

MINUTES
NASH COUNTY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
January 11, 2022

The Nash County Tourism Development Authority met January 11, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. at the Nash County Claude Mayo Administrative Building in Nashville, NC. Present were Robbie Davis, Chairman, and members Judy Winstead, Kay Mitchell, Retho Williams, George Griffin, Lisa Ferguson, Wayne Murphy, Percell Kelly, and Carole Reda.

Also present were Donna Wood, Nash County Finance Officer; Mary Edwards, Nash County Finance Technician; and guest Susan Phelps, Nash County Retail Economic Developer.

Chairman Davis welcomed all members and guests.

Chairman Davis called the meeting to order and asked for approval of the minutes of the May 11, 2021 meeting. Motion was made by Wayne Murphy, seconded by Kay Mitchell and duly passed for approval.

Chairman Davis then called upon Finance Officer, Donna Wood, to review the June 30, 2021 Audit Report prepared by Thompson, Price, Scott, Adams & Co, P.A. out of Whiteville, NC. Ms. Wood informed the board that TDA received a CLEAN AUDIT opinion for Fiscal Year 2021 and net position increased by \$211,077. The Fund Balance as of June 30, 2021 is \$1,406,985. Restricted fund balance as of June 30, 2021 represents 167.73% of total General Fund expenditures compared to prior year of 123%.

Chairman Davis asked the Board to accept the audit as presented. A motion for acceptance of the June 30, 2021 audit was made by Kay Mitchell, seconded by Lisa Ferguson and duly passed for acceptance.

Chairman Davis again called upon Finance, Officer Donna Wood, to present the financial information. Ms. Wood stated the TDA occupancy tax collections from July through November 2021 totaled \$523,718.62 compared to \$382,101.04 from July through November 2020. This is an increase of approximately 37.06% from prior year resulting from the lifting of travel restrictions due to the Coronavirus Pandemic. All transient occupancy tax collections are current through November 2021.

Donna Wood reported the following agencies had submitted the Fiscal Year 2022 Outside Agency Funding – Mid-year reports attached to the agenda for review were from Nash Arts \$10,000, Top Gun \$7,500, Spring Hope Pumpkin Festival \$15,000, and Viking Classic-ECSU \$40,000.

Chairman Davis notified the Board of a funding request he received via email from Turner Votipka for a private venue for a Wedding Event Center on Halifax Road in Rocky Mount. Kay Mitchell stated funding to private entities could reduce available funding to small towns who may be unaware of potential funding for events. Retho Williams asked if the Board had previously received a request from a private entity, Chairman Davis responded TDA has not previously funded a private entity. Carole Reda stated other private entities may begin to ask for funding if this is funded and a precedent is set. The board indicated they would be willing to hear Mr. Votipka's fund request but would not commit to a funding decision at this point.

Finance Officer, Donna Wood, announced that FY2023 Funding Applications would be sent out mid-February/return mid-April in preparation for the May meeting. If anyone is aware of a tourist related event/organization interested in applying for funding for FY2023 notify her or Mary Edwards so a copy of the application may be forwarded to them.

Business Recruitment update for Nash County:

The Business Recruitment update for Nash County was presented by Retail Economic Developer, Susan Phelps. The Nash County Economic Development 2021 Year In Review included highlights of areas of new jobs, new investment, increase in new single-family residential developments, notable announcements, retail updates, and the WRAL Digital Solutions Year 1 Campaign results.

In Barbara's Green's absence, Susan Phelps, gave an update on Nash County's Travel & Tourism tools utilized to promote the area on the website explorenashcounty.com. The new website's number of new users raised from 12,000 annually to 91,000. Traditional and digital ads reach over 3.5 million visitors each month (360-mile area around Nash County as a drive market).

Old Business:

City of Rocky Mount 2 cent Occupancy Tax Update

Nash County is currently funding 1% of the collections quarterly with the remaining 1% held in reserve until the City of Rocky Mount Mayor presents a Tourism Promotion request to the TDA Board for approval for use of funds.

New Business:

Chairman Davis requested additional information from Travel & Tourism's economic impact from the Viking Classic held in September 2021. Travel & Tourism's Viking Classic's event impact summary reported an economic impact in business sales of \$396,726 which is approximately 10% return on net investment, and approximately 481 hotel room nights were mostly for Friday and Saturday nights. This information was requested to assist the TDA Board in future funding requests.

Chairman Davis discussed touring the Tennis Facility at Wesleyan College and the tour was tentatively scheduled for January 20th at 2:00 pm.

Chairman Davis identified that the following board member terms are set to expire April 30, 2022: Retho Williams, George Griffin, Lisa Ferguson, Mark Cone, Brittany Parker, and Dan Daly. All are eligible for reappointment except Dan Daly who has served three consecutive three-year terms. Retho Williams, George Griffin, Lisa Ferguson agreed to reappointment. Chairman Davis indicated he will contact Mark Cone and Brittany Parker to see if they are willing to serve another three-year term. Chairman Davis also indicated that he will begin searching for a replacement for Dan Daly and asked the Board to notify him if they are aware of someone interested in serving on the Board.

Other Discussion:

The next TDA meeting will be held on May 10, at 2:00 p.m. at the Nash County Claude Mayo Administrative Building in Nashville, NC.

There being no other business, Chairman Davis called for a motion to adjourn. Wayne Murphy made a motion, seconded by George Griffin. The meeting was adjourned by approval of the board.

Mary Edwards
Finance Technician