

Meeting Minutes

Pitt Greenville Convention & Visitors Authority

Thursday, January 23, 2025

Hilton Greenville (Julep)

Board members present: CVA Chair Diane Taylor, CVA Vice-Chair Candace Hollingsworth, CVA Secretary Bri Lester, (zoom) CVA Assistant Secretary Aileen Peacock, Bob Sheck (zoom), Brett Morgan, (zoom) Staci Moye, Brittany Parker, and Convention Center liaison Rhesa Tucker. CVA Staff members present included Andrew Schmidt, Ce’Nedra Dillard and Megan Singleton.

Board members absent: County Commissioner liaison Chris Nunnally, City Council liaison Matt Scully, Deputy Finance Officer Jacob Joyner Dr. Brenda Fairfax, Chamika White, and Jay Bastardo were not able to attend.

I. Call to Order: Chairwoman Diane Taylor called the meeting to order at 12:03pm. Executive Director Schmidt recognized Aileen Peacock as a new member of the CVA Executive Committee. Peacock will serve as the Assistant CVA Secretary.

II. Approval of Minutes: Executive Director Schmidt reviewed the minutes of the November 21, 2024, full board meeting and asked the board members to review to see if any changes that needed to be made. Staci Moye made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Convention Center liaison Rhesa Tucker and passed unanimously.

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

- Schmidt shared that he attended his first Economic Development Partnership Meeting on December 11th and 12th in Raleigh. Schmidt continued that former Governor Cooper attended the meeting and gave an update on the major economic development wins for the year. Schmidt stated that being a part of this board will be a learning opportunity and should be a positive for both the CVB and Greenville-Pitt County community.
- Schmidt stated that he, Sierra Jones, and Rachel Whitten attended the annual MLK Unity Day breakfast on January 20th on the campus of East Carolina University. Schmidt continued that Visit Greenville was a sponsor of this event for the first time to help continue to drive DEIA forward in our destination.
- Schmidt summarized the current activities of the Greenville-Pitt County Sports Task Force which has been working since August to come to a recommendation on how to move forward with a potential sports complex. Schmidt shared that the task force had adopted an approach and will be summarizing that approach during the City Council retreat on Saturday, January 25th.

- Schmidt informed the CVA board that Visit Greenville is a sponsor of the upcoming AENC Legislative Reception which will be held at the NC Museum of Natural Sciences in Raleigh on January 29th. As a sponsor, the CVB gets ten tickets to the event. Currently, 7 additional community members plan to attend under the CVB's umbrella. Schmidt also shared that there is only one other destination marketing organization sponsoring the event. Schmidt stated that he wanted to be in spaced where other CVB's were not and that this was a good example of that.
- In a last piece of business, Schmidt announced that he has begun working on the 2025-2026 fiscal year budget for the CVB. The budget will be shared with the CVA's Executive Committee in February, considered by the full board in March and then presented to City Council at the beginning of May. Formal adoption of the budget takes place in June.

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 of late November 2024 through mid-January 2025. 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 there were excellent numbers around the holiday happenings in Pitt County.
- Jones stated that the Brew and Cue Trail has officially been relaunched and that all the participating locations have their materials and are ready to go. As far as other project updates, Jones shared that she must drop in a few final additions of the updated version of the destination guide and then the guide will be ready for proofing. On a last note, Jones announced that she had finished the last edits needed to send out the RFP for development of a tourism master plan for Pitt County. The RFP should go out at the end of the month.
- Jones gave a snapshot of her late fall activity as well as ones that are upcoming for the spring. Jones stated that the Art Walk, which is a partnership between the City of Greenville, Pitt County Arts Council, and CVB, will begin in earnest next month. Lastly, Jones shared with the CVA Board that the CVB's annual National Travel and Tourism Week luncheon will be held on May 6, 2025, at the Hilton.
- 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, and community involvement.

- Singleton shared that she would be leaving the CVB at the end of March to take a job with the Peace Corps and work with youth development in Panama. CVA Chairwoman Diane Taylor asked if Singleton would be able to stockpile some blogs to be run during the time of transition until a new employee was able to be brought on board. Jones stated that she has met with Singleton and that this is their intention.

VP of Sales & Services Rachel Whitten gave a convention, and meetings update to the CVA Board.

- Whitten gave an update on the meeting and convention leads that were generated during the months of November and December 2024.
- Whitten announced Visit Greenville and its partners, the Hilton and Greenville Convention Center, won best booth at the AENC Trade Show on December 11th in Raleigh. Jay and some of his staff from Villa Verde attended providing food to attendees. Whitten said the show provided some good leads for our meeting properties. She also gave a shout out to Josh Meeks, who attended the trade show and did much of the heavy lifting on show logistics and background.
- Whitten highlighted her late fall travel and conference activities and reviewed her upcoming travel and conference scheduled which includes attending IPEC conference in Atlantic City next week. Whitten continued that this is a show specifically for independent meeting planners and one we have not participated in before.
- Whitten gave an overview of her previous and upcoming community engagement and professional development opportunities noting that she has been quite busy supporting various groups.

Director of Sports Development Ce'Nedra Dillard gave a sports tourism update to the CVA Board.

- Dillard gave an update on the sports tourism leads that were generated in November and December 2024. Dillard stated that this is usually slower booking time of the year.
- Dillard summarized her upcoming travel schedule which will keep her quite busy over the coming months. Dillard shared that her first trip of the new year is next week as she will travel for meetings with sports tournament organizers at the Sports Express conference.
- Dillard also summarized her community engagement and professional development opportunities for this winter and spring. She also shared that her membership application has been approved and she is now an official member of the Greenville Junior League. Dillard also that she is now part of the Sports ETA member mentoring program.

IV. Finance report:

- Executive Director Schmidt gave the occupancy tax report. Currently, five months of collections have been recorded. Through five months, occupancy tax collections for the 2024-2025 fiscal year are 7.36% higher than collections for the 2023-2024 fiscal year. Schmidt noted that the December collections should be available within the next five days.
- Schmidt reviewed the current year-to date budget report. The report, which was run on January 21, 2025, showed that the CVB has spent 48.0% of its yearly budget thus far. Schmidt stated that the CVB should not expend more than 58.3% of its yearly budget by the end of January. Schmidt said that expenditures are on track. The low percentage is due to the influx of funds from the December budget amendment.
- Finance Director Jacob Joyner was unable to attend the meeting so there was not an update on the CVB's current cash balance. Executive Director Schmidt said that once Joyner shared the cash balance report, he would distribute it to the board.

V. Old Business

- Executive Director Schmidt gave an update on his intentions of holding a staff retreat with a facilitator for some time this winter. Schmidt stated that he has found a facilitator and location and is waiting on some available dates. Schmidt did say he anticipates having the retreat sometime in March.
- Schmidt shared that the CVB's budget amendment, which included the overage for the Greenville Convention Center, was approved in December. Funds have already been dispersed to the appropriate accounts.

VI. New Business:

- Executive Director Schmidt stated that the CVB would like to hold its annual thank you dinner for the board in late February. Schmidt will share dates once confirmed with the venue.

VII. Closed Session

- CVA Assistant Secretary Aileen Peacock made a motion to go into closed session at 12:51pm. The motion was seconded by Staci Moye and passed unanimously.
- CVA Assistant Secretary Aileen Peacock made a motion to go back into open session at 12:59pm. Brittany Parker seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

VIII. Adjournment: With no other business, CVA Chairwoman Diane Taylor closed the meeting at 1:01pm.

Respectfully submitted

Bri Lester
CVA Secretary

