

**JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 pm, October 12, 2022**

Present: R Childrey, R Capps, M McDonnell, WE Andrews, C Roby, B Cook
Absent: J Jennings, P Boucher, M Smith, M Worthington, C McLamb
Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, A Phillips

I. Call to Order – R Childrey, Chairperson

R Childrey called the meeting to order at 12:23 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 accept the September minutes that were previously sent to the board.

M McDonnell motioned to accept the September minutes as presented to the board. R Capps seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

II. Executive Committee

R Childrey opened the floor for nominations for Secretary/Treasurer for the board.

R Capps motioned to accept M McDonnell as presented to the board. B Cook seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Finances – September Financial – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-Date Revenue for September was \$171,002.21. Month-to-Date Operation Expense was \$101,669.10. Net gain for the month was \$69,333.11. Year-to-Date Revenue was \$484,400.63. Year-to-Date Operation Expense was \$282,215.28. Year-to-Date gain was \$202,185.35. The August County 3% revenue was \$121,420.39. Smithfield's 2% Revenue was \$42,047.26. Selma's 2% Revenue was \$7,955.82. Kenly's 2% Revenue was \$2,229.71. Benson's 2% Revenue was \$7,967.75.

The Visitors Bureau has received a grant in the amount of \$149,311 from the Specialty Crop Block Grant Program for the JoCo Grows Agriculture project. As instructed by C McLamb, the Tourism Authority will need to vote to accept the grant then go before the County Commissioners for a budget increase request.

R Capps motioned to accept the Specialty Crop Block Grant in the amount of \$149,311 as presented to the board. WE Andrews seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Marketing Committee - P Boucher

DB Taylor presented updates from the Marketing Minutes. The committee reviewed the concept for the next Visitors Guide and the criteria for adding unique AirBnB stays in the county like local farms, historic homes, or meeting facilities. The staff has updated the location and picked a better billboard for Bentonville Battlefield and checked what new inventory of boards are available on I-95 and US 70.

J Andreasen and Nicole Youngblood, Cooperative Extension Agent, are distributing Fall Family Fun postcards to area farms and farm markets. Plans are to meet with N Youngblood in the next week or so to discuss the JoCo Grows grant projects and how to move forward.

The bureau has sent out the first Calendar email, Insider Newsletter and the Tourism Does That? emails using Act-on. As the staff continues to learn about Act-on, and already has found the email heat map a very helpful tool.

V. Sports Council - B Cook

B Cook reported that fall sports season is underway with all communities. Other highlights that were mentioned were: The Clayton Clovers will be switching from Carolina Collegiate League to Old North State League. The county park in Cleveland has completed the public input and will soon have plans in place for moving forward. Smithfield is continuing to host USA Youth Softball Tournaments. Johnston County Public Schools will be adding lacrosse opportunities for boys and possibly girls. There remains a shortage of officials in the county. Construction of Archer Lodge Town Park is ongoing.

VI. Special Projects Committee - R Capps

No meeting.

VII. Staff Report - D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor shared that the Johnston County Hospitality Association will meet and network together on October 25th at the Old North State Food Hall at 2 pm. The staff handed out 100 gift bags at the Hinnant 50th Anniversary. The Ava Gardner Festival was a great success drawing visitors from all over the country and internationally. D Bailey-Taylor thanked the staff for all their help with PR, video production, social media, and other areas to support the festival. The bureau has been in Fall Festival marketing mode for the past 30-60 days and will begin shifting to Holiday Shopping and Christmas Events now. It was noted that the staff will be at JCC October 13-14 for the JoCo Works events, with our theme, "Tourism Takes You Places". D Bailey-Taylor will be meeting with Selma Town Council on the adoption of the Town's marketing plan for the tourism committee. The Town of Selma has installed the first six wayfinding signs. D Bailey-Taylor reported that a press release will be going out on October 13th from the Johnston County Economic Development office about GALOT Motorsports Park receiving a \$583,586 grant from the federal COVID-19 recovery funds. These funds will be used for a new outdoor concert venue and additional restroom facilities. DB Taylor shared that the Johnston County Arts Council will celebrate its 50th anniversary and it would be a good time to support their work in the county.

VIII. New Business

None.

IX. Old Business

WE Andrews shared thoughts about involving town counsels more in the financial discussion about use of town revenues. It was also asked if the town marketing committees had by-laws. DB Taylor stated that the Town of Selma and Kenly have by-laws for their tourism committees.

X. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 1:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark McDonnell, Secretary/Treasurer

Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, November 9, 2022
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices - 12 Noon