

MINUTES

NASH COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

January 16, 2018

The Nash County Tourism Development Authority met January 16, 2018 at 2:00 p.m. at Country Inn & Suites in Rocky Mount, N.C. Board members present were Robbie Davis, Chairman and Jerry Patel, Faye Beddingfield, Samantha Myszelow, Retho Williams, Tracey Jackson, Ernestine Neal, Lydia Davis, Dan Daly, Bill Lehnes, George Griffin and Wayne Murphy.

Also present were Donna Wood, Nash County Finance Officer and guests Dr. Dewey Clark, President and Linda Jones, Grant Writer, from North Carolina Wesleyan College.

Chairman Davis welcomed all members and guests.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order then asked for approval of the minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting. Motion was made by Wayne Murphy and seconded by Bill Lehnes and duly passed that the minutes of May 16, 2017 be approved.

Chairman Davis then called Finance Officer Donna Wood to review the June 30, 2017 Audit Report prepared by Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co out of Whiteville, NC. Donna informed the board that TDA received an Unmodified Opinion and net position increased \$187,432 primarily due to an increase in Occupancy tax collections from Hurricane Matthew in FY2017. The increase was based on stays in the hotels from FEMA employees North Carolina coastal residence as well as local displaced residence staying in hotels for extended period from October 2016 through February 2017. The Fund Balance as of June 30, 2017 is \$883,854. Restricted fund balance as of June 30, 2017 represents 118% of total General Fund expenditures compared to prior year of 92%.

Chairman Davis asked the Board to accept the audit as presented. A motion for acceptance of the June 30, 2017 audit was made by Faye Beddingfield and seconded by Wayne Murphy and duly accepted by a unanimous vote.

Chairman Davis then called upon Finance Officer Donna Wood to present the financial information for the current fiscal year to date. TDA occupancy tax collections from July through November 2017 totaled \$374,527.70 compared to \$397,452.43 from July through November 2016. This is a decrease of approximately 5.77% from prior year due primarily to the occupancy as a result of Hurricane Matthew collected in FY2017 during this same time period.

Ms. Wood reported that expenditures through December 31, 2017 were \$365,792.09 however, this only includes five months of utility payments consistent with prior year. In addition, TDA still has an outstanding credit from the agreement with the City of Rocky Mount on the Winstead Avenue extension lighting and the Nashville 58/64 Lighting is not currently in place. It was also noted that, Economic Development, and Nashville Blooming Festival Funding were not included in the expenditures through December 2017.

Under Old/New Business, Chairman Davis wanted to remind the TDA Board of the Fund Balance Policy that was approved in a prior year by the Board and asked Ms. Wood to provide the Board with the information.

Ms. Wood indicated that according to minutes from May 19, 2011 the TDA Board unanimously passed the fund balance policy to not allow the fund balance not to drop below 25% of expenditures or the dollar amount not to fall below \$150,000.

In other Old/New Business, Chairman Davis informed the Board that the Business Development Recruiter position, in which the TDA Board budgeted in FY2017-2018 to fund half of the salary and benefits along with Nash County, was filled by Susan Phelps. She was hired by the County on 11/1/17 and previously had a position with the City of Rocky Mount.

Chairman Davis opened discussion with the Board regarding a new lease for Travel and Tourism for a location at the Rocky Mount Mill instead of at the train station. He indicated that this move would allow better access to Travel and Tourism and based on the location would attract more interest in the area and tourist options. Chairman Davis noted that he had been working with the Travel and Tourism Director, Barbara Greene and Capital Broadcasting for a lease agreement. Through discussion with Capital Broadcasting and insurance requirements, it was determined that the lease should be in Tourism Development Authority name and that the

funding would come from the Travel and Tourism budgeted funds. Chairman Davis opened discussion on the lease with the following questions regarding term and office set-up. The Chairman indicated that it was a 5 year renewable lease with a 2% annual escalation. The space will have 3 offices and a board room and there is also the possibility that the upstairs could be leased by another tenant. The requested occupancy date is July 2018, however move in will most likely be the end of the third quarter (September 2018).

After discussion, a motion to approve and allow TDA to be the lessee with Travel and Tourism paying through budgeted funds was made by Dan Daly seconded by Faye Beddingfield and duly passed by a unanimous vote.

Chairman Davis noted that he had received a grant match funding request from Dr. Dewey Clark, President of North Carolina Wesleyan College (NCWC). Chairman Davis asked Dr. Clark to present this directly to the Board.

Dr. Clark and Ms. Linda Jones indicated that NCWC received notice of grant funding of \$50,000 from Longleaf Foundation for a walking trail project that is anticipated to cost approximately \$160,000. They presented to the Board information and a map of the area regarding the walking trail around the NCWC campus which would not only open opportunity for NCWC to host cross country events and 5K events but would be available to the public. NCWC has 24-hour security on campus and the trail would also have security stands throughout the trail. The completion of the trail is anticipated in the Fall of 2018.

The grant is anticipated to be received in February 2018 for \$50,000 but requires a \$50,000 matching partner and a \$60,000 match from NCWC for labor and supplies. Dr. Clark's request was that the TDA Board consider being the matching partner. Dr. Clark and Ms. Jones thanked the Board for consideration and left the meeting.

Chairman Davis opened the floor for discussion of the funding request. Bill Lehnes made a motion to support the full grant funding to be the matching partner but to fund \$25,000 in FY2018 and the remaining \$25,000 match in FY2019 through budget appropriation. Retho Williams seconded the motion. The motion was duly passed with a unanimous vote.

Donna Wood then presented a request to amend the budget with an appropriation of fund balance to cover the NCWC funding request. Bill Lehnes made a motion to approve the budget amendment with a second from George Griffin. The motion was duly passed with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Davis opened the floor for other discussion.

1. The Board requested that a standard funding request form be prepared and provided to agencies to complete for funding requests to TDA. Ms. Wood indicated that she would prepare a form and allow the Board to review in order to be available for FY2019 funding requests.

2. Samantha Myszelow indicated that Gateway Blvd is in desperate need of repaving and repair due to numerous potholes and asked who was responsible. Chairman Davis indicated that she should contact Brad Kerr at the City of Rocky Mount.

3. Chairman Davis indicated he would follow-up with Tara Nelson and Zack Dorovic to determine status as a member of the TDA Board or to receive Board resignation letters if they were no longer available due to change of jobs.

Chairman Davis requested the Board to provide recommendations of hoteliers who may be interested and available to potentially fill these too board positions.

4. Jerry Patel opened the discussion of training for Hotels and staff regarding human trafficking. Chairman Davis asked the members who are also on the Travel and Tourism Board (Jerry Patel, Faye Beddingfield and Samantha Myszelow) to consider options for this training and to provide the TDA Board with a potential game plan for availability and cost to all hotels for this important training.

Chairman Davis noted that the next TDA meeting will be held in May 2018.

Chairman Davis called for the meeting to be adjourned, Wayne Murphy made a motion to adjourn, second by Samantha Myszelow. The meeting was adjourned.



Donna Wood
Finance Director