

WILLIAMSBURG TOURISM COUNCIL MEETING
Williamsburg, Virginia
January 14, 2025
Finance Meeting Minutes

A meeting convened at 11:00 a.m. on January 14, 2025, in the 1st-floor conference area at 421 N. Boundary Street.

Tourism Council Members Present:

TREASURER Doug Pons, Mayor, City of Williamsburg
PRESIDENT Ruth Larson, Chair, James City County Board of Supervisors

Staff Members Present:

Ed Harris, CEO
David Turner, Finance Director
Lorine Ottarson, Accountant

I. Call to order

- Doug Pons called the meeting to order
- December 10, 2024, finance meeting minutes were acknowledged

II. November 2024 Activity

November Activity

- November 2024 revenues were \$1.4M – over budget by \$14K
 - Sales tax receipts (58.1-603.2) totaled \$1.2M, under budget by \$42K
 - Transient tax receipts totaled \$163K, over budget by \$33K
 - Maintenance of Effort funds totaled \$0K, in line with budget
 - Other revenue was \$35K, over budget by \$23K on interest received from the state
- November 2024 expenses were \$1.2M – over budget by \$7K
 - Destination Marketing expenses were \$976K, over budget by \$216K, primarily related to spending for digital advertising (over budget by \$99K) and social media (over budget by \$124K).
 - Sales activities were \$79K, under budget by \$118K
 - Activity in event sponsorships is occurring, but the invoicing and payout of sponsorships is only just beginning, resulting in \$150K of savings for November. These savings were partially offset by an increase in spending on Sports sales activities (over budget by \$35K).
 - Total administrative expenses were \$173K, under budget by \$92K
 - Staffing costs were \$145K, under budget by \$27K on a delay in hiring
 - Other administrative expenses were \$28K, under budget by \$665K. Office renovation expense was budgeted to be \$50K for November; however, the project is currently in the planning and design stage.

Fiscal YTD Activity

- Fiscal 2025 revenues were \$7.5M – under budget by \$65K
 - Sales tax receipts (58.1-603.2) totaled \$6.6M, under budget by \$108K
 - Transient tax receipts totaled \$770K, under budget by \$14K
 - Maintenance of Effort funds totaled \$63K, in line with budget
 - Other revenue was \$104K, over budget by \$56K, primarily on interest income from the state

- Fiscal 2025 expenses were \$5.2M – under budget by \$416K
 - Destination Marketing expenses were \$4.0M, over budget by \$69K
 - Marketing spend is \$69K over budget, primarily on internal marketing activity (favorable \$69K) related to paid media spends (over budget by \$44K) and other marketing-related activities (over budget by \$20K)
 - Sales activities were \$325K, under budget by \$257K
 - Invoicing and payout of sponsorships is only just beginning, resulting in \$205K of savings against the budget. The majority of the remaining favorability to budget is from the International Sales area that is under budget by \$41K on the timing of sales events and conferences.
 - Total administrative expenses were \$852K, under budget by \$228K
 - Staffing costs were \$723K, under budget by \$25K
 - Other administrative expenses were \$129K, under budget by \$202K due to delays in office renovations (favorable \$148K), travel (favorable \$11K), training (favorable \$8K), and office equipment purchases (favorable \$21K)

Cash on Hand Slide

- The Tourism Council has \$6.4 million in the bank for operations
 - Cash on Hand for Operations on November 30 is under budget by \$329K, with accounts payable liabilities of \$1.3M, leaving free Cash on Hand for Operations at \$5.1M

Tax Slides

Reminder: The tax slides show the month the actual activity took place, not when the payment was received. This month is October, a one-month lag to the financial reports.

- Sales Tax (58.1-603.2)
 - October sales tax increased by \$66K or 5.5% year-over-year
 - \$1.3M in 2024 versus \$1.2M in 2023
 - The three-month moving average decreased by \$61K or -1.6% versus the same period in 2023
 - YTD sales tax receipts are up \$506K or 4.3% versus the same period in 2023

- Transient Tax
 - October transient tax increased by \$7K or 5.3% year-over-year
 - \$142K in 2024 versus \$135K in 2023
 - The three-month moving average increased by \$67K or 17.6% versus the same period in 2023
 - YTD tax receipts are up \$81K or 6.0% versus the same period in 2023

III. Additional Information

- The auditors have not completed the 2024 audit and will not be ready to present at the upcoming January board meeting

IV. Next Finance Meeting

- The next Finance meeting will be on February 11, 2025

V. Adjournment

- Doug Pons adjourned the meeting