

**Alamance County Tourism Development Authority**

**Board of Directors Meeting**

**February 27, 2024  
Fairfield Inn Mebane**

Present: Anderson Rathbun  
Kavita Patel  
Teena Koury

CVB: Grace VandeVisser  
Reed Northcott

Financial: Susan Evans

**Moment of Silence**

Anderson Rathbun called the meeting to order.

**Approval of Minutes**

Kavita motioned to approve the November minutes, and Teena seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

**Collection Report**

Susan presented the Financial Reports as of January 31, 2024. The total fund balance is \$2,048,065. Total revenue received was \$496,194. Total expenses to date were \$560,325. Occupancy tax collections were \$730,953. Investments totaled \$1,090,683. Sales tax revenues to date were \$18,585,448, an increase of 2.28%.

**Visitor Bureau Updates**

Grace provided a recap and update regarding the Maverick Sponsorship Fulfillment. TDA approved sponsoring the Craig Morgan concert and 2 smaller concerts, including Building 429 and Sanctus Real in the sponsorship package. Building 429 and Sanctus Real were scheduled for the Sunday after the Craig Morgan concert, along with a Christmas show with Jeremy Camp and New Song. A breakdown of what was and was not fulfilled was provided for the \$25,000 Sponsorship. Radio Ads are in the process of being fulfilled. It does not appear that the Wytheville Radio Station outlined in the sponsorship was purchased; there was no reporting on this purchase. The Burlington Sock Puppets fulfilled the 4 Google ads via Facebook and Instagram. The digital billboard ads were fulfilled. Print cannot be confirmed on any social media posts. Visit Alamance was not found to be tagged on any post. The banner was fulfilled on the day of the show. The Craig Morgan Cameo with Visit Alamance Promo was not fulfilled. Craig Morgan was supposed to receive a Burlington Sock Puppets Jersey with the Visit Alamance Logo, but this was not fulfilled. Branded Koozies could not be confirmed. The TDA was to get 50 tickets to distribute, and only 18 were received. The tickets sold for Craig Morgan totaled 1,686, and the tickets scanned at the gate were 1,295. The second-day headliner, Building 429, did not perform; the concert included only Sanctus Real. The total number of tickets sold is unknown. The TDA's \$5,000 in additional ads has not been used. The

Christmas concert was to include both Jeremy Camp and New Song. The total number of tickets sold is unknown. The promotional radio was fulfilled.

The grant applications for the City of Mebane, requesting \$10,000, and the Textile Heritage Museum, asking \$5,000, along with the Animal Parks 4th quarter grant. were approved unanimously. Anderson made a motion to approve these grants, and Kavita seconded.

Grace spoke about the Burke Manor Inn and the property's location shared in Alamance County and Guilford County. For our CVB to promote the inn, the Burke Manor Inn has been paying a voluntary, monthly marketing fee (2%) for many years. Any occupancy taxes collected by the inn are submitted to Guilford County. When the TDA rebranded around 2018, the board decided to include the town of Gibsonville in some of the marketing materials. The TDA has also provided the town with marketing grants. Grace asked the board if the Burke Manor Inn should continue to pay this monthly fee and the board agreed that it should, considering it is not an accommodation in Alamance County. Anderson suggested that the 2% paid should be placed in the Tourism scholarship program.

Grace distributed information on the scholarships provided to local schools, including ABSS schools, private schools, charter schools, and local homeschoolers organizations. Applications are due by April 1<sup>st</sup>. The board can review the applications during the April meeting.

Grace provided Guidebook updates and stated that the new Guidebooks will be printed in late spring this year. Grace asked if there were any new photos to update or add to the upcoming Guides and to submit them as soon as possible.

Grace provided an update on the budget. A draft budget was provided to the board. Grace stated that the empty categories in the budget will be updated by the county as it relates to salaries and insurance. There may be some minor adjustments to these figures. Grace mentioned that Visit NC and Our State advertising was left blank as well, as this information is forthcoming.

Anderson mentioned that Campus Alamance has an internship program. Elon pays for these interns. This may be a good resource if there is anything that these summer interns could help with such as with videos, photography, or any other areas. The program runs for 8 weeks.

Grace provided reports from Placer AI. Grace stated that she has Points of Interest listed in these reports. The report shows visitors via zip code, and these numbers also include residents. Placer AI is aware of this and is in the process of correcting this problem. These reports provide a snapshot of where people come from within the county for marketing purposes. Grace has an upcoming meeting with Graham Parks and Rec and Mebane Parks and Rec to provide information on using Placer AI. Grace also stated that she could use reports from Placer AI to give more detailed information about visitors and residents in the area, including during specific times and/or events.

Grace reported on ITI Digital updates (displays our events on the website). We have encountered several issues since onboarding with ITI Digital. Events are not searchable on our main page under the website's search option. They are only searchable within the ITI search bar. Currently, in order to address this, we must also enter events on the back end of our website, which utilize additional time in posting events to our webpage. Google Analytics was not reporting on engagement activity from this calendar, however, ITI Digital has had to create a dedicated GA report to resolve this issue. Grace also mentioned that we chose ITI due to events being served to us in a timely fashion. However, we are finding events and adding them to our calendar before they are served to us by ITI. We have received positive feedback on how events are displayed on our webpage using ITI Digital. Further inquiry will be made to resolve.

Alamance Arts has created a cultural arts and community calendar where artisans and museums can add upcoming events.

Grace reported on the highway signage. As of January 9<sup>th</sup>, the DOT said they would let us know when the new sign would be displayed.

In the calendar year 2023, there have been over 4000 media mentions and over 27,000 social mentions of the TDA across the county from our partners.

Website usage engagements on partner events are up 229% with more than 1 million actions taken on the website in 2023.

Current upcoming co-ops include the Inn at Elon. They are participating with us this month for the Small Surprises spotlight on WCHL; in May, we are doing a co-op for the newsletter "Let's Explore," which spotlights only Alamance County. This year's 4 partners were Green & McClure, Smokehouse at Steves, Tanners Wine Bar, and Owl and Rabbit.

We currently have digital and print with Northern Virginia Magazine, Our State Magazine, WCHL radio, and North Carolina Field and Family Magazine.

A bid was submitted for BMX Nationals to be held in 2025. A bid is in the works for the 2026 PGDGA.

"Window in Woods" is to begin filming in Alamance County this spring.

Visit NC Tourism conference is March 17-19<sup>th</sup>. Grace will be attending and has invited board members to participate if they are interested.

North Carolina Tourism Week is scheduled for May 19-25<sup>th</sup>. During Tourism Week, the TDA will be representing Alamance County in Dobson and Norlina.

Reed reported on New and Closed businesses in the county. Olivia's Place is a new Coffee Bar in the OV Yonder store in Graham. D&J's Martini Bar in Burlington has opened D&J's Bakes & Bites, offering a limited menu. Fat Man and his Food opened The Pig Pen in Buffalo Lanes in Mebane. Crush Superfoods is scheduled to open on Front Street in Burlington in mid-March. Burney's Desserts closed locations in Downtown Graham and Mebane. The Passion Restaurant in Graham is temporarily closed due to a fire. They are expected to reopen.

Anderson reported the Sock Puppets will be adding a new summer baseball league. The stadium will also open a restaurant/sports bar. This will open on weekends or for special events.

The meeting adjourned at 11:45 pm.