

Rock Hill/York County CVB Board of Commissioners Meeting
York County/Rock Hill Airport
June 26, 2024 | 8:00 am

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

- **Board:** David Angel, Drew Corrigan, Porter Gable, Laurie Helms, Natalie Hoekstra, Chip Hutchison, Brown Simpson, and Mark VanSickle; Elizabeth Bowers - Zoom
- **Staff:** Allison Cleveland, Andy Clinton, Kaylin Dettman, Logan Elrod, and Cortney Peterson

CALL TO ORDER

Chip Hutchison called the meeting to order at 8:02am.

APPROVAL OF BOARD MINUTES

Brown Simpson made a motion to approve the April meeting minutes; Laurie Helms seconded the motion. All were in favor.

APPROVAL OF TREASURER'S REPORT

Chip Hutchison provided the report in Shea Maple's absence. He shared that all revenue had come in except for the anticipated \$50,000 from the STAR Grant, and that one more payroll would hit for June, as well as \$10,000 in credit card expenses. The net operating income is anticipated to land between \$130,000 and \$140,000. Following conversation regarding kiosk installation, David Angel made the motion to dedicate a portion of the net operating income for the Kingsley kiosk installation costs; Porter Gable seconded the motion and all were in favor. The anticipated cost is \$20,000 for the new, permanent structure.

Chip continued in noting the First Citizens' account balances of just under \$700,000 in Savings and just under \$600,000 in Operating. David Angel made the motion to keep \$250,000 in the Operating account and transfer the remaining balance into Savings. Porter Gable seconded the motion and all were in favor. This will be completed once checks clear for FY24. The Money Market interest grew from \$2,800 during the last fiscal year to almost \$25,000 this year due to the interest rate when switching from South State Bank to First Citizens.

Andy referenced doing better than expected with the Destination Marketing Fee Program and through Municipality & Event Partnerships, which allowed for purchasing the truck, Placer AI (mobile location software with municipality partnerships), a revamped website with interactive map, Bike SC, and a partnership with Winthrop Athletics.

David Angel made a motion to approve the report as presented; Brown Simpson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

PREFERRED HOTEL PROGRAM

Cortney Peterson shared that \$1,215,789.46 had been invoiced in Destination Marketing Fee collections, compared to FY23 amount of \$1,186,140.63. Similarly, \$1,066,311.97 was collected this FY compared to last year's \$1,031,516.75. She noted \$23,000 being past due, with one hotel over 90 days past due. The month of May is forecasted at \$131,287. The Holiday Inn at Galleria Blvd. is under new ownership and management and is a new hotel partner. Cortney noted Occupancy of 62.4%, Average Daily Rate of \$101.30, and Rev PAR of \$63.20 for the month, as well as increases YOY. July is forecasted to be a strong month, and conversations are taking place regarding the addition of hotels. There have been market surveys sent by hotel brands to Rock Hill hotels regarding the potential of a hotel in York. She concluded in sharing that hotel site visits for the year have been completed and board members are encouraged to participate in future visits.

Chip asked about the room pick-up for BMX and short-term rental usage. Cortney shared that there were 1500 room nights reported through the housing bureau, and conversations have taken place about partnerships with short-term rentals.

CEO REPORT

Andy pointed out a few meetings and events relating to organization engagement that included attending Tourism Day in Columbia with SCPRT during National Travel & Tourism Week, our Taste of Tourism event with strong County Council and management attendance, followed by a powerful presentation that translated to support and funding increase. He continued by recapping some significant events, with the largest impact being an estimated 30 million in economic impact from BMX Worlds, also noting Rivals Football Camp held at Nation Ford High School.

Kaylin touched on social media highlights including a 19.4% increase from FY23 for total followers across all platforms, hitting 80,000 total followers across all platforms for FY24. She also referenced 2 million total website page views for FY24, which exceeded the initial 1 million goal and reflected an increase of 124% YOY. Kaylin noted the website revamp that will take months to complete and referenced the reels and videos that are performing well. Logan Elrod expanded on increased engagement through short-form video content and noted a 30% increase in Instagram followers YOY and a high ratio of shares.

Andy continued by reporting on FY24 Goals and working diligently to secure increased funding for the next fiscal year from York County, the municipalities, and the Destination Marketing Fee Program. He was happy to report that we have support from the county and all goals were met/exceeded relating to organization sustainability and growth. Andy reiterated far exceeding the marketing goals and touched on sales goals relating to the SCPRT Star Grant, bids, and events. He concluded by sharing an update on the overarching destination branding and working with local graphic designers to come up with color scheme, logo, and overall branding message for both the overarching brand as well as a potential new Visit York County brand.

APPROVAL OF FY25 BUDGET

Andy reviewed the proposed budget and noted line items with variances from FY24 as a result of the \$200,000 increase in total revenue. More is being spent in staff development for resumed educational opportunities and conference attendance. There is an increase in memberships and subscriptions, but this is due to consolidating multiple codes. He referenced Placer AI that was discussed earlier in the meeting and noted funding support coming from municipality partnerships for this new software. More money is being put into the website, our strongest asset, with a component that allows people to book hotels directly. An estimated \$20,000 is allotted for the installation of the Downtown Fort Mill kiosk. Andy also noted a decrease that was reflective of the \$120,000 that was dedicated to BMX Worlds that won't be returning in FY25. The Rock Hill Parks, Recreation & Tourism partnership is now percentage-based to reflect the growth of the Destination Marketing Fee Program. A switch was made in marketing agencies to allow for communication and PR support. Andy also noted the ability to increase advertising opportunities with the additional revenue. There is also an increase in hospitality meetings and trainings for the hotels with educational components.

David Angel made a motion to approve the budget as presented, and Brown Simpson seconded. While there was no longer an in-person quorum, Natalie Hoekstra had reviewed prior and voiced her approval via phone.

NEW BUSINESS

Andy shared that a position for Destination Services Manager is posted and being added for a connector between events and marketing. He shared that County Council had their first reading on moving our board meetings to a quarterly frequency, and the next meeting is scheduled for August 28th at 8am but may change.

ADJOURNMENT

David Angel made the motion to adjourn at 9:08am.

Chip encouraged everyone to be influencers to help make connections.