

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at 10:00 A.M.
Visitors Bureau Office

Present: Cary Worthy
Kavita Patel
Matt Patel
Jessalynn Strauss

CVB Staff: Grace VandeVisser
Claire Davis
Brian Baker

Guest: Sara Danieleley-Kernodle

Financial Officer: Susan Evans

Moment of Silence

Grace VandeVisser, CVB, called the meeting to order and a moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Minutes

Grace asked if there were any additions or corrections to be made to the minutes of the December 18th meeting. Cary Worthy motioned to approve the minutes, Jessalynn Strauss seconded the motion; the minutes were unanimously approved.

Collection Report

Susan Evans presented the Financial Reports for July 1, 2019 through January 31, 2020. Total assets are \$1,485,083. Total revenue reported totals \$327,096. Total expenditures total \$298,269. Occupancy tax collections reported through January 31, 2020 totaled \$496,252, a 4.88% increase over the same period in 2019 with the TDA's share of \$320,925. Sales tax collections reported through January 31, 2020 total \$13,441,370 which is an 5.59% increase over the same period in 2019. Investments total \$584,127.

Visitor Bureau Updates

Susan asked for the renewal of the audit contract with Martin Starnes for the fiscal year 2020. Price quoted is \$6700. Cary Worthy motioned to approve the continuation of using Martin Starnes for the TDA Audit for fiscal year 2020. Jessalynn Strauss seconded. All were in favor.

Grace brought to the board's attention the Town of Haw River grant update. The Town of Haw River has started working on their project and are requesting to be reimbursed in this fiscal year. Cary made a motion to give funds early if they complete the project early. Kavita Patel seconded the motion. Grace stated that we will rewrite the grant application for next year to clarify when the funds will be available. All board members will have the opportunity to submit possible changes to the grant application.

Grace stated that Alamance Battleground did not submit their receipts by the deadline to be reimbursed for their project from last year. After discussion, the board agreed to accept the receipts from Alamance Battleground. Deadlines will be clarified in the new grant application that will be written.

Grace handed out a draft of the 2020-2021 TDA Budget. Grace asked that the board members read the budget over the course of the next month and submit changes as needed. The budget will be approved at the next board meeting. Grace discussed various advertising opportunities which are mentioned in the budget. Advertising includes a new campaign with Our State magazine that will focus on local Makers and Artists.

Grace mentioned several promotional video proposals she has received. A final decision will be made soon.

Grace stated that the website extranet is almost ready to go live. Partners will be able to access their listings and make changes as needed. This will help partners to be able to add information, coupons or specials to their own listing. Details about the extranet will be released at the Partner's meeting, which will give Partners a chance to ask questions and understand this new feature.

Grace spoke about the STS Tourism Marketing College, and the opportunity to offer a scholarship for a partner or community member to attend. The program is a 3 year commitment. The scholarship would include tuition, air fare and lodging. The board agreed to offer a scholarship to the program for a community member next year and thereafter.

Grace discussed the Passport Program she is creating. This program which will be county wide and will be designed to highlight the downtowns. There will be no cost, but local shops will have some requirements in order to participate. The goal is for the program to be a visitor tool, and to be able to track visitors and cross promote local businesses across the downtowns.

Grace announced that VisitNC has approached the CVB with two projects. One includes CycleNC and will take place during their statewide bike tours, which bring visitors into our area. The next project will take place in the spring. It will be a media tour with national writers highlighting agriculture between Saxapahaw, Durham and Hillsborough. Visit NC will be working with local farms in Alamance County in support of this.

Claire Davis gave a Visitor Services update including our online activity for 2019, as well as physical Visitor Guide and brochures that were mailed out. Grace stated that we ordered 8,000 copies of the Visitor Guide in September and we are almost out. Grace stated that the guidebook is being updated. A new piece is being considered that would include a post card in the center of the guidebook with a scavenger hunt for visitors. Grace presented the new museum piece that was created for the historical attractions in the area.

Grace stated that a board secretary needs to be decided. Kavita motioned for Jessalynn to be appointed the board secretary and Cary seconded. All were in favor.

Grace announced updates for the ACT/Studio One grant approval. Considerations were made to award them \$3500 for one year. Matt motioned to approve this amount, and Jessalynn seconded the motion. All were in favor. The Town of Gibsonville will be awarded \$2400 for their grant. Cary motioned to approve this amount and Jessalynn seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Grace updated the board on our new Visitor Center location search with our realtor, Bob Lewis. The salon next to Alamance Arts is interested in selling which makes this a possible location. Several other locations in Graham are also possibilities. Brian Baker updated the board on the possible function of the new location as a venue. If the additional 3 percent of the occupancy tax is collected a venue is a possible use of those funds. Brian stated that he has several consultants to consider regarding contracting their services for a study and this is something that the TDA could cover as it was something identified during the strategic planning session. Cary voiced concerns that there are already a lot of venues in the area. Brian responded that the study will also help see what is needed in the area.

Adjourn

Kavita Patel adjourned the meeting at 11:11 am.
Minutes submitted by Claire Davis.