

Alamance County Tourism Development Authority

Board of Directors Meeting

September 24, 2024

Alamance Chamber - Burlington

Board Present: Kavita Patel
Anna Rooney
Stephanie Williams
Michael Hammond

CVB: Grace VandeVisser
Reed Northcott

Recreation Staff: Jamie Merchel

Financial: Susan Evans

Call to Order

Kavita Patel called the meeting to order.

Approval of Minutes

Kavita motioned to approve the August minutes, and Anna seconded. The meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

Collection Report

Susan presented the Financial Reports as of August 31, 2024. The total fund balance is \$2,203,549. Total revenue received was \$93,041. Total expenses to date were \$137,965. Occupancy tax collections for FY2025 are due in the preceding month (August). July's collections were \$134,920, up 26.27% from the previous year. Investments totaled \$1,120,757. Sales tax revenues to date were \$44,930,557.

Visitor Bureau Updates

Grace welcomed new board members, including Michael Hammond from the Courtyard by Marriott in Burlington and Stephanie Williams from the Alamance County Chamber of Commerce.

Grace mentioned that the Board needed to fill the Chair and Vice Chair positions. Anna motioned for Kavita to fill the Chair position and Stephanie to fill the Vice Chair position. Michael seconded. The motion carried.

Grace spoke about the grant application previously awarded to the City of Mebane for marketing and promotion, which was to be completed in July. A copy of a letter from Ashley Ownbey, Mebane Development Director, was provided to the board that stated that due to staffing issues, the deadline to submit receipts for grant reimbursement was not submitted within the 30 days outlined. Receipts were submitted in September instead of August. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Grace asked the board for approval to proceed with the \$10,000 reimbursement to the City of Mebane. Stephanie made a motion to approve, which Anna seconded. A motion was passed for reimbursement to the City of Mebane.

Grace discussed developing a new strategic plan for the next 3 or 5 years. The last strategic plan was in 2017, with some items completed in 2018 and some still ongoing. Stephanie mentioned that a consultant was previously brought in and it was aligned with the rebranding at the time. Grace asked for suggestions for contacts regarding completing the strategic plan. It was suggested that the TDA receive a minimum of two proposals. Grace will provide the board with a copy of the previous strategic plan for review.

Grace provided an update regarding Fishing University filming in Alamance County on October 25th -27th at Lake Macintosh, which will air in the spring of 2025 on the Outdoor Channel and other outdoor sites. The visitor's bureau will assist them with places to stay during the filming along with other necessary needs. Grace plans to contact schools and local club organizations in search of outdoor/recreation groups interested in being part of the educational portion to highlight outdoor careers.

Grace is completing the 2026-2027 PDGA bid for the four events the county can host, due October 1st. Alamance County previously hosted this event in 2023 at Cedarrock Park, and Grace mentioned that it was very successful for both Alamance County and Cedarrock Park. The PDGA will announce the awarded locations in early spring.

Grace reported that she attended the Great Trails State Conference held in Winston-Salem in September. Attendees included people from tourism, parks, and others who collaborated with the trails. October 19th will be Great State Trails Day, with many events across North Carolina. North Carolina is recognized as The Great Trails State.

Grace spoke about the Travels with Darley: Revolutionary Road Trip series which airs on PBS. Filming was completed earlier this month at the Alamance Battleground and will air in mid-January or February 2025 in collaboration with Visit NC and EDPNC. This show highlight's locations related to the Revolutionary War.

Grace provided a handout of the press release for the North Carolina Ale Trail by Rail. The Ale Trail website is live on the Brewers Guild and Visitors Bureau websites and will launch on October 1st, which coincides with the start of North Carolina Beer Month. Alamance County has six guild member breweries on the tour.

Grace reported that the NC Sports Association meeting will be held in North Wilkesboro on October 30th. Some other municipalities might represent the county in this meeting with the State. Grace will contact Tony Laws with the City of Burlington to see if they will participate in this meeting.

Grace provided a snapshot of the visitors from January to June 2024 from Placer AI. Alamance County has had 7.4 million visits with 1.4 million visitors. Overnight travelers were 464,000 and 1.2 million overnight stays. The top states for overnight visitors were NC, VA, NY, GA, MD, SC, NJ, FL, PA, and MA.

Grace reported that we completed filming for inclusion in the Spectrum program *Wish You Were Here*, expected to air in Greensboro, Winston Salem, and Raleigh. Digital marketing this month included editorials with Travel, Taste and Tour and Carolina Travel. We will also have editorial on Saxapahaw in the upcoming Business North Carolina magazine. This will be highlighted under their NC Portrait and how Saxapahaw has changed our community from a visitor standpoint.

The meeting adjourned at 11:55 am.