

JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 Noon, February 10, 2021 – Via Zoom

Present: M Mancuso, S Henley, B Cook, R Capps, M McDonnell, R Childrey,
M Worthington, P Boucher, WE Andrews, J Jennings, C McLamb

Staff: DB Taylor, A Phillips

I. Call to Order – S Henley, Chairperson

S Henley called the meeting to order at 12:01pm and stated that a quorum was present.

With no corrections the agenda was adopted. S Henley also asked for any possible Conflict of Interest concerning the agenda. None were heard.

S Henley asked for a motion to accept the January minutes that were previously sent to the board.

R Capps motioned to accept the January minutes that were previously sent to the board. M McDonnell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Executive Committee

D Bailey-Taylor stated the County Commissioners have adopted an extension of the Covid-19 Employee Leave policy through March 31, 2021. It was noted this allows for up to 80 hours of paid sick leave for COVID.

M Mancuso motioned to accept the Covid-19 Employee Leave as presented by the county. J Jennings seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

The Executive Committee met just prior to the board meeting. D Bailey-Taylor informed the committee that she has been working to complete the PPP Loan Application with Stephen Parker with First Citizens Bank. Discussion was had about legislation that is being introduced allowing DMO's to participate in the program.

D Bailey-Taylor stated that she was in the process of preparing the budget for 2021-22 and is not recommending Capital Grants and Matching Marketing Grants be funded.

III. Finances – January Financial – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-Date Revenue for January was \$76,531.76. Month-to-Date Operation Expense was \$91,354.28. Net loss for the month was (\$14,822.52). Year-to-Date Revenue was \$613,564.68. Year-to-Date Operation Expense was \$559,156.00. Year-to-Date gain was \$54,408.68. The December County 3% revenue was \$49,468.60. Smithfield's December Revenue was \$14,990.10. Selma's December Revenue was \$3,178.71. Kenly's December Revenue was \$1,601.52. Benson's December Revenue was \$4,007.72.

M McDonnell noted that he had seen the Ramada Inn sign change to the La Quinta Inn. M Mancuso asked if there was a plan to try to drive people off I-95. He asked what kind of net could we cast to reach travelers earlier. He noted that he had seen billboards on I-95 stating “Safe place to stay” in Dunn, and wondered if we needed to change our message. D Bailey-Taylor stated that we are currently using the big exit numbers campaign, and have not discussed changing messages.

IV. Staff Report

D Bailey-Taylor reported to the board that the bureau has an intern, Rebecca Gregg, a student from NC State University’s tourism program. The staff continues to rotate into the office one person at a time, and staff works after hours to meet any deadlines. D Bailey-Taylor is completing the final report for the Cares Act grant. It was noted that the Ava Gardner Museum flooded and would be closed for approximately two months as repairs are made at the cost of around \$60,000. Bentonville will be holding a virtual reenactment event in March that will have several programs for the week of March 15-20. Two meeting facilities have closed due to Covid restrictions: The Hall and Gardens at Landmark and The Dupree House in Smithfield. D Bailey-Taylor noted that JoCo Works is up and running and will be available through March. The Friends of Johnston County Parks group is hoping to hold a clean-up day on April 24 for Earth Day. The bureau sent JoCo masks to tourism partners and will be sending them out to the board. Look for photos on social media of tourism partners wearing the masks.

V. New Business

R Capps stated that Johnston Now has an opening for a marketing position. M Mancuso shared the 2021 Strawberry Festival is in the planning stages and will be tying in to the theme of shop at home.

VI. Old Business

WE Andrews stated that we should be moving closer to the time that we can again hold in person meetings. S Henley noted that we would continue to monitor the mandates and would adjust accordingly.

Meeting adjourned at 12:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Worthington, Secretary/Treasurer

**Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, March 10, 2021
Zoom Meeting – 12 Noon**