



**Salisbury-Rowan County Convention and Visitors Bureau Board of Directors Meeting
Wednesday, August 10, 2016, Noon, Gateway Building**

MEETING MINUTES

Board Members Attending: Krista Osterweil (**Board Chair**), Craig Pierce, Suzanne Jones, Barbara Perry, Vivian Hopkins, Ed Norvell, Whitney Wallace, Steve Hall, Thad Howell, Shannon-Stewart Hill, Darryl Blackwelder, Amie Baudoin and Karen Alexander

Tourism Staff: James Meacham, Lesley Pullium, Tara Ludwig, Lauren Litaker

Attending Guests, Liaisons, and Officials: Trinity Oaks Leadership Team

Not Attending: Kelly Alexander, Tony Shaw and Brian Miller

I. SRCVB Call to Order

Board Chair, Krista Osterweil called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the August meeting of the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Board of Directors.

The CVB welcomed and was honored to host representatives from Trinity Oaks in Salisbury. The team from Trinity Oaks provided the CVB Board a 2015 Community Service Report and the programs and activities conducted through Trinity Oaks.

After the report CVB Board members thanked Trinity Oaks for their service and for working to attract and support retirees to the community who in turn often support arts, culture and dining establishments.

Osterweil informed the Board of Directors that Suzanne Jones, Darryl Blackwelder and Vivian Hopkins were all reappointed to the Rowan County TDA and that Whitney Wallace and Amie Baudoin were appointed to a first term.

II. Approval of SRCVB Board Meeting Minutes

Osterweil called for a motion to consider approval of the July 2016 and June 2016 CVB Board meeting minutes.

Motion: Craig Pierce, motion to approve.

Second: Whitney Wallace.

Motion: Approved

III. Financial Report

James Meacham reported on the CVB financials through July 31, 2016. Meacham also reported to the CVB Board that the 2015-2016 independent audit work will begin in October. It was reported that total cash on hand was \$151,436 with \$35,013 in occupancy tax receivables as of July 31, 2016. Year to date revenues were \$65,270 with year to date expenses at \$57,897 for an increase in net assets of \$7,754.

Meacham reported that occupancy taxes in June 2016 were up 0.4% from June 2015, which is a strong number because June 2015 was up 25.7% from June 2014. Total Fiscal Year Occupancy Tax collections for 2015-2016 came in 5.4% ahead of 2014-2015 with a total of \$768,193.

It was also reported that the Salisbury Inn on Klumac road was recently purchased and will be renovated and upgraded to a Quality Inn Brand through Choice Hotels. This will positively impact the market both with increased occupancy and room rates.

IV. Tourism Master Plan Committee

Committee Chair Barbara Perry reported that the Master Plan Committee will hold its first quarterly meeting on September 28th and will have a combined meeting of the Master Plan committee and its subcommittees on September 28th. Perry also gave the Board a full update on the development of the Arts and Cultural Fund in partnership with the Salisbury Community Foundation. Perry thanked Commissioner Pierce for his time and guidance regarding working with the County Commissioners and for his commitment to the tourism board. Additionally, Perry reported on the successful dedication of the George Washington public art at the Rowan Museum and she thanked the CVB and its Capital Committee for funding the new art piece.

V. Tourism Capital Committee

James Meacham provided the Board an update on the Tourism Capital program. It was reported that NCDOT has approved roughly 98% of the phase 2 wayfinding signage system for Salisbury and tentative plans are for installation to occur towards the end of 2016 into early 2017.

Meacham reported that that the Rouzer Company accepted the CVB's offer to purchase and that phase 1 of the environmental study will begin this week.

VI. Rowan County Branding Initiative

The Board received an update that the Brand Story's development is in the creative phase and the creative committee will meet on August 23rd to make a final decision on the Brand Story and submit to the full Brand Taskforce for approval in September 2016.

It was also reported that the digital infrastructure upgrades with the CVB for hardware, software, technology, website, CRM, digital and social have gone very well so far. The only remaining component is the website and social media revamps. The County and the CVB are on a dual track for the redevelopment of both websites as new platforms to tell the brand story and to service visitors, citizens and businesses.

VII. Destination Marketing Committee

Committee Chair Thad Howell reported to the Board that the Destination Marketing Committee (DMC) recently streamlined its tourism partner support program into three areas focusing on support for overnight packages, lodging, and food and beverage with a maximum amount of \$3,000 per event or program. Howell reported that the committee recently approved a request for an event at the fairgrounds for up to \$1,000 in lodging support and for the development of an incentive package with October Tour and Historic Salisbury Foundation for up to \$1,000 in support.

CVB Director of Marketing Lauren Litaker went over the CVB's Destination Marketing Report for the months of June 2016 and July 2016. (Appendix A).

After the report James Meacham notified the Board that Tara has moved to a new position as Director of Public Relations and Communications and Lauren will be the Director of Marketing.

Tara will engage heavily in the telling of the Brand Story, partner communications, and public relations as effort to tell the destination's story through multiple media channels. Tara will also work closely with partners on adoption of the new Rowan County Brand.

Lauren will continue to oversee all Digital Marketing, but now will oversee the CVB's entire destination marketing strategy and program of work.

The CVB Board congratulated both on their new positions and roles.

The CVB Board had an open discussion regarding the proposed Welcome signs on I85 that were recently presented at a Board of Commissioners meeting. After discussions the CVB Board by consensus agreed that the concept of welcome signs on the interstate is a positive, but it should be tied into the new brand story. Since the proposed signage would be adopted by multiple platforms across the county, the Board expressed the desire to not rush the new signs in advance of the new brand. This will aid in helping to avoid a situation that creates brand confusion for the county

VIII. Adjourn

CVB Chair Krista Osterweil adjourned the meeting at 12:53pm.