

**JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
Noon, March 13, 2024**

Present: B Cook, J Pritchett, M Smith, WE Andrews, J Lassiter, K Pickett,
J Hoke, J Jenkins, J Hamilton
Absent: M McDonnell, C McLamb
Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, A Phillips

I. Call to Order – B Cook, Chairperson

B Cook called the meeting to order at 12:14 pm and stated that a quorum was present. B Cook asked for any possible Conflict of Interest concerning the agenda. None were heard.

B Cook asked for a motion to adopt the agenda as presented.

J Jenkins made a motion to adopt the agenda. K Pickett seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

B Cook asked for a motion to accept the February minutes that were previously sent to the board.
K Pickett motioned to accept the January minutes as presented. M Smith seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

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

Month-to-date revenue for February was \$168,785.55. Month-to-Date Operation Expenses was \$113,838.56. The net positive variance for the month was \$54,916.99. Year-to-date revenue was \$1,321,574.06. Year-to-date operation Expense was \$1,046,269.47. The Year-to-Date net positive variance was \$275,304.59. The January County 3% revenue was \$85,916.80, Smithfield's 2% revenue was \$25,321.91, Selma's 2% revenue was \$5,589.03, Kenly's 2% revenue was \$2,160.65, Benson's 2% revenue was \$5,037.88.

III. FY 2025 Budget Review – D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor shared a draft of the FY 2025 budget with the board. The draft includes one part-time employee for 30 hours weekly to cover the Visitor Center from 9 am-3 pm.

Per the recommendation from the Special Projects Committee D Bailey-Taylor met with officials at Johnston Community College to discuss budgeting scholarships for the Culinary Degree program. Discussion was had about naming the scholarship and the requirements for awarding the scholarships. It was recommended that the Authority budget \$5,000 for up to five scholarships each year.

WE Andrews motioned to budget the Tourism Authority Culinary Scholarship for a trial basis as presented. J Pritchett seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Special Projects Committee - WE Andrews

The Special Projects Committee will meet the week of April 1-5 to review the capital grant applications for the FY 2025 Budget. D Bailey-Taylor noted that applications are due to the office by 5 pm on March 29th.

V. Marketing Committee – M Smith

The Marketing Committee will meet on March 27th for budget discussions. D Bailey-Taylor stated that the JCVB staff will make a presentation on new strategic marketing initials for FY 25.

VI. Sports Council

There was no report, and D Bailey-Taylor noted that the Sports Council will meet on March 20th.

VII. Staff Report - D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor reported she is working with the towns on their budget ideas for FY 25. The new FY24 Visitors Guide is here and as usual businesses open and close during the print process. D Bailey-Taylor asked the Tourism Authority board members to let the bureau staff know of any openings and closings they are aware of as it would be a great help to keep up with changes for brochures and the website. Springtime is when the Bureau’s advertising placements pick up with current ads running in *Our State Magazine*, *Main & Broad*, *Cary Magazine*, and in a large market combo magazine with VisitNC in Atlanta, Philadelphia, and Wash, DC.

D Bailey-Taylor announced the top click-through BLOG article this month was the Benton Card Company piece about the American Pickers show with 1,521 clicks and the Insider Newsletter with 3,420 opens. Critical Mention: The audience reach in February was nearly 80 million with a media value of over \$700,000.

D Bailey-Taylor informed the board that the tradeshow season is also picking up with K Radford attending with A Brame the DC Travel & Adventure show and Ideal Living Retirement show in Washington, DC. Also, with spring travel – hits to the Bureau’s website are increasing, and planning of the 301 Endless Yard Sale scheduled for June 14-15 with our partners along I-95 has started. The staff is working on the budget full steam getting pitches from advertisers, considering what VisitNC is offering, and talking to our current vendors on budget items for next year’s marketing plan.

VII. New Business

None

IX. Old Business

None

X. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 1:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
James Hoke, Secretary/Treasurer

Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, April 10, 2024
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices - 12 Noon