

# VISIT ROWAN COUNTY

SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA

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## ROWAN COUNTY TOURISM BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING – Virtual

Wednesday, February 17, 2021: 12:00 pm

### BOARD MEETING MINUTES

**Board Members Attending:** Krista Osterweil, Michelle Patterson, Don Bringle, Cyndi Greenwood, John Ketner, Stephen Kidd, Sada Stewart, Karen Alexander, Craig Pierce

**Not Attending:** Vivian Hopkins,

**Guests:** Eddie Carrick, CPA, Tony Brewer, CPA

**TDA Staff:** James Meacham, Tara Furr, Sarah Michalec, Mary Scott

#### RCTDA Call to Order

Osterweil called the RCTDA to order at 12:00pm.

#### 2019-20 Audit Reports

Meacham reminded the members of the yearly audit presentation on the RCTDA and the SRCVB. The RCTDA is legally required and filed with the LGC and the state treasurer's office. The 2019-20 audits were emailed out to all members for review prior to meeting and hardcopies are available.

Carrick reported that there were several additional items that had to be completed this year due to the ongoing Covid-19 situation. Carrick briefly reviewed those changes as well as some of the items that were adjusted this year. Tourism's auditors gave the 2019-20 RCTDA Audit report stating that the organization received an unqualified or clean opinion. Auditors reviewed key components of the report for the board. They noted that RCTDA is a governmental entity and is monitored by the State Treasurer's office and LGC each year. A review of the Audit's highlights from the report were provided. At the conclusion of the TDA audit report the 2019-20 SRCVB audit report was provided to the Tourism Board; the CVB also received an unqualified or clean opinion.

Carrick reported that the RCTDA audit was accepted by the State Treasurer's office and Local Government Commission.

## **Approval of the Minutes**

Motion: Craig Pierce made the motion for approval of the January 2021 minutes.

Second: Krista Osterweil

Motion: Approved

## **Organizational & Financial Update**

Meacham gave an organizational update reporting that as of today staff has not received the January occupancy tax revenue figures yet. Meacham gave the financial highlights noting that year to date compared to last year revenue is trending down 27.7%. The December 2020 collections were down 30% from December 2019, however this is an improvement from the decrease of 38% in November 2020. The December 2020 figures are better than anticipated considering the loss of the Polar Express event. Revenue year to date equals .04% ahead of budget. Year to date Trolley revenues equal \$4,833 and continue to be one of the last revenue segments to return. Wedding rentals for May into September are slowly starting to return. Gateway Building revenues year to date equal \$77,911 and are in line with projections. Fiscal year to date revenues is ahead of expenses by \$13,173.

Meacham reported total current assets with the TDA are \$215,750 which is an increase of \$7,450 since December 2020. Accounts receivable (December & January Occ taxes) equal \$116,497. Cash on hand as of December 31, 2020 was \$99,252 and fixed assets equaled \$3,129,898. Meacham reviewed the occupancy tax chart and the trends being observed. Revenue is right in line with the 2016-17 projection.

## **Destination Marketing Report**

Tara Furr presented the year end marketing report noting that 2020 started off very strong and staff was forecasting the year to be very successful. All branding and marketing tools were being utilized to promote the destination and were performing well in the first 10-weeks of the year. In the first three months of the year staff was working with several groups that were scheduled and on the books for 2020 and 2021. During the first eight weeks of the Covid-19 situation there was initial shock, reevaluation and quick changes to the website and marketing approach. The website was quickly adapted to serve as a one stop shop and resource for information and the business resources for the local businesses. There was a phased approach in the business response campaign with the first phase of transitioning the website to a one stop shop, the second phase was the creation of the business resource kits for local businesses. On the organizational side, there were payroll reductions, cutting of organizational expenses and utilizing those the funds along with those received from the IDEL program to fund the business response campaign and resources. Furr reported there was a great deal of success in this phase of the business response campaign with around 14,000 users and 19,000 pageviews on the website. Heading into the next phase of the process, Furr reported that the business resource toolkits were complimentary to local businesses to lessen the stress of implementing the new practices during the pandemic and allow them to continue to operate. 219 total toolkits were requested with 1,500 additional items also requested. There were also customizable assets that were available with the toolkits. Furr reviewed some of the basic signage and other items included in the toolkit. The first marketing response campaign was the "Visit Local" with a video that was released focusing on supporting Rowan County and local businesses. The video pushed shop and visit local as well as the outdoor assets of the county. Staff utilized digital, print and billboard marketing tools to promote the Visit Local campaign.

Furr noted that as the year progressed staff launched the "Let's Give it Another Go" campaign promoting tourism from a safe zone. A series of videos were launched using funds secured through a grant that Visit NC released. The campaign contained fourteen videos that promoted safe tourism practices as well as letting visitors know that when they are ready to travel Rowan County is ready for them. The videos launched in late December and continue to run. The videos have been very popular on social media platforms.

Furr stated that the county rebranding done in 2019 was key in the success of the Covid-19 business response. The key county partners had a unified central platform of identification that was known and accepted throughout the community so folks were able to see the new branding and recognize how everyone was working together in a team approach during this challenging time.

Furr reported that Rowan County Tourism received several grants as well as assisting community partners in finding and securing grants themselves. The TDA received funds from the CARES Act for local arts and cultural organizations, the Visit NC marketing credit program and the Visit NC tourism promotion grant. In addition, the TDA supported the county governments effort to provide CARES funds through its small business grant program. Meacham reported that the county just recently added another \$250,000 for a local restaurant grant program this week. Furr added that if there are any additional stimulus available staff will continue to maximize those for tourism as well.

Furr reported that visitor services were halted in late March 2020 due to Covid. The visitor center reopened on a limited basis in September 2020. Trolleys halted in March with limited services beginning in Sept 2020 through today.

Furr stated that PR went well in 2020 with 22 media assists and 24 placements. The majority of the PR efforts in 2020 were focused on the Covid-19 resources that were offered to the community rather than tourism.

Sarah Michalec reported that the [www.visitsalisburync.com](http://www.visitsalisburync.com) website has held steady this year despite Covid-19. Visual upgrades were implemented across the website including a new blog home page and a thematic site map. 2020 was the first full year on the new e-newsletter platform with the open rate increasing by 21.5%. Looking at social media there are 16,715 Facebook fans, 1,700 Instagram followers and 2,000 Twitter followers. Social media continues to be our most effective marketing tool with the wide reach available. The visitsalisbury tourism blog had 24,502 views during the year.

Furr touched briefly on what is coming up in the spring and summer in marketing plans. Staff is looking to bring back the destination mark committee and to discuss our approach moving forward. Videos are very popular, and staff is looking at doing more of those and bringing back promotions for lodging packages. Staff will be continuing to promote outdoor travel and dining during spring and summer. Staff will be working on some incentivized packages for summer and fall promotion agritourism and outdoor events and activities.

### **Program of Work Report**

Meacham reported that the Gateway building will have some shuffling of tenants due to expansion of the Three Rivers Landtrust and changes in EDC staff. There will be an office suite swap between the CVB and the Three Rivers Landtrust. The Visitor Center space will remain open downstairs, but staff will move upstairs. The CVB lease would go down a bit and decrease office space allowing for about \$6000 less per year that the CVB will pay in lease but there will be no net change in revenue or expenses of the building. The move should take place on April 1, 2020.

Meacham thanked the City of Salisbury for the partnership of closing Kerr Street last year for the Farmer's Market. Staff will submit a request for the closure again this year as the Farmer's Market is opening the Saturday after Easter.

### **Additional Business**

Meacham reported briefly about the Downtown Salisbury Main Street plan being discussed by the City, Downtown Salisbury and other community partners. Meacham turned the discussion over to John Ketner as a business owner in the area for his comments and thoughts on the projects. Ketner gave a brief summary of the project and offered several primary concerns relating to project including parking, increased traffic,

ingress/egress space and curb issues. Karen Alexander noted that at this time there were no funds available for the project. The Salisbury City Council will be voting on a new street scape for downtown Salisbury in March 2021. This would then become a project for future based on funding.

The meeting adjourned at 1 pm.

Respectfully submitted.  
Lesley Pullium  
SRCVB

# VISIT ROWAN COUNTY

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## FINANCIAL SUMMARY REPORT AS OF February 28, 2021

Report Date: March 15, 2021

**\*The Tourism Authority utilizes accrual based accounting. Year to date expenses typically run about 6 weeks ahead of year to date revenues.\***

### Year to Date Statement of Activities: Highlights as of 2-28-2021

- Revenue fiscal year to date from occupancy taxes collected and received by the TDA equals \$508,148 which is 0.7% ahead of budget.
  - Occupancy tax revenue collections through 1-31-21 are down 26.5% from the same period in FY2019-20.
  - January 2021 occupancy tax collections were down 30% from January 2020
    - The 30% decrease in January was inline with projections
    - Starting in early November as COVID-19 cases and impacts began to increase travel began slowing again and coupled with no Polar Express in November and December 2020 led to larger percentage decreases.
    - Initial figures from February show improvement over January.
- Year to date Trolley revenues equal \$5,433 and will continue to be one of the last revenue segments to return.
  - Wedding rentals for May into September have slowly started returning with a slight uptick in February
- Gateway Building revenues year to date equal \$85,050 and are in line with projections.
- Fiscal Year to Date revenues are ahead of expenses by \$10,019

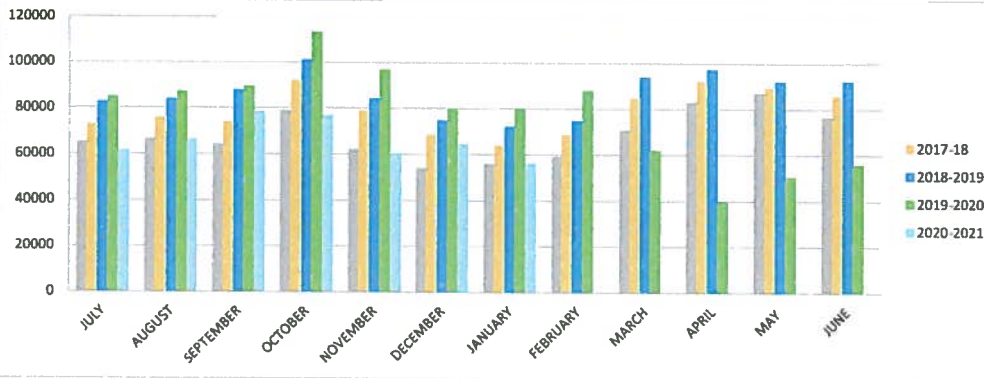
### Balance Sheet: Summary as of 2-28-2021

- Total Current Assets with the TDA equaled \$212,463 a decrease of approximately \$3,287 from January 2021.
- Accounts Receivables equaled \$123,018 consisting of January and February occ. taxes.
- Cash on hand as of 12-31-20 equaled \$89,444.93
- Total assets equaled \$3,064,974
- The CVB was approved for a PPP in March and will receive the funds by the end of March.

**Rowan County Occupancy Tax Receipts (GROSS)**

MONTH	FY16-17	FY17-18	%CHNG	FY18-19	%CHNG	FY19-20	%CHNG	FY20-21	%CHNG
July	65,208.17	72,999.06	11.9%	82,827.79	13.5%	85,062.04	2.7%	61,737.08	-27.4%
August	66,663.57	76,010.73	14.0%	84,227.53	10.8%	87,388.13	3.8%	66,399.96	-24.0%
September	64,467.53	74,220.99	15.1%	88,060.74	18.6%	89,694.58	1.9%	78,562.08	-12.4%
<b>Quarter Total</b>	<b>196,339.27</b>	<b>223,230.78</b>	<b>13.7%</b>	<b>255,116.06</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>262,144.75</b>	<b>2.8%</b>	<b>206,699.12</b>	<b>-21.2%</b>
October	79,169.16	92,286.61	16.6%	101,229.40	9.7%	113,427.41	12.0%	76,794.51	-32.3%
November	62,445.01	79,174.98	26.8%	84,418.19	6.6%	97,848.24	15.9%	60,357.00	-38.3%
December	54,165.23	68,584.25	26.6%	74,894.47	9.2%	79,686.64	6%	64,749.41	-19%
<b>Quarter Total</b>	<b>195,779.40</b>	<b>240,045.84</b>	<b>22.6%</b>	<b>260,542.06</b>	<b>8.5%</b>	<b>290,962.29</b>	<b>11.7%</b>	<b>201,900.92</b>	<b>-30.6%</b>
January	56,069.00	64,114.21	14.3%	72,190.74	12.6%	80,100.88	11.0%	56,291.87	-30%
February	59,387.76	68,703.79	15.7%	74,900.88	9.0%	87,894.99	17%		
March	70,895.99	84,759.62	19.6%	93,890.99	11%	62,149.01	-34%		
<b>Quarter Total</b>	<b>186,352.75</b>	<b>217,577.62</b>	<b>16.8%</b>	<b>240,982.61</b>	<b>10.8%</b>	<b>230,144.88</b>	<b>-4.5%</b>		
April	83,161.39	92,168.35	10.8%	97,300.73	5.6%	39,870.97	-59%		
May	87,164.78	89,394.40	2.6%	92,104.89	3.0%	50,585.59	-45%		
June	76,624.86	85,776.47	11.9%	92,254.88	7.6%	56,142.85	-39%		
<b>Quarter Total</b>	<b>\$ 246,951.03</b>	<b>267,339.22</b>	<b>8.3%</b>	<b>281,660.50</b>	<b>5.4%</b>	<b>146,599.41</b>	<b>-48%</b>		
<b>Adjmts Penalties</b>									
<b>Penalties</b>									
<b>Year Total</b>	<b>\$ 825,422.45</b>	<b>\$ 948,193.46</b>	<b>14.9%</b>	<b>\$ 1,038,301.23</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>929,851.33</b>	<b>-10.4%</b>	<b>408,600.04</b>	

Total decrease in from onset of COVID  
March 20 to Jan 21 \$335,118.00



**Rowan County Tourism Development Authority**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As of February 28, 2021**

Accrual Basis

	<u>Feb 28, 21</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
1052 · F&M Bank-Operating 9224	13,205.05
1020 · Petty cash	16.83
1050 · First Bank checking #0436	17,312.00
1065 · NC Capital Mgmt Trust	10,005.44
1070 · First Bank MM account-4509	48,905.61
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<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	89,444.93
<b>Accounts Receivable</b>	
1201 · Accounts Receivable	123,018.29
	<hr/>
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	123,018.29
	<hr/>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	212,463.22
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
1503 · RAILWALK PAVILION	506,594.36
1501 · Land	250,604.00
1500 · Building	2,098,436.00
1505 · Computers	13,223.52
1510 · Furniture & fixtures	51,529.00
1515 · Office equipment	23,278.13
1516 · Trolley cars	319,880.00
1990 · Accumulated depreciation	-425,370.81
	<hr/>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	2,838,174.20
<b>Other Assets</b>	
1900 · Pension Asset	14,337.00
	<hr/>
<b>Total Other Assets</b>	14,337.00
	<hr/>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b><u><u>3,064,974.42</u></u></b>

**Rowan County Tourism Development Authority**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As of February 28, 2021**

Accrual Basis

	<u>Feb 28, 21</u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
2039 · United Way	-380.00
2033 · State withholding payable	120.00
2035 · Retirement withholding	184.63
2100 · Payroll Liabilities	<u>2,469.71</u>
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<u>2,394.34</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	2,394.34
<b>Long Term Liabilities</b>	
2105 · Interlocal Payable	350,000.00
2700 · Pension Deferrals	16,932.00
2500 · Compensated Absences	<u>12,590.38</u>
<b>Total Long Term Liabilities</b>	<u>379,522.38</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	381,916.72
<b>Equity</b>	
3050 · Investment in fixed assets	2,488,174.00
3100 · Fund balance	105,460.78
3105 · Restricted Fund Balance	79,555.00
Net Income	<u>9,867.92</u>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>2,683,057.70</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b><u><u>3,064,974.42</u></u></b>



**Rowan County Tourism Development Authority  
Statement of Activities**

Accrual Basis

February 2021

	Feb 21	Jul '20 - Feb 21
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
4070 · Misc and Ticket Sales	5.01	541.14
4060 · Holiday Caravan Parade	2,500.00	39,801.47
4010 · Occupancy taxes	61,833.02	508,148.99
4000 · Trolley Operations		
4210 · Trolley - Rentals	0.00	0.00
4000 · Trolley Operations - Other	300.00	5,133.20
<b>Total 4000 · Trolley Operations</b>	<b>300.00</b>	<b>5,133.20</b>
4300 · Gateway Building Revenue	5,632.98	83,544.13
4025 · Partner Services	15,000.00	56,123.10
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>85,271.01</b>	<b>693,292.03</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>85,271.01</b>	<b>693,292.03</b>
<b>Expense</b>		
6501 · Tourism Capital Projects	0.00	4,739.40
6510 · Holiday Caravan Parade Expense	451.25	59,066.87
6511 · Partner Service Expense	0.00	367.48
60001 · Marketing & Visitor Services		
6135 · Salisbury-Rowan CVB	69,095.35	529,420.07
6140 · Destination Mktg Programs/Ser	0.00	0.00
6465 · Trolley	59.74	1,114.55
6165 · Marketing Supplies & Equipment	332.33	439.89
6070 · Miscellaneous	191.92	886.22
60001 · Marketing & Visitor Services - Other	0.00	0.00
<b>Total 60001 · Marketing &amp; Visitor Services</b>	<b>69,679.34</b>	<b>531,860.73</b>
60002 · Operations & Administration		
6010 · RCTDA Operations Staff	3,076.92	22,238.69
6025 · Payroll taxes and unemployment	239.73	1,735.26
6030 · Retirement	315.08	2,350.90
6020 · Health Benefits	0.00	0.00

**Rowan County Tourism Development Authority  
Statement of Activities**

Accrual Basis

February 2021

	<u>Feb 21</u>	<u>Jul '20 - Feb 21</u>
6040 · Worker's comp insurance	0.00	886.00
6105 · Professional Services	2,600.00	10,370.00
6600 · Gateway Building Expenses	12,213.95	49,808.78
<b>Total 60002 · Operations &amp; Administration</b>	<u>18,445.68</u>	<u>87,389.63</u>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<u>88,576.27</u>	<u>683,424.11</u>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<u>-3,305.26</u>	<u>9,867.92</u>
<b>Net Income</b>	<u><u>-3,305.26</u></u>	<u><u>9,867.92</u></u>

**Rowan County Tourism Development Authority  
Profit & Loss Budget Performance  
July 2020 through June 2021**

This report reflects activity as of 3/11/2021.

	Jul '20 - Jun 21	Annual Budget	\$ Over Budget
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>			
<b>Income</b>			
4070 · Misc and Ticket Sales	541.14	0.00	541.14
4060 · Holiday Caravan Parade	39,801.47	30,000.00	9,801.47
4010 · Occupancy taxes	508,148.99	800,000.00	-291,851.01
4000 · Trolley Operations			
4215 · Trolley - Ridership/Tours	0.00	0.00	0.00
4210 · Trolley - Rentals	0.00	0.00	0.00
4000 · Trolley Operations - Other	5,433.20	1,000.00	4,433.20
<b>Total 4000 · Trolley Operations</b>	<b>5,433.20</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>	<b>4,433.20</b>
4300 · Gateway Building Revenue	85,050.16	110,000.00	-24,949.84
4025 · Partner Services	56,123.10	12,000.00	44,123.10
4045 · Other Revenue	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>695,098.06</b>	<b>953,000.00</b>	<b>-257,901.94</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>695,098.06</b>	<b>953,000.00</b>	<b>-257,901.94</b>
<b>Expense</b>			
6501 · Tourism Capital Projects	4,739.40	70,000.00	-65,260.60
6510 · Holiday Caravan Parade Expense	59,066.87	30,000.00	29,066.87
6511 · Partner Service Expense	367.48	10,000.00	-9,632.52
60001 · Marketing & Visitor Services			
6000 · Covid-19 Contingency	0.00	0.00	0.00
6135 · Salisbury-Rowan CVB	529,420.07	685,000.00	-155,579.93
6140 · Destination Mktg Programs/Ser			
6465 · Trolley	0.00	0.00	0.00
6165 · Marketing Supplies & Equipment	1,114.55	10,000.00	-8,885.45
6070 · Miscellaneous	439.89	4,000.00	-3,560.11
60001 · Marketing & Visitor Services - Other	886.22	3,700.00	-2,813.78
60001 · Marketing & Visitor Services	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total 60001 · Marketing &amp; Visitor Services</b>	<b>531,860.73</b>	<b>702,700.00</b>	<b>-170,839.27</b>
60002 · Operations & Administration			
6010 · RCTDA Operations Staff	23,777.15	30,000.00	-6,222.85
6025 · Payroll taxes and unemployment	1,850.97	2,300.00	-449.03
6030 · Retirement	2,350.80	4,000.00	-1,649.10
6020 · Health Benefits	0.00	0.00	0.00
6040 · Worker's comp Insurance	886.00	12,000.00	-11,114.00
6105 · Professional Services	10,370.00	12,000.00	-1,630.00
6600 · Gateway Building Expenses	49,808.78	80,000.00	-30,191.22
6145 · Office Postage	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total 60002 · Operations &amp; Administration</b>	<b>89,043.80</b>	<b>140,300.00</b>	<b>-51,256.20</b>
<b>6560 · Payroll Expenses</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>685,076.28</b>	<b>953,000.00</b>	<b>-267,923.72</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>10,019.78</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>10,019.78</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>10,019.78</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>10,019.78</b>