

MINUTES

NASH COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

January 17, 2017

The Nash County Tourism Development Authority met on January 17, 2017 at 2:00 p.m. at Country Inn & Suites in Rocky Mount, N.C. Present were Robbie Davis, Chairman and members Jerry Patel, Faye Beddingfield, Samantha Myszelow, Retho Williams, Tara Nelson, Lydia Davis and Wayne Murphy.

Also present were Donna Wood, Nash County Finance Officer and Vince Durham, Nash County Attorney.

Chairman Davis welcomed all members.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order then asked for approval of the minutes of the May 17, 2016 meeting. Motion was made by Faye Beddingfield and seconded by Lydia Davis and duly passed that the minutes of May 17, 2016 be approved.

Chairman Davis asked the committee if they had any questions or concerns regarding email voting specifically for the most recent request on August 31, 2016 sent to the Committee regarding funding for NC Wesleyan College Football game funding request. The funding request passed with a 11 to 0 approval, with 4 members not responding. As a follow-up to the email vote Wayne Murphy made a motion to accept the budget amendment for the request to fund NC Wesleyan College \$10,000 with a second from Samantha Myszelow. The motion passed.

Chairman Davis then called upon Finance Officer Donna Wood to review the June 30, 2016 Audit Report. Donna informed the board that TDA received an Unmodified Opinion and net position increased \$50,484 primarily due to an increase in Occupancy tax collections in FY2016. The Fund Balance as of June 30, 2016 is \$696,422. Restricted fund balance as of June 30, 2016 represents 84% of total General Fund expenditures compared to prior year of 91%.

Donna Wood then informed the Board that a Request for Proposal (RFP) for audit services had been sent out for the FY16-17 audit. It is recommended by members of the Nash County Board of Commissioners that every three to five years the County seek proposals on contracts to ensure that the services being received are best quality and price. The County and TDA audits are proposed together in the RFP. A decision by the County on the audit services is expected in March 2017.

Chairman Davis then called upon Finance Officer Donna Wood to present the financial information. TDA occupancy tax collections from July through November 2016 totaled \$396,920.95 compared to \$349,545.35 from July through November 2015. This is an increase over prior year of approximately 13.5%.

Ms. Wood reported that expenditures through December 31, 2016 were \$365,339.34 however, this only included five months of utility payments and noted that utility expenditures are down from prior year for the first 5 months. In addition, TDA still has an outstanding credit of \$6,882.77 from the agreement with the City of Rocky Mount on the Winstead Ave. Extension lighting. It was also noted that, Economic Development, Tackle the Tar and Nashville Blooming Festival Funding were not included in the expenditures through December 2016.

Under Old/New Business, Chairman Davis informed the Board that Travel and Tourism Director, Barbara Waskowiak, was out of town and would not be able to present but handouts were made available to all TDA Board members from the Director providing a summary update of Travel and Tourism activities. In addition, the Travel and Tourism video, which is available on facebook at Destination Rocky Mount, North Carolina under videos was also presented for the TDA Board to view.

Commissioner Davis called upon, Vince Durham, County Attorney to give an update regarding the agreement and legislation on the 2 cent occupancy tax for the City of Rocky Mount. According to Mr. Durham, the Nash County Board of Commissioners approved a resolution dated September 10, 2001, from the 2001 session, House Bill 583 effective November 1, 2001, to levy an additional 2 cent occupancy to be remitted to the City of Rocky Mount for tourism related expenditures in Nash County that have been specifically approved by

the Nash County Tourism Development Authority. Currently the 2 cent occupancy tax is being used to pay debt service on the Imperial Center and the Rocky Mount Sports Complex. These two projects were approved by the Nash County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) at the January 21, 2003 TDA Board Meeting.

The City of Rocky Mount refinanced the Imperial Centre debt in June 2014 considering the original debt structure was based on tax credit that ended after 7 years. The refinance put the facility in the City's name with a 15 year loan for \$9.7 M at 2.55% which according to Amy Staton, City of Rocky Mount Finance Director, was a favorable change. The final maturity is scheduled for June 14, 2028. The Sports Complex loan was refinanced in May 2014 in which the interest rate was reduced from 4.16% to 1.62%. The final maturity is June 2019.

Chairman Davis indicated that the review of use of the occupancy tax funds by the City of Rocky Mount came up as a result of the refinancing which was unknown by the TDA Board until almost a year after the refinancing. The Chairman suggested that since the TDA Board must approve the use of the 2 cent occupancy tax for the City of Rocky Mount, that a letter be sent to the City of Rocky Mount requesting that any change in funding for items currently approved for use and plans for future use of funds, specifically after the Sports Complex debt is paid in 2019, to provide advance notice to the TDA Board to allow the TDA Board time to approve use in advance in order to follow guidelines from the House Bill. Tara Nelson made a motion that the Chairman draft a letter to the City of Rocky Mount requesting this information (to be reviewed by the Board prior to submitting), a second by Lydia Davis, the motion was approved.

Chairman Davis informed the TDA Board that the Nash County Board of Commissioners at the January 11, 2017 meeting, had approved to move forward with a Business Recruiter for Nash County to provide a better avenue for commercial/retail businesses to the Nash County area, outside of Rocky Mount considering the City has a recruiter. The Chairman asked the Board to consider funding half of the cost, approximately \$30K to \$35K per year, for the recruiter as tourism related expenses. Chairman Davis indicated that although the TDA Board would not have direct responsibility for hiring, he anticipated that the TDA Board would be active

in formulating the job description. TDA Board members acknowledged agreement for the funding and Chairman Davis indicated that he would take this back to the Board of Commissioners to move forward with discussion on the position which is anticipated to be effective July 1, 2017.

Chairman Davis provided the TDA Board an update on the Goldrock Area indicating that the Nash County Board of Commissioners were moving forward with a two phase plan to 1). Clean-up area and 2) Provide long range plan for the area. Chairman Davis indicated that meetings are being put in place with the Sheriff's office – who has already been in contact with State ALE Nuisance and Abatement teams, DSS, Health, Fire Marshalls, and the City of Rocky Mount to begin action on the area that is an embarrassment to Nash County and travel and tourism. Chairman Davis indicated that with the Industries that are close by now and the intermodal connection coming to the area, we will need this area to represent Nash County with a positive image and safe for visitors and employees.

Chairman Davis introduced and welcomed the two new members of the Board, Wayne Murphy, with Southern Bank, who was appointed July 5, 2016 and Samantha Myszelow with Marriott Operations, who was appointed August 1, 2016.

Chairman Davis noted that the next TDA meeting will be held in May 2017.

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



Donna Wood
Finance Director