

**MINUTES OF THE**  
**PITT-GREENVILLE CONVENTION AND VISITORS AUTHORITY**  
**Executive Committee Meeting**

**February 9, 2016**

The Executive Committee of the Pitt-Greenville Convention and Visitors Authority held its monthly Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, February 9<sup>th</sup> at the CVB offices, 417 Suite#100 Cotanche St. in Greenville. CVA Chair JJ McLamb, Vice Chair Hanna Magnusson, Secretary Candace Hollingsworth, CVA Assistant Secretary Dr. George Fenich, Convention Center liaison John Van Coutren, City Finance Director Bernita Demery, City Council Liaison Rose Glover and CVB Executive Director Andrew Schmidt were in attendance. County Commissioner liaison Charles Farley was unavailable to attend.

1. CVA Chair JJ McLamb called the meeting to order at 12:13pm.
2. CVA convention center liaison John Van Coutren called for a motion to approve the December, 2015 CVA Executive Committee meeting minutes. CVA Vice-Chair Hanna Magnusson seconded the motion. The vote was taken and was approved with George Fenich abstaining from the vote since he was not present at the January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.
3. Executive Director Andrew Schmidt passed out the summary of activities and sales and marketing reports for January of 2015. The activity report summarizes the occupancy tax receipts for the month, the CVA's advertising for the month, sales and services activity and the number of destination inquiries for the month. Schmidt mentioned that the CVB's Communications Assistant, Sierra Jones, would be starting a new newsletter in February called the Pitt County Palate. Schmidt asked Convention Center liaison John Van Coutren if the Independent Restaurant Association was an organization again since there had been movement with some independents participating in the Uptown Small Plates Tour. Van Coutren replied that at this point it was a loose group but that efforts were being made to get the group up and going. Schmidt stated the CVB would like to get in front of this group to discuss the new newsletter and talk with restaurant owner about submitting new specials, fare and other information on a consistent basis. Van Coutren suggested getting the participants list from Bianca at Uptown and starting there.

The sales and marketing report was also presented by Schmidt and summarizes sales activity, monthly bookings, strong prospects, upcoming business and lost business for the month of January. Schmidt

commented that the number of sales bookings was solid for January and that February's bookings had already exceeded January's numbers. Schmidt shared his excitement that the Top Gun group had six tournaments planned for the spring and summer but also noted that due to a lack of facilities he could not bring 13-18 year old age tournaments to Greenville. Van Coutren asked about Guy Smith and Schmidt replied that it is booked solid so no other tournaments could use the facility. On a different note, Vice-Chair Magnusson inquired whether Dynamic was coming back and Schmidt confirmed that they were. Magnusson suggested that it would be a positive thing to send e-mails to the GM's to remind them to keep inventory available for these weekends with the hope of not turning away rooms. Magnusson also encouraged the CVB to continue to work with tournament organizers to not book their events on weekends with other tournaments.

4. Executive Director Schmidt gave an update on the marketing activities that the bureau is currently involved in. He mentioned that the kick off meeting for the meeting and events video project as well as the comprehensive visitors guide would be taking place on February 10<sup>th</sup>. Schmidt also shared that the CVB will be exhibiting at the Seymour Johnson Air Force Base Consumer Show on February 24<sup>th</sup>. Vice-Chair Magnusson inquired on what type of materials the CVB would take at this show. Schmidt explained that it was only a table top show and that the CVB would take their small pull-up, convey so the video could be played and visitor guides. CVB staff will also concentrate on signing people up for the newsletter and social media. Schmidt also gave an update on the Visit 365 luncheon sponsorship and summarized the TRAC event that the CVB hosted with the staff from Visit NC.
5. Finance Director Bernita Demery gave an update on occupancy tax collections for the month of December. December's collections were up 8.99% over the same time last year. Demery reported that current occupancy tax levels were up 2.79% as compared to this time last year. Convention Center liaison John Van Coutren stated that there has been a trend for several months now of lower occupancy and that the ADR is what is responsible for keeping occupancy levels at a slight increase thus far. Executive Director Schmidt asked if the snow in January had hurt the hotels and the answer was definitely yes. Van Coutren did note that the spring and summer looked strong however and that in his opinion any slump for January and February would likely be offset by a strong spring. Van Coutren also noted that election years tend to be softer due to uncertainty.

6. Executive Director Schmidt gave an update on the CVA board openings. Kowee Trusdale, the general manager of the Residence Inn by Marriott, has applied to be on our board. Schmidt stated that he was involved with the Charlotte CVA and would be a good candidate for the board. City Council liaison Rose Glover said that she would review his application and put a board appointment on the agenda for Thursday night's Council meeting. Convention Center liaison John Van Coutren also inquired about the City Council considering lowering the number of board members on city boards to help with the establishment of quorums. Glover replied that the City Council was looking at this possibility in a favorable light. She also asked Schmidt if the CVA had any issues with not having a quorum. He replied that gaining a quorum was not an issue and that he did not think it was a problem. Schmidt said the main issue with the CVA board was getting more involvement as only certain individuals seem to be truly engaged. Schmidt did mention that there would still be one more opening on the board after the appointment made by Mrs. Glover on Thursday night.
  
7. Executive Director Schmidt shared his vision for the next fiscal year budget regarding the overall budget, staff raises and three title changes for staff in the area of Communications and sales. The Executive Committee established a budget committee that will be made up of Finance Director Bernita Demery, Chair J.J. McLamb, George Fenich and Executive Director Andrew Schmidt. This committee will meet on March 1<sup>st</sup> at noon to discuss the next two year budget as well as the sales incentive plan and asked Schmidt to send them budget information prior to that meeting. Schmidt and Finance Director Bernita Demery will plan to sit down prior to the March 1<sup>st</sup> meeting to discuss the budget as well. Schmidt announced that the budget must be approved by the Executive Committee at the March 8<sup>th</sup> meeting and by the full board at the March 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.

In other new business, Executive Director Schmidt stated that he is working to gather more information about the cost of a study for a sports complex. He will be working with the CVB intern to gather potential costs and also put together a list of community organizations that may be willing to contribute to a study. Chairman J.J. McLamb mentioned that CSL had just finished a study for the athletic department less than six months ago and that it may be a good idea to reach out to them since they may have a familiarity with our area. In addition, Schmidt shared that Our State Magazine had done a feature article on Barbecue and that Pitt County had fourteen pages of mention within the article as well as the front cover which is the equivalent of over \$200,000 in advertising value.

There being no further business, CVA Chair J.J. McLamb made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:54pm. CVA Assistant Secretary George Fenich seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Candace Hollingsworth



Secretary