

**JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 Noon, June 9, 2021**

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

Absent: J Jennings, M Mancuso

Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, K Radford

I. Call to Order – S Henley, Chairperson

S Henley called the meeting to order at 12:16pm 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 May minutes that were previously sent to the board.

WE Andrews motioned to accept the May minutes that were previously sent to the board. B Cook seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Finances – April Financial – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-Date Revenue for May was \$119,298.62. Month-to-Date Operation Expense was \$83,443.10. Net gain for the month was \$35,855.52. Year-to-Date Revenue was \$993,852.74. Year-to-Date Operation Expense was \$941,284.07. Year-to-Date gain was \$52,568.67. The May County 3% revenue was \$77,827.48. Smithfield's 2% Revenue was \$20,962.43. Selma's 2% Revenue was \$6,092.56. Kenly's 2% Revenue was \$3,249.04. Benson's 2% Revenue was \$6,097.21.

D Bailey-Taylor reported April revenues were definitely up over 2020 (by 146%), however, the county revenues remain behind collection totals for FY 2019 and 2018.

III. Recreation & Sports Council - B Cook

B Cook announced the County Commissioners adopted the newly updated County-Wide Parks & Recreation Master Plan. Clayton has secured partnerships with the schools in Clayton for joint use of fields and they are executing several projects with the town's recreation bond. Clayton may become home to a D-1 League Baseball team which will have a 26-30 game season by the summer of 2022. D Bailey-Taylor reported she assisted the department with the economic impact of having the team play in Clayton. Although mostly daytrip and local attendance the impact may exceed \$500,000 for the town. Selma has started their concert and movie series in Downtown Selma. The new splash pad is now open in Smithfield at Smith Collins Park. Smithfield Parks & Recreation will complete a Master Plan for the new 20-acre soccer park on NC Hwy 210 just behind the new apartments. Benson's construction is underway for the new field house, and the tennis courts are now gone but they hope to get these rebuilt with a sponsor.

IV. Special Projects - R Capps

The Johnston County Heritage Center has requested \$9,000 for the first phase of their grant project, and the board instructed D Bailey-Taylor to proceed with the payment.

V. Staff Report - D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor reported to the board the staff will continue to rotate teams into the office. The new font package project with Simpleview is complete giving the website a new look and Donna encouraged the board to click around and see the updates. D Bailey-Taylor announced the July issue of *Our State Magazine* has content about the I-95 corridor, and Johnston County is featured on the cover. The opening of the Ava Gardner Museum was a great success with several media outlets covering the event on that day. There have been several media visits following the opening including Durham/Cary magazine and UNC Weekend Now show. Public Relations and social marketing campaigns are underway for the 301 Endless Yard Sale with large numbers of visits on the microsite (23,000 views in May). The new Visitor Guide concept is almost complete and D Bailey-Taylor passed around a DRAFT copy of the guide for feedback. The guide will be half the size of previous year's guides to reduce costs. One of the criteria for tourism businesses receiving listings is that they are open at least 5-days a week. All content categories drive visitors to use the JCVB website for more planning information. The guide will be digital as well with links to tourism business listings. D Bailey-Taylor reported tourism research on forecasting future travel says 8 out of 10 Americans are ready to travel this summer.

VI. New Business

D Bailey-Taylor continues to write grants for the JoCo Grows Agriculture committee and she asked for the board's approval to branch out and write additional grants for tourism projects in the county. S Henley was concerned about work balance. P Boucher questioned if there was enough work to support another position. D Bailey-Taylor will reach out to Skip Green, a professional grant writer, to see how the bureau might work with him directly.

VII. Old Business

WE Andrews asked about the request for recovery funding support from the county, and D Bailey-Taylor reported the request was sent to the county manager.

Meeting adjourned at 12:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melody Worthington, Secretary/Treasurer

Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, August 11, 2021
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices - 12 Noon