

VISIT ROWAN COUNTY

SALISBURY, NORTH CAROLINA

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ROWAN COUNTY TDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday, August 15, 2018: 12:00 pm, Gateway Building

CALLED MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Attending: Krista Osterweil, Whitney Wallace, Edward Norvell, Craig Pierce, Steve Hall, Tony Shaw

Not Attending: Kelly Alexander, Brian Miller, Amie Baudoin, Darrell Blackwelder,

TDA Staff: James Meacham, Tara Furr, Sarah Michalec, Allyson Teague

Approval of the Minutes

Motion: Craig Pierce made a motion for approval of the June and July 2018 minutes as presented.

Second: Edward Norvell

Motion: Approved

Financial Report

Meacham reported record growth has continued with the finish of fiscal year 2017-18 up 15%. June 2018 was a strong month compared to June 2017. May 2018 was up around 3% compared to May 2017. The new Hilton is on schedule for opening in the spring of 2019. NC Division of Tourism released reports that breaks up data by regions. The region as a whole for fiscal year 2017-2018 was up 5%, while Rowan is outpacing the region with a 15% fiscal year growth rate

Destination Marketing Report

Tara Furr reported that RCTDA has a new employee, Sarah Michalec who is coming to us from High Point University. Sarah is from Salisbury and will be serving as the new Destination Marketing Manager.

Furr reviewed the Destination Marketing report for July noting that Trolleys are continuing to do well. Furr stated that the Fall Winery Trolley Tours are coming up in September. The Fall Winery Tours will occur on Saturdays throughout September with the Trolley visiting two Rowan County wineries each Saturday.

Visitor Services has completed 220 fulfilled inquires year-to-date as well as distributed the new end of summer quarterly event calendar in the Kiosks and handled many package calls for Day out with Thomas over the summer.

Group sales are going well with the Little League group in July, the NC Main Street Conference booked for March of 2018 and with Charlotte being awarded the RNC in 2020.

Furr reported the committee approved a Tourism Marketing Investment application for the Brewbury Festival that will take place in September. Lodging support for out of town breweries and a package was approved for the festival.

TDA packages in place include: Brewbury Festival, Thomas and Polar Express. Overnight room sales are up for both Thomas and Polar Express compared to the same time period in 2017.

Scrooge Trolley tour tickets are on sale and Lee Street has added an additional night of tours each week for the 2018 season.

Furr reviewed the digital marketing statistics noting a large increase in website traffic in July. Furr stated that the all TDA digital marketing will transition from Mollie Ruf at Miller Davis to Sarah Michalec by October 1st. All digital platforms continued to show growth over the summer.

Arts & Ag continues to go well and is being pushed heavily on social media as well as Thomas and Polar Express. The Brew & Choo Festival had strong attendance and was well attended on August 11th with all the beer tasting train rides sold out (430 tickets). The Tomato Festival takes place this weekend in Woodleaf. TDA staff and the Arts & Ag information tent will be attending the festival.

Staff will be attending the NC Division of Tourism's mid-year update in September.

Tourism Capital Committee Report

Meacham reported on the revisions to the Railwalk Pavilion project, those plans have been approved by the inspections department at the County and we are able to proceed with the changes that the TDA board authorized.

Additional Business

Tara Furr continues to do a great job and has been promoted to Chief Marketing Officer with the marketing aspects of the organization under her control. Allyson Teague and Sarah Michalec now directly report to Furr.

Meacham noted that in regards to the TDA recommendations for staggered terms, the City Council and County Commission will take up those recommendations next week. Steve Hall and Edward Norvell moving off the TDA Board at the last meeting in June 2018.

There are three applicants to the TDA Board including Don Bringle, County lodging, Cyndi Greenwood, City lodging and Stephen Kidd, At-large seat. Those applicants will be coming up for consideration for appointment in September.

The CVB and TDA annual audits will occur in September with results coming to the board in January 2019.

This fall the initiative from last year's budget of the shuttle services between lodging properties, businesses, etc. will be starting up in the fall. Drivers are being identified and then will work on the transportation route.

Adjourn

Krista Osterweil thanked the members for attending today and the meeting adjourned at 12:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Lesley Pullium, RCTDA