

**Alamance County Tourism Development Authority**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**February 25, 2025**

**Alamance Arts, Graham, NC**

Board Present: Kavita Patel CVB: Grace VandeVisser  
Teena Koury Reed Northcott  
Katie Geoffrion  
Stephanie Williams

Recreation Staff: Jamie Merchel Financial: Susan Evans  
Guest: Jarrod Howell, GM-Courtyard by Marriott

**Call to Order**

Kavita Patel called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes**

Teena motioned to approve the December minutes, and Katie seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

**Collection Report**

Susan presented the Financial Reports as of January 31, 2025. The total fund balance is \$2,246,293. The total revenue received through January was \$513,841. Total expenditure was \$516,021. Total occupancy tax collections to date were \$745,722. Year-to-date collections are up 2.02%, investments totaled \$1,141,364, and sales tax revenues were \$18,593,778.

**Visitor Bureau Updates**

Grace provided a handout and recap of the Tourism Scholarship application, which was offered beginning in 2024. There is an available balance of \$4,951. The previous TDA Board approved funding to award a \$1,500 scholarship to a student pursuing a career in the tourism industry. The 2024 student awarded the scholarship is Zoe Dean, who attends Western Carolina and will be our guest at the Visit NC Conference in April. The board agreed to continue providing the scholarship in the amount of \$1,500 this year. The application will be sent to ABSS, home school groups, and ABEC. For 2025, the board will award one student a \$1,500 scholarship.

Grace spoke about ABSS's desire to change the school calendar and provided copies of a letter from the NC Travel & Tourism Coalition on behalf of the NC Restaurant and Lodging Association. They oppose the change due to the economic impact it may have on communities from vacation changes and staffing during peak times. House Bill 27 proposes to change the school calendar to be the same as community college in the county. ABSS plans to keep the traditional calendar the same this year and consider changing the school calendar for 2026 to align with the community college's calendar.

Grace provided the board with information she received from Dr. Robinson regarding the North Carolina Station Cities Consortium for Piedmont Service Equity. Dr. Robinson has volunteered to reinstate Burlington, High Point, and Salisbury on train schedules that had previously been eliminated. Dr. Robinson hopes to get these stops back on the schedule so people can have more time to plan day trips and commute. Grace asked the board if they would like to support Dr. Robinson's efforts to add these stops to the Amtrak Schedule. Stephanie made a motion to approve, and Kavita seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Grace reminded the board that the Strategic Planning meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 18<sup>th</sup> at the Alamance Chamber from 1-4 pm. This meeting will be with Chris Cavanaugh of Magellan Strategy Group.

Grace updated the board on America 250. She is preparing to submit the county grant with information from Snow Camp Outdoor Theatre, which Studio 1 runs. They want to create trail signage at the theater. It would be accessible anytime. It will highlight the story of the underground railroad around the theater. Alamance Battleground finalized their proposal of an America 250 kickoff event in the Spring of 2026 for inclusion in the grant application.

Grace updated the board on the Visit NC conference, which will be April 6<sup>th</sup>—8<sup>th</sup> in Hickory. Registration is still open if anyone would like to attend.

Grace updated the board on the tourism grant. It was removed from the website until the strategic plan is complete.

Grace provided updates and information for the area. Region 10 is coming up in May and will be held at the Burlington Athletic Stadium. Last weekend, the NC Fusion Soccer Tournament was held at Bryan Park and Springwood Park.

The county has been awarded the Tim Selinske PDGA US Masters Championship for 2027.

A bid is being developed to host the BMX Tarheel Nationals in 2026.

*Fishing University's* episode, filmed in Alamance County last Fall, will launch in the next few months. It is a 13-week series, with filming at Lake Mackintosh and Graham Mebane Lake. Filming also took place in Saxapahaw, Glencoe, Burlington, and Mebane. This will air during week nine of the series on the World Fishing Network and the Outdoor Channel.

Visit NC should complete our video creation soon. Currently working on voiceover selection.

Arts Around the Square will be returning to Graham on May 17.

National Tourism week is May 4<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup>. The TDA and John Guss from the Textile Heritage Museum will represent Alamance County at the Norlina and Dobson Welcome Center events.

The International Film Festival will hold a viewing on March 29<sup>th</sup> at the Haw River Ballroom. Grace will attend, providing information on the area to those attending the film festival.

In July, Reed will attend the Visitor Services Conference in Chicago.

Travel Zoo, through Visit NC, is offering our partners exclusive attractions pages, and the Animal Park and Haw River Canoe and Kayak have expressed interest in partnering.

The *Travels with Darley: Revolutionary Road Trip* series aired on the Explorer Channel and PBS in February. Included Alamance Battleground.

The meeting adjourned at 11:35 am.