

**JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 pm, October 11, 2023**

Present: R Childrey, WE Andrews, M Smith, J Hoke, P Boucher, C Roby
B Cook, M McDonnell, J Pritchett, C McLamb

Zoom: J Jennings

Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, A Phillips

I Call to Order – R Childrey, Chairperson

R Childrey called the meeting to order at 12:15 pm and stated that a quorum was present. R Childrey asked for any possible Conflict of Interest concerning the agenda. None were heard.

R Childrey asked for a motion to adopt the agenda that was previously sent to the board.

B Cook made a motion to adopt the agenda. M McDonnell seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

R Childrey asked for a motion to accept the September minutes previously sent to the board.

WE Andrews motioned to accept the September minutes as presented to the board. M Smith seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Executive Committee

The board confirmed the staff 2% merit increase effective in October approved by the County Commissioners in the tourism budget. Further discussion was had to conduct yearly job salary studies to ensure that the staff is in line with salary ranges for Visitor Bureaus in NC.

M McDonnell motioned to recommend that the Visitors Bureau conduct an annual job salary review in conjunction with the yearly budget planning. M Smith seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

D Bailey-Taylor updated the Tourism Authority on the status of the 2% Room Tax for Clayton and Four Oaks, and extended thanks to Representatives White, Strickland, and Penny and Senator Sawrey for their support of recent appropriations in the state budget for tourism projects.

D Bailey-Taylor noted that the board currently had four open positions. There have been a total of seven applications. October 24th is the last day for applying and appointments will be made on November 6th by the County Commissioners. The board recognized outgoing board members R Childrey, P Boucher, and J Jennings, thanking them for their service to the Authority.

III. Finances – September Financial – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-date revenue for September was \$136,146.28. Month-to-Date Operation Expense was \$130,477.84. The net positive variance for the month was \$5,668.44. Year-to-date revenue was \$505,853.66. Year-to-date operation Expense was \$370,174.86. The Year-to-Date net positive variance was \$135,678.80. The September County 3% revenue was \$111,679.63. Smithfield's 2% Revenue was \$35,612.42. Selma's 2% Revenue was not reported. Kenly's 2% Revenue was \$2,538.65. Benson's 2% Revenue was \$6,744.64.

IV. Marketing Committee – P Boucher

P Boucher stated that the Marketing Committee met just prior to the board meeting. Discussion was had concerning the Town of Selma canceling the Hotel Coupon Program for Selma hotels. It is a program that is a coop between hotels and towns using 2% room tax funds to pay a 50% match

for ads. Due to the timing of the upcoming edition, the bureau will provide the match from the 3% revenue for the current publication with a cost of \$106.66. This will give the hotel owner the opportunity to decide what to do about paying the full cost of the ad. Bureau staff will send an invitation to hotel partners to review and discuss the merits of the program moving forward.

V. Sports Council – B Cook

B Cook gave a brief update from the Sports Council meeting. The county has been awarded a grant of \$500,000 for the Cleveland Park project. Friends of Johnston County Parks will host a Walk and Talk event on October 21st from the SRAC to the Amphitheater. Visit NC will be hosting the Outdoor NC 2.0 learning lab on November 7th at SRAC. SSS High School and SRAC hosted the Global Open Kukkiwon Cup on September 30th, with over 30 different countries and 20 different states attending. The Clayton Rugby Football Club will be collecting Toys for Tots in October. JCPS Athletics has approved gym bleachers for middle schools. It was also noted that the “George Whitfield’s Annual Baseball Clinic” will be held at Wayne Community College on January 13th. B Andrews informed the board the clinic is free for the athlete and parent.

VI. Special Projects Committee – WE Andrews

No meeting was held, no report or request for Matching Marketing Grants this month.

VII. Staff Report - D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor shared that the Global Kukkiwon Cup Championship was a huge success with 3,000 in attendance staying in our hotels, shopping and dining out having a tremendous economic impact for the area. Governor Cooper received an honorary black belt, and there was an incredible Taekwondo performance from the national South Korea team. The FY 24 JCVB Marketing Plan has been posted on the website and shared via the *Tourism Does That?! newsletter*. The FY 2023 Annual Report is almost complete and will be posted online, mailed to hotel owners, hospitality association members and elected officials, and shared in the next *Tourism Does That?! newsletter*. Bentonville, the NC Dept. of Cultural Resources, and the Friends of the Mountains to Sea Trail hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony to open a new mile of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail at Bentonville Battlefield State Historic Site on September 15th. D Bailey-Taylor reported funds for additional trails are available in the state budget, and there is great interest in the concept of “nature meets history” at Bentonville for additional trails. The Fall Family Fun marketing campaigns are running for JoCo Grows Agriculture with WQDR, and Nicole Youngblood and Extension staff are attending all the fall festivals with promotional information. The Barn Mural project is moving forward with a Call for Artists form in conjunction with a JoCo Grows campaign.

VIII. New Business

IX. Old Business

X. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:01 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Rick Childrey, Chairperson

Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, November 8, 2023
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices - 12 Noon