

**JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 pm, December 13, 2023**

Present: J Hoke, B Cook, M McDonnell, J Pritchett, C McLamb, M Smith, WE “Bud” Andrews, J Jenkins, J Lassiter, K Pickett

Absent: C Roby

Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, A Phillips

I. Call to Order – B Cook, Vice-Chairperson

B Cook called the meeting to order at 12:17 pm and stated that a quorum was present.

B Cook asked for a motion to adopt the agenda.

M McDonnell made a motion to adopt the agenda. J Pritchett seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B Cook welcomed back B Andrews, introduced new board members James Lassiter, James Jenkins, Jr, and Kimberly Pickett who were appointed to the Tourism Authority by the Johnston County Commissioners.

B Cook opened the floor for nominations for officers for Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary/Treasurer. Officers terms are for 2 years.

WE Andrews nominated B Cook as Chairperson. M McDonnell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B Cook nominated M McDonnell as Vice-Chairperson. J Pritchett seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

M McDonnell nominated James Hoke as Secretary. J Pritchett seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

With the adoption of officers, Chairperson B Cook proceeded to run the meeting per the adopted agenda. B Cook asked for any possible Conflict of Interest concerning the agenda. None were heard.

B Cook asked for a motion to accept the November minutes that were previously sent to the board.

M McDonnell motioned to accept the November minutes that were previously sent to the board. M Smith seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Finances – November Financial Report – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-date revenue for November was \$163,946.07. Month-to-Date Operation Expense was \$124,929.97. The net positive variance for the month was \$39,016.10. Year-to-date revenue was \$861,081.48. Year-to-date operation Expense was \$653,735.45. The Year-to-Date net positive variance was \$207,346.45. The October County 3% revenue was \$105,815.91 Smithfield’s 2% Revenue was \$32,385.63. Selma’s 2% Revenue was not reported, Kenly’s 2% Revenue was \$2,370.05, Benson’s 2% Revenue was \$6,595.16.

III. Sports Council – B Cook

B Cook gave a brief overview of the November 15th Sports Council meeting. It was noted A O’Neal and A Cross received a \$1.1 million grant for the land purchased in Wilson’s Mills. O’Neal will seek permission with County Commissioners to start phase 1-A of the regional park in the Cleveland area. The Smithfield-to-Benson East Coast Greenway feasibility study is underway. O’Neal is working with NC

Wildlife to construct a boat ramp on Hwy 42. A Cross is applying for a grant to help fund a portion of the project. Friends of Johnston County Parks strategic planning will begin in January for the group and will include a new membership drive. Smithfield is working on the site plan for the Hwy 210 soccer park. The park will have 3-4 fields, a walking area, and a playground. Selma is currently working on freshening up parks with new plants and signs. Glendale Chapel Recreation is in the process of applying for a grant for a soccer field and travel ball tournaments.

IV. Staff Report - D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor stated that K Radford and J McGowan did a wonderful job with the 2-day JoCo Works program at JCC and we have found an activity (putt-putt) that engaged the 8th graders.

D Bailey-Taylor reported the bureau hosted several media and influencers in November and now we are seeing several Holiday posts, reels, and stories from those efforts on social media. Visits were made to The Rudy Theater, DeWayne's, Meadow Lights, Old North State Food Hall, and Carolina Premium Outlets to promote Johnston County for the holidays. D Bailey-Taylor continued to share that via Critical Mention tracking service, the online and print audience in the media for the county was 1.4 million reach with a value of \$11,249.

D Bailey-Taylor reported that the Angel Tree project with the Hospitality Association was a success with more than 36 children receiving presents. She continued that K Radford has been very busy with mailing boxes to AAA offices in NC, SC, and VA with fresh apples from Ashlan Meadows Farm, and over 650 holiday letters were sent out with the 2024 computer calendar strips, the 2023 Annual Report was mailed out, and visits were made to both Welcome Centers on I-95 North and South.

D Bailey-Taylor stated work continues with the Town of Selma on the 2024 Calendar rack card, with the staff waiting on photography and graphics to be approved by the town. The Selma photoshoot went very well and several photos were shared with Nikki Wall for use in the Livability magazine. D Bailey-Taylor continued that there will be another photoshoot in the Spring to capture different businesses and another season.

Todd Johnson, Director of the Heritage Center is setting up a committee for the America 250th Observation taking place in 2026 and he would like a representative from the bureau or the Tourism Authority to serve on the committee.

V. New Business

M McDonnell, Triangle East Chamber of Commerce Board Chair, took the opportunity to extend congratulations to Donna Bailey-Taylor in recognition of being honored as a 2023 ATHENA International Leadership Award Nominee.

VI. Old Business

VII. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:17 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
James Hoke, Secretary/Treasurer*

**Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, January 10, 2023
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices - 12 Noon**