

**JOHNSTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES
12 Noon, October 13, 2021**

Present: M McDonnell, R Childrey, WE Andrews, R Capps, J Jennings,
S Henley, M Worthington

Absent: C McLamb, P Boucher, C Roby, B Cook

Staff: D Bailey-Taylor, A Phillips

I. Call to Order – S Henley, Chairperson

R Childrey called the meeting to order at 12:14pm 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 September minutes that were previously sent to the board.

J Jennings motioned to accept the August minutes that were previously sent to the board. WE Andrews seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

DB Taylor took the opportunity to recognize Scott Henley for his service to the Johnston County Tourism Authority. Henley thanked the board for the accomplishments and friendships that were a result of serving on the board.

II. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is recommending the Tourism Authority have a fund balance policy requiring six months of expenses to withstand any future major crisis to the budget. DB Taylor will meet with C McLamb to draft the policy and present it to the board at the next meeting.

DB Taylor noted that the bureau will not be filling the vacant sales position. Ashby Brame will take over sales duties and her job classification has been changed.

Marie Smith, the Chamber's Director of Events and Operations has been appointed to serve on the Tourism Authority Board.

III. Finances – September Financial – D Bailey-Taylor

Month-to-Date Revenue for September was \$153,886.11. Month-to-Date Operation Expense was \$91,233.16. Net gain for the month was \$62,652.95. Year-to-Date Revenue was \$450,414.53. Year-to-Date Operation Expense was \$247,444.11. Year-to-Date gain was \$202,970.42. The August County 3% revenue was \$97,158.41. Smithfield's 2% Revenue was \$30,066.08. Selma's 2% Revenue was \$7,138.75. Kenly's 2% Revenue was \$3,258.02. Benson's 2% Revenue was \$6,924.65.

IV. Marketing Committee - P Boucher

No meeting in September. The next meeting will be Wednesday, October 27th.

V. Sports Council - B Cook

In B Cook's absence, DB Taylor gave a brief overview for the September meeting. A O'Neal

shared that the County Commissioners have approved the Feasibility Study for the Mountains to the Sea Trail route and that it will become a comprehensive trail plan for the county. The county has closed on the land at Covered Bridge Road site to be developed into a boat ramp. The Cleveland Park will be getting temporary parking and a temporary multipurpose field while plans are developed for the new land and old school sites. The county has launched a new Parks & Recreation website to assist residents and visitors in finding park assets in the county.

VI. Staff Report - D Bailey-Taylor

D Bailey-Taylor and A Brame attended the Williamson Preserve ribbon cutting and the park is now on the bureau's website.

DB Taylor attended the NC Tourism Leadership Conference in Winston Salem where the bureau won two Destination Marketing Awards - Platinum for JoCo Strong Partner Communication and Gold for the Meeting Facility Guide Goes Digital project.

JCVB staff along with Jonathan Levin and models from around the county held a photo shoot at Carolina Premium Outlets. The bureau is continuing to improve the image and video database for the website, print advertising, brochures, and a future destination video for Smithfield.

The bureau hosted two influencers in September. Jason Barnette, Road Trips and Coffee visited several attractions, shops, and dining around the county. Travel to Blank, who travels with their dogs to pet-friendly locations, visited Hinnant, Howell Woods, Broadslab, and Redneck BBQ. The bureau also sponsored the F&B Podcast interview with JP's Pastry in Benson.

The Town of Benson along with the Benson Art Advisory Board installed the new Benson Mule Sculpture and the next big project will be an alley improvement.

The website had over 5,000 click-throughs for Mule Days and the bureau is increasing promotions for fall festivals, Live@ The Rudy Christmas Show and Holiday/Shop Local events.

DB Taylor shared the 2020 Visitor Spending report from VisitNC showing Johnston County was down 33.1% over 2019 numbers, which is a loss of \$89.77 million in revenues.

VII. New Business

The Tobacco Farm Life Museum announced they were awarded a national grant from the NEH for their living history programming, which is a very competitive grant. Members of the board congratulated M Worthington.

VIII. Old Business

None was heard

IX. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 12:56 pm.

*Respectfully submitted,
Melody Worthington, Secretary/Treasurer*

**Next Meeting
Johnston County Tourism Authority
Wednesday, November 10, 2021
Visitors Bureau Administrative Offices - 12 Noon**