

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
ALAMANCE COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 10:00 A.M.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom

Present:	Kavita Patel	CVB Staff:	Grace VandeVisser
	Jessalynn Strauss		Claire Davis
	Cary Worthy		Brian Baker
	Katie Dukeshire-Geoffrion	Guest:	Sara Danieleley-Kernodle
Absent:	Matt Patel	Financial Officer:	Susan Evans

Moment of Silence

Katie Dukeshire-Geoffrion, Chair, called the meeting to order and a moment of silence was observed.

Approval of Minutes

Katie asked if there were any additions or corrections to be made to the minutes of the May meeting. No updates were needed. Cary Worthy motioned for the minutes to be approved. Kavita Patel seconded. Minutes were unanimously approved.

Collection Report

Susan Evans presented the Financial Reports for July 1, 2019 through June 30, 2020. Total assets are \$1,452,023. Total revenue reported totals \$485,483. Total expenditures total \$489,716. Occupancy tax collections reported through May 2020 totaled \$737,721, a 15.03% decrease over the same period in 2019 with the TDA's share of \$477,083. Sales tax collections reported through April 30, 2020 total \$27,867,123 which is a 6.91% decrease over the same period in 2019. Investments total \$584,620.

Visitor Bureau Updates

Grace VandeVisser shared with the board a new music series promotion that the Alamance County Visitors Bureau is planning. With the musical chair series having to be cancelled, Grace stated that we have lost some outreach to our community and to the people that might travel in for those series. The plan is to wait until we are in Phase 3 and see if we can collaborate with some venues in the community. Phase 3 would need to be in process so that the facilities would be allowed to open. Grace spoke with Aaron Davis in Mebane and Emily Crowley with Brown Events and they supported the idea. Grace plans to reach out to Elon and Graham as well. The CVB would sponsor a concert in each community, preferably one that took place indoors. The concert would be a ticketed event but would be free for the first 50 people. The concert would be totally coordinated by the community partner hosting the event but the CVB would sponsor and utilize the event to give folks entertainment with good bands. This would continue to push our brand and help our partnership with the communities.

Grace shared the new Our State Cooperative ad which will come out mid-October. This cooperative ad is a holiday branded advertisement and is full right now, there is a waitlist for those still hoping to participate. Grace shared the sponsors who have currently signed up. They are The Town of Elon, Graham Historical Museum, Sal's Italian Restaurant, Acorn Inn., The Owl and Rabbit Gallery, Steve's Garden Market, Impulsive Creativity, Bigbee Coffee, Alamance Arts, and The Inn at Elon. The CVB is excited about this cooperative ad as it is expensive to get into Our State magazine and our local partners see a value in participating.

Grace shared our Instagram social media campaign update. The CVB has been hosting downtown takeovers for the past 18 months on Instagram. The new campaign will include new business lives, where we will feature new businesses that fall within the tourism category. We can also bring it to the website and it can live as a story on the blog. There have been several new businesses that have opened this summer including Whit's Custard, Sweet Grace Market, Things Above, and Beetle and Bees. We will also be building collections to highlight like-businesses or themes. For example, gather all the coffee shops in the county or trails, in an Instagram takeover.

Claire shared that our blog is now live on VisitAlamance.com. We have several blog posts up including our Year of the Woman posts which we are adding to twice monthly. Grace added that this blog was something we had to have built instead of a page under another element and there's a huge value in how things are tagged and shared. Debbie from Iron Gate Winery is already up for the Year of the Woman and Lashauna Austria at Kindred Seedlings Farm will be highlighted on Saturday.

Claire also shared Visitor Services statistics. In the last 28 days we have 2069 followers on Facebook. We gained 15 new followers this month and we had 701 engagements on our posts. For Twitter we have 72 followers and 7,000 impressions on our Twitter. On visitalamance.com our top pages for the month are events, followed by our parks and recreation pages. Thirdly, our curbside restaurants page and then the Visitor Explore page where guests can request a visitor guide. We've had 48 visitor guides requested this month with 58 inquiries total, to include e-newsletter and planners guide request. Grace added that a year ago for Facebook we had 1500 followers so we've had a positive gain. On Instagram we gained 78 followers this month. Engagement sessions were down on our website by 26% and the pages were down by 4%, almost the same from last year. We are starting to see that our referral sites and our sessions were up 25% from Facebook and Our State. We are seeing more visitors coming from these areas as they are looking for things to do as people get out more.

Grace thanked those who were able to get on the extranet training. She stated that she and Claire have another minimal training to go live on the extranet. Those that were on the call will be able to access the extranet in the next couple weeks.

Grace updated the board on the Year of the Woman campaign that was launched two weeks ago on social media. Our October ad in Our State magazine will highlight these women. We had seven of the ten ladies who are being featured available for a photo shoot. Grace stated that we are still tweaking this ad but are excited about it. The ad will point people to our blog post page and by October the blogs will be online.

Grace stated that she has received the suggestions sent through e-mail from a few of the board members for the grant applications. She added that those who haven't yet looked it over to please make suggestions through email or on the current copies you have and send over to Grace. Once suggestions are in, Grace will send over a copy to look over and then present the final copy to the board members.

Katie asked about a county STR report. Grace replied that the trend right now through the end of June 2020 was a decrease of 40% occupancy compared to the same period last year. April saw the greatest drop and in May we did see an uptick. Grace stated that hopefully we continue on that trajectory or at a minimum see no change.

Grace stated that the Senior Softball Championship was cancelled when we did not move into Phase 3.

Cary stated that Alamance Arts has their current exhibit open to the public and they will have a social distancing reception to celebrate the opening.

Adjourn

Katie adjourned the meeting at 10:35 am.
Minutes submitted by Claire Davis.

