hewett would also like help with placement of public facilities. There was a desire to put a sports complex on Fields Rd, Exit 49. It was a great concept to put travel and tourism close to our hotels with easy access to I-95. The City would welcome your comments when we rebrand and on things like not having a bus that goes to the airport – is that something that helps or hurts or something we shouldn't worry about. Mr. Hewett is excited about where we are going and the renewed focus and openness. Ms. Cannon asked if there were any other questions or discussions; all in favor say aye. All said Aye. Ms. Cannon asked if there was any opposition? – seeing none, motion carries.

- C. **CEO Report and Strategic Plan** – You received a Program of Work, an 82 page document, each year, which included data on the website, the budget and other items. Most people never read it; It didn't serve the purpose it was intended to. Any organization, including nonprofits should have a strategic plan. Several weeks ago, the Team wrote a strategic plan on how to proceed and allocate budgeted funds approved at the previous board meeting. Previously Team members did not attend board meetings but as you can see, they are here, and you can ask them questions. Page 1 of the Strategic Plan states that we are committed to 5 things – Transparency, Visibility, Respect, Partnerships, and Leadership. The CVB will be transparent. The Team is now more visible, going to luncheons and meetings. It is essential that we gain the respect of the community; it is not given freely, it is earned. We are going to partner with the community and take on a leadership role as never before. In the following pages, you will see what each Team member does and where we are going. I asked the Team what our biggest challenges are and the top ones are listed. With every challenge is an opportunity that we need to look at. This is not my staff; it is my Team; Team CVB. Convention Sales and meeting is going through a real transition in how the numbers are calculated; we are getting that under control. Amy Karpinski has been here a little over a year and is doing a terrific job in the Sports market. We have changed her title to Director of Sports Marketing. We also changed Angie Brady's title to Director of Tourism Marketing, and she will be filling the number 2 position in that department after losing a terrific Team member whose spouse was relocated in the military. Angie will be assisting me and the future CEO in management of the contracts. Communications is doing a great job and will be heading up the partnership with the new agency. The Operations Team is included in our Strategic plan, being a direct component handling finance and the Welcome Centers. We are going through the RFP process with new agencies; our current agency of 17 years was without a bid process. Ms. Cannon states the Plan is easy to read and concise and asked if there are

tracking mechanisms in place. Mr. Fiveash stated we are conducting operational and programmatic audits as discussed in the June meeting. We are conducting a research audit on who our customers are, and what they do from a tourism and convention standpoint. The website will have current information; track things from a tourism and sports marketing standpoint; and meeting conventions will be reported in an appropriate way. We will report in a regular and consistent way so citizens are comfortable with what this organization is doing. Ms. Cannon stated that based on discussions today at the TDA meeting about finances and contracts, that we may want to present measurable results and progress quarterly to the TDA to give them an understanding of what this organization is accomplishing. Mr. Fiveash stated that the RFPs for agencies will commit the agencies to provide measurable results. Some things are not measurable, but vast majority of what we do is measurable. Ms. Cannon asked if there were any other questions. Doug motioned to approve the Strategic Plan, Adam seconded the motion. All in favor say aye. No nays were reported. Motion carries.

D. Non-action Items –

Crown - Mr. Graftstrom stated that the Crown is a week away from normal operations. The Harlem Globetrotters are coming; theatre has sold out shows for August and September; the Fair is returning Sept 3rd to the 12th. The Crown is cautiously moving back to normal operations quickly with tons of inquiries for our Expo center and ballroom, and significant acts considering Fayetteville. We are hopeful that Covid will not take a step backward and we can get as many people vaccinated and continue on a positive track.

City of Fayetteville - Mr. Hewett stated the City is announcing a concept for a Makers Space at the Old Nissan dealership at corner of Rowan and Bragg on Monday. It is an opportunity for artists to have studios and creative space. The City is creating a maintenance plan to revitalize Veterans Park and starting work on Veterans Park Phase 2, the vision is a space for Military reunions and ceremonies. Repairs to the Market House have been completed; the fence around the Market House will stay until City Council gives further direction. Parks & Rec bonds are under way; the new pool at Lake Rim Park is breaking records and a Senior Center will be built there and at Fayetteville State. An agreement with Ft. Bragg to put a sports complex on I-295 and McArthur Road was signed. A long-term lease was signed for Jordan Soccer Complex with Methodist University to invest \$1.5m to make improvements and install lights to host events and play after dark.

County – Ms. Cannon stated that the City and County have a good relationship. The City and County are working together on Rental Assistance Fund. There is information on City and County websites for landlords and citizens who may be struggling with rental assistance as they encounter financial and economic hardships due to Covid. The city and county have been allocated additional American Rescue Plan funds; City with \$40 million and the County with \$65 million. There was a community listening session to get feedback on how to spend those funds in accordance with Treasury guidelines and a live survey through Saturday on the County website has secured over 400 responses. Three board members make up the American Rescue Plan committee and will put forward framework on how to spend those funds through 2/2026. The Treasury has detailed guidelines to help public health programs for behavior and mental health. Funds can be used by households with financial and economic hardships for rental and utility assistance; Small businesses have struggled significantly without small business grants and nonprofits without contributions; Tourism related sectors; Funding for premium pay to those who were on the frontline with vaccine efforts. The Treasury is looking for communities to reach out to demographic groups who were disproportionately impacted by this virus, by health issues, financial or food insecurity, or housing issues. Mr. Hewett has engaged in an hourly consultant to assist. The County is also conducting a study to get feedback on the Performing Arts Center. Ms. Cannon met with Dr. Jennifer Green, CC Public Health Director, who is concerned about our COVID-19 numbers. The State website shows CC at 12.7% case positivity rate over 14 days, putting us in orange. The CDC shows CC at 19+% over 7 days, which puts us in red and possibly the highest we have been. County employees and facilities will be receiving a memo that a mask mandate will be back based on CDC guidelines. The CDC is recommending that anyone entering a building, vaccinated or unvaccinated, wear a mask. Even though vaccinated people are testing positive; their symptoms are not quite as severe. If you are vaccinated and test positive you can spread the virus. Mr. Hewett stated the City is opening a Day Resource Center and hope to have a place for the homeless to spend the night. Mr. Fiveash asked if there is a homeless problem in


Fayetteville. Mr. Collier stated that since COVID he has seen homeless near his hotel. Mr. Hewett spoke of Exit 49, most touristy area we have where visiting public sees homeless. Mr. Hewett suggested shaving some of the occupancy tax to help with more police presence or if they are willing to form an NSD it would allow more police presence. The hoteliers don't call; it makes a difference when the police are called and show up. Mr. Fiveash stated we will be looking at the feasibility of having a Welcome Center there. Mr. Hewett stated that a homeless issue is everywhere, although other areas of the country seem more affected. Ms. Cannon stated the county is conducted a study to find the gaps in our community and ways to service the homeless. Some strategies will be presented next week, and sheltering is one of the recommendations. Ms. Cannon and Mr. Hewett agree someone other than local government should operate those facilities. Ms. Cannon's recommendation is to have the company conducting the study develop an implementation plan. Mr. Fiveash stated Amy Karpinski spoke to him about hospitality industry unable to find people to work; Amy worked for NC Works. We are going to help sponsor a job fair, along with Mr. Grafstrom. Mr. Collier stated he has 70-80 applicants; they apply but don't reply or show up.

CLOSING

Ms. Cannon thanked the Team. Our next meeting is October 27, 2021. If there is no further business, do we have a motioned to adjourn; Adam motioned, and Becki Kirby seconded the motion.

Next Meeting: October 27, 2021

Meeting was adjourned at 1:30pm.



Amy Cannon, Secretary

/ksb