



## ROWAN COUNTY TDA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Wednesday, December 13, 2017: 12 Noon, Gateway Building

### CALLED MEETING MINUTES

**Board Members Attending:** Kelly Alexander, Steve Hall, Craig Pierce, Whitney Wallace, Krista Osterweil, Edward Norvell, Amie Baudoin

**Not Attending:** Karen Alexander, Shannon Stewart-Hill, Darrell Blackwelder, Tony Shaw

**CVB Staff:** James Meacham, Lesley Pullium, Allyson Teague

#### I. RCTDA Call to Order

Krista Osterweil called the RCTDA to order at 12:05pm.

#### Approval of the Minutes

**Motion:** Craig Pierce made the motion for approval of the RCTDA November 2017 minutes.

**Second:** Edward Norvell

**Motion:** Approved

#### Financial & Occupancy Tax Report

James Meacham stated at the end of November there were just under \$170,000 in cash assets. \$91,000 were tax receivables from October. Year-to-date revenues and expenses are in line with where they should be.

September was the first month in which the new tax law went into effect. The final report information was positive, with an increase in funding due to a broader base.

October 2017 was the highest revenue collections month ever in Rowan County occupancy tax history, with a total of \$92,286. This was a 16.6% increase from last year. Some reasons for this increase are new properties, like the Holiday Inn Express, the overall market growth, and the restructuring of the occupancy tax law.

There have been follow-up conference calls and meetings with two firms regarding feasibility studies for new hotel opportunities. One is at Exit 74 and the other is a South Rowan project.

## **Destination Marketing Report**

Meacham shared the current destination marketing report. Tourism support investments total over \$11 million with around 3,000 room nights. The current incentive package, Polar Express, has generated 750 packages, with a total of 1,011 room nights to date. Kelly Alexander stated the growth of Polar Express has been tremendous and thanked everyone for their hard work. Over 52,000 tickets have been sold with two school day trips being added. "Wine About Winter" will be the next incentive package offered, with the event taking place on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Meacham informed the group the website continues to be successful with substantial growth of visitors each month. Most visitors are experiencing the website through mobile platforms, at 68%. Social media engagement is continuing to grow as well, including Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Holiday events have brought in several journalists from the surrounding region with the TDA supporting their stay. In addition, an undisclosed sports-tourism group will partner with the RCTDA in October - November of 2018 to bring in around 760 room nights. Bids are in from hoteliers and the group will select an option soon.

Trolleys have been steady with year-to-date ridership at 12,539 and over 300 room nights associated with those bookings. There have been around 60 advanced bookings scheduled for 2018. In addition, the Scrooge trolley tours are in full swing with up to 6 shows being sold out each night.

Also, 374 visitor inquiries were fulfilled last month. The year-to-date visitor inquiries equals 4,400.

## **Capital Committee**

Whitney Wallace updated the group on the Capital Committee. Several new committee members have been added, including Wes Thompson, past TDA Board Member and a tax assessor for Rowan County, Irene Sacks, Economic Developer for the Town of Kannapolis, Dan Peters, Past town manager for Granite Quarry and past TDA Board Member, Krista Osterweil, Todd Littleton, owner of City Tavern, and Shannon Stewart-Hill. For 2017-2018, \$52,500 is committed for the trolley system and the Rowan County Wayfinding Signage project is continuing. In addition, the committee approved a grant request from the Salisbury Rotary Club. This grant will support the addition of a World War I and World War II veteran memorial wall.

## **Local Tourism Industry**

Meacham shared that a new property, Hilton Home 2, has broken ground and construction will be underway soon. It is slated to open in the first quarter of 2019. The location is off Exit 75 on Interstate 85, across from the entrance to Rowan Cabarrus Community College.

## **II. Adjourn**

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