

## Meeting Minutes

Pitt Greenville Convention & Visitors Authority

September 17, 2024

Hilton Greenville (Julep)

**Board members present:** CVA Chair Diane Taylor, CVA Vice-Chair Candace Hollingsworth, CVA Secretary Bri Lester, Deputy Finance Officer Jacob Joyner, County Commissioner liaison Chris Nunnally, Dr. Brenda Fairfax, Chamika White, and Convention Center liaison Rhesa Tucker. CVA Staff members present included Andrew Schmidt, Sierra Jones, Rachel Whitten, Ce’Nedra Dillard, Megan Singleton, and Josh Meeks. Peyton Burgess and Kayla Brown attended on behalf of French West Vaughan advertising agency.

**Board members absent:** City Council liaison Matt Scully, Bob Sheck, Aileen Peacock, Brett Morgan, and Jay Bastardo.

**I. Call to Order:** Vice-Chair Candace Hollingsworth called the meeting to order at 11:45 am. Executive Director Schmidt recognized Josh Meeks, the CVB’s newest employee, and let the board know that they would be hearing from him later in the meeting.

**II. Approval of Minutes:** Executive Director Schmidt reviewed the minutes of the May 16, 2024, full board meeting and asked the board members to review to see of any changes that needed to be made. Convention Center liaison Rhesa Tucker made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Vice-Chair Candace Hollingsworth and passed unanimously.

**III. Executive Directors Report:** Executive Director Schmidt shared the following during his Executive Directors Report:

- Schmidt gave an update on current board reappointments and current efforts to fill open board positions. Schmidt shared that Aileen Peacock, Dr. Brenda Fairfax, and Chamika White had been reappointed to the board for a three-year term. Schmidt thanked them for their previous service and for continuing to serve. Schmidt also announced that Staci Moye, a local realtor and sports enthusiast and Brittany Parker, Director of Sales for the Homewood Suites/Residence Inn have been recommended to the County for appointment by Matt Scully. Schmidt said that those appointments should be made later in September and that both would join us for our November meeting.
- Schmidt shared that the move was now complete to the upstairs and plans are being formulated to turn the downstairs portion of the building into a true visitor’s center. Currently, the visitors center is open from 9am until 4pm with Ethelene and Vera splitting those hours. Eventually, the CVB would like to sell Greenville and Pitt County

branded merchandise out of the visitor's center and even experiment with weekend hours on special event weekends.

- Schmidt mentioned that the CVB's 2024-2025 Program of Work had been distributed to the board via e-mail and asked that if board members had any questions to please contact him.
- In a last piece of information, Schmidt gave an update on the efforts of the Sports Complex Task Force that he is chairing on behalf of the City of Greenville. Schmidt shared that in April of 2024, Victus Advisors gave a report to the City Council of their findings regarding the feasibility of a sports complex for Greenville-Pitt County. The report was quite positive, recommending 12 diamond fields and 4 rectangle fields. As a result, Council asked for the task force to be formed to gather more information on areas such as usage, configuration, location, funding, potential partnerships, citizen outreach, and operation. Schmidt stated that the first task force meeting had taken place on August 15<sup>th</sup> and the second meeting would be held later today. The Sports Complex Task Force will provide the City Council its final update at their annual workshop in late January.

#### **Staff Updates:**

Sierra Jones and Megan Singleton gave a marketing and communications update to the CVA Board of Directors.

- Jones gave an update on the web analytics for Visitgreenvillenc.com and social media statistics that covered the period from late May through August of 2024. Jones reviewed the number of users, sessions, page views, locations of viewers, and the top pages viewed for the website and number of followers and reach for the CVB's social media platforms.
- Jones shared that she is working to oversee the final additions to both the updated version of the Greenville-Pitt County Destination Guide as well as the relaunch of the Pitt County Brew and Cue Trail. Jones also gave an update on progress on the effort to develop a tourism master plan for Pitt County and the development of an Extranet Portal that will allow our partners to help update their own data within our platforms.
- Jones announced that she did some survey work for the Town of Winterville at the Winterville Watermelon Festival in late August. She stated that she received 111 responses while tabling at the and received a good set of data to share. Dr. Brenda Fairfax said that she had often wanted to attend the festival, but parking was a challenge. She asked if there was any type of park and ride set up at the festival. Jones replied that the only transportation that she knew of was via golf carts as it is legal to ride individual golf carts in the downtown area.

- Jones gave a snapshot of the summer and early fall conferences that she has attended as well as ones that are upcoming for the rest of the year as well as committee responsibilities. Jones highlighted her work with the Art Walk, which is a partnership between the City of Greenville, Pitt County Arts Council, and CVB, and shared ridership numbers on the Emerald Express during the monthly event. Jones said that the success of the Art Walk has spurred conversations from the City Managers office of purchasing a new trolley.
- Singleton updated the CVB Board on her current projects that she has been working on including the creation of new website material, events calendar management, generating the monthly newsletter, posting on social media, writing blogs, and participating in additional marketing projects.
- Singleton reviewed her community involvement and conference activity. Singleton shared that she had just returned from Winston-Salem and attending the Great Trails State Conference. She also shared that she will be tabling at the multi-cultural Arts festival this weekend along with Sierra.

VP of Sales & Services Rachel Whitten gave a sales program update to the CVA Board.

- Whitten gave an update on the meeting and convention leads that were generated from May 2024 through August 2024. Room nights from those leads totaled close to 3,000.
- Whitten highlighted her travel and conference activities from May through August discussing some of the clients that she has met with during that period. Additionally, she reviewed her upcoming travel and conference schedule for the rest of the calendar year specifically calling out the AENC Trade Show in Raleigh which is the biggest show of the year for the sales team.
- Lastly, Whitten gave an overview of her previous and upcoming community engagement and professional development opportunities. Of particular interest, Whitten shared with the board that she had completed the ECU 21<sup>st</sup> Century Leadership Micro credential course. The course was nine months long, meeting once per month.

Sports Sales Manager Ce'Nedra Dillard gave a sports sales update to the CVA Board.

- Dillard gave an update on the sports tourism leads that were generated from May 2024 through August 2024. Room nights for those leads totaled over 1,200 room nights.
- Dillard summarized her recent travel to Connect Marketplace in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Dillard stated that she had some excellent appointments and was able to take clients out

to a Milwaukee Brewers game, enhancing some of her networking time. Dillard also gave a complete overview of her sales conferences from May to August while showcasing her upcoming travel for the rest of the year.

- Dillard also summarized her community engagement and professional development opportunities over the last four months. Dillard highlighted her new role with the Junior League of Greenville.

Sales & Services Assistant Josh Meeks updated the CVA Board on his new role at the CVB.

- Meeks began by introducing himself and summarizing his role with the CVB. Meeks said that it will be his goal to deliver exceptional hospitality to our groups, work with Ethelene to provide quality client services, create sales assets to enhance our selling efforts, conduct facility audits, and work to make the CVB a more sustainable organization and destination.
- Meeks gave an overview of the services and events that he has provided since he started with Visit Greenville, NC in late July. Of note was a video that he created for the Monk Family Reunion as well as taking video out at the Sara Law Softball Complex. Meeks also gave a synopsis of his upcoming services opportunities.

**IV. Closed session:** CVA Secretary Bri Lester made a motion to go into closed session. Dr. Brenda Fairfax seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Candace Hollingsworth made a motion to leave the closed session. Convention Center liaison Rhesa Tucker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Upon coming out of closed session, Executive Director Schmidt stated that there would not be enough time to go through the financial report but that the occupancy tax report, year to date report, and cash balance report were all included in the board packet. Schmidt asked all board members to review the information and let him or City Finance Officer Joyner know if there were any questions.

**V. Adjournment:** CVA Vice Chair Candace Hollingsworth closed the meeting at 1:07pm.

Respectfully submitted

Bri Lester  
CVA Secretary