

JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 Noon, November 13, 2019
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices

Present: P Boucher, R Childrey, C McLamb, M Mancuso, L Daniels, R Heilmann, R Capps, C Lane, M Worthington, M McDonnell
Absent: S Henley, E Brame, B Cook
Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, A Phillips

I. Call to Order – R Childrey, Vice-Chairperson

R Childrey called the meeting to order at 12:19 pm and stated that a quorum was present. With no corrections the agenda was adopted. R Childrey also asked for any possible Conflict of Interest concerning the agenda. None were heard.

R Childrey asked for a motion to accept the October minutes that were previously sent to the board.

R Capps motioned to accept the October minutes as presented. M Mancuso seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Board Recognitions

Lynn Daniels was recognized for six years of service on the Tourism Authority Board. L Daniels thanked the board for the opportunity to serve and R Heilmann shared his thoughts and thanked L Daniels for her commitment to the county through tourism. Ernie Brame, who was unable to attend the meeting will also be rotating off the board after serving six years. The board welcomed two new board members: Mark McDonnell with AdVenture Development will serve as the hotel representative, and Melody Worthington with the Tobacco Farm Life Museum will serve as a Kenly Chamber representative.

III. Election of Officers

After noting that the only position that needed to be filled was for Sec/Treasurer, R Childrey opened the floor for nominations for Sec/Treasurer.

R Heilmann nominated Cheryl Lane to the position of Secretary/Treasurer. M Mancuso seconded.

M Mancuso motioned that Lane be appointed as Secretary/Treasurer by acclamation. R Capps seconded. Motioned passed unanimously.

IV. Finances – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-Date Revenue for October was \$148,353.01. Month-to-Date Operations were \$102,927.02. Net gain for the month was \$45,425.99. Year-to-Date Revenues were \$569,778.42. Year-to-Date Operations were \$421,866.73. Year-to-Date net gain was \$147,911.69. The September County 3% revenues were \$84,917.39. Smithfield's October Revenues were \$21,554.89. Selma's September Revenues were \$9,853.96. Kenly's September Revenues were \$3,004.21, Benson's September Revenues were \$5,668.91. Revenues are down compared to last year's as the staff expected, with high occupancy from Hurricane Florence which increased revenues for September, October, and November.

V. Executive Committee – R Childrey, Vice-Chairperson

The Executive Committee had not met but had a few items to cover. Each board member was given a copy of the Conflict of Interest Policy to review and sign. These are completed yearly per the county. DB Taylor stated that the due to changes with the county personnel policy, which the bureau operates by, the board needs to adopt the changes in longevity pay for employees that have five or more years of service.

R Heilmann motioned to make the changes to coincide with the county policy as presented. M McDonnell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

DB Taylor shared a copy of the proposed updates to the bureau's bylaws. These changes would line up with the new Strategic Plan that the bureau adopted. Taylor also informed the board that there were some changes to the purchasing policy. Both these items will be addressed at the December board meeting.

VI. Special Projects – E Brame

Special Projects did not meet and it was noted that with E Brame's departure, a new chairman will be needed.

V. Marketing Committee – R Heilmann

R Heilmann stated that the Marketing Committee had met and the minutes were included in the board packet. The committee discussed information about Excelerate Digital that would be sending out 50,000 emails to local JoCo residents to help raise awareness of tourism events and our partners in the county. The bureau will be sending 4 campaigns: Shop Local & Holiday events, Bentonville Battlefield Reenactment, Spring events/Agritourism in JoCo and Summer Travel is Here. The bureau staff is researching the possibility of using an outside agency to run integrated digital campaigns to five top feeder markets based on Visa data research. Website audits continue, working with content and photo work. The new *Bike Route* brochures are here. *You Are Here Map* and the *Visitors Guide* are in the final stages of edits before going to the printer. The 2018 Annual Report has been distributed to hotel owners and elected officials and is available online.

VII. Sports Council Committee – Ben Cook

The Sports Council did not meet. The next meeting for the Sports Council will be November 20, 2019.

VIII. Staff Report – D Bailey-Taylor

The staff continues to work on the website audit. The DMO destination Google project has started and was presented to the Hospitality Association members by A Brame and J Andreasen. S Lagasse has done a fantastic job on the JoCo Works planning with support from E Dean on design materials. The staff will be working with the Angel Tree project again this year – K Radford and A Phillips are planning the week of December 2-6, as the time to drop off gifts. They will be featuring "sweets from our tourism partners" in the Visitor Center as a thank you for all those that participate in this community project.

Discussion was had about the board wanting to be able to attend and participate with the Angel Tree Week as part of the Christmas season of giving back to the community.

R Capps motioned to move the December board meeting to first Wednesday in December, allowing the board to participate in the Angel Tree event. M Mancuso seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Cycle NC, which was just in Clayton, is holding dates in October 2020 to overnight at the Smithfield Community Park/Aquatic Center. The Town of Benson is forming a Public Art Board. DB Taylor plans to work with this board to represent tourism and how the town's 2% funds may be used for public art projects. DB Taylor is currently working on two more projects from newly adopted Strategic Plan: researching the Road Disruption Marketing Plan to help our communities affected by NCDOT road projects, and the Destination Development Plan for future growth of tourism in Johnston County. DB Taylor also met with Adrian O'Neal, the county's new recreation director, who will be coming to the Sports Council meeting next week.

IX. Old Business

None.

X. New Business

R Heilmann noted that the Cleveland Chamber may be shutting down operation and its members will join with other chambers. There are discussions taking place on saving the Strawberry Festival as an event in the county. M Mancuso announced the Triangle East Chamber met with organizers of the Freedom Balloon Festival to host it at the Johnston Regional Airport, Memorial Day Weekend, 2021. R Capps let the board know the new Christmas Room is now open at Ready-Set-Escape.

Meeting adjourned at 1:16 PM.

*Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl Lane, Secretary/Treasurer*

**Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
December 4, 2019
Johnston County Tourism Authority Boardroom - 12 Noon**