

Brunswick County Tourism Development Authority

March 27, 2018

Meeting Minutes

In Attendance: Maryann Azzato, Bill Bernier, Glenda Browning, Bonnie Cox, Dana Fisher, Melaney Robbins, Buddy Rudd, Whitney Sauls and Eddie Walters. **Absent:** Jerry Helms. **Also in Attendance:** Mitzi York, Executive Director

I. Call to Order:

Bonnie Cox called to order the TDA's regular monthly meeting at the Brunswick County TDA office at 712 Village Rd SW in Shallotte at 3:00 pm.

II. Public Comment:

No one requested to speak during the public comment period.

III. Approval of February 27, 2018 Board Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Maryann Azzato and seconded by Buddy Rudd to approve the minutes of the February 27, 2018 meeting. The motion was passed unanimously.

IV. Executive Director's Report:

Mitzi York reviewed the financial report for February 2018. Occupancy tax revenues received during February in the amount of \$25,729.95 were collected for December and other months. Revenues for February totaled \$25,473.29. The largest expenditures for the month were media costs, agency fees, and postage. Total expenditures for the month were \$42,288.61 plus \$58,112.27 in accruals. Our ending bank balance for February was \$892,988.85. Mitzi York also reviewed the occupancy tax report. She reported that we received additional November and December funds since the last Board meeting. She pointed that we are still expecting January funds from one of the towns. Currently, we are 4.86% up over this point last year. Several Board members said bookings look good for Easter. Buddy Rudd motioned to approve the financial report, seconded by Maryann Azzato. The motion passed unanimously.

Mitzi York reported that a writer was here from Our State magazine for the upcoming photo essay. The article should be somewhere between 14 and 20 pages. We have a full page co-op ad in the June issue. Within 24 hours of the announcement of the co-op, all six space were sold. Southport will also have a full page co-op ad in the June issue. Mitzi York reported that in February Ocean Isle Beach was in Trips to Discover article "4 Best Romantic Getaways in North Carolina for Valentine's Day". The Southport Spring Festival was included in Atlanta Journal Constitution's online calendar. The Southport Christmas Tour of Homes was included in Our State's online story "2018 Tours of Historic Homes & Gardens Across North Carolina". Carolina Country Living included Days at the

Docks, Oak Islands Lighthouse Run, Southport Spring Festival, and the Badwater Cape Fear Marathon in its online calendar. Spectrum News included the Badwater Marathon, Days at the Docks, First Friday Gallery Walks, Howl at the Moon, Southport Spring Festival, and Oak Island Lighthouse Run in its online calendar. Total circulation/UVM was 13,906,637 with an earned media value of \$24,733.32 and earned editorial value of \$74,199.96. In March Chapel Hill Magazine and Durham Magazine will include Bald Head Island in an article. The writer from Columbia Metropolitan Magazine visited and the story on Southport should be in the May issue. The beaches will also be mentioned in the article. Southport made TripAdvisor's list of 16 places you need to visit in 2018. USA Today 10Best has a contest for 10 best beaches in North Carolina including Oak Island, Holden Beach, Sunset Beach and Bald Head Island. Oak Island is currently number 2 and Holden Beach number 3. Southern Living announced Ocean Isle Beach was named Best Tiny Town in the South in the April issue. In the March issue of Southern Living a house in The Cottages at Ocean Isle Beach made the cover. The 4th of July Festival will be featured in an upcoming issue of AAA Go. VisitNC's New York media mission will be the last week in April.

Mitzi York reminded the Board that she is looking to fill the Database Coordinator/Marketing Assistant position that will be vacated this summer. Eddie Walters suggested using Indeed.

Mitzi York reviewed the **Resolution Awarding the Audit Contract** for FY 2017-18 in the amount of \$5000 to Martin Starnes & Associates. Dana Fisher pointed out that the fee in the resolution is less than the amount on the agenda. Mitzi York advised that we received a revised contract after the agenda was prepared. Glenda Browning motioned to approve the resolution, seconded by Melaney Robbins. The motion was unanimously approved.

VI. Marketing Committee Report

Mitzi York reviewed the Marketing Reports for February. In February, we received 26,954 leads/request for guides including downloads and views. There were 35,644 unique visitors to our website and 38,324 views of the partner pages and from there 11,330 visits to our partners' websites. February media included the Alabama Media Group banners, Interfuse/Connect Golf campaign, Interfuse/Connect, Madden Media, MMSI, NC Travel Guide, On-going SEM, Travel Spike Golf, Travel Spike Leisure, Pandora, NCC TV, Spectrum TV, YouTube Search, TV Search Campaign and Golf Display, and VisitNC.com. Leads year-to-date total 69,403 compared to 73,200 for the same time period last year. The top states were North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

Mitzi York reviewed the Google analytics reports for February. We had 35,644 unique visitors in January and 102,008 page views on the website. The bounce rate was 47%. Comparing that to February of last year, the number of users was up about 23%. The bounce rate was up about 12%. Google organic search was the

number one source of traffic to the website followed by our cost per click program, Pandora, direct traffic, VisitNC and our email program. Mitzi York advised that while Pandora is doing better than our fall campaign, we did pause the campaign as the cost per lead is still high. We are going to look if we can leverage the State's new TV campaign. The Advance campaign is driving traffic to the site but people are not spending much time on the site. Our home page was the top page viewed followed by the request a guide page. The top states were North Carolina, Ohio and Georgia. Charlotte was our top metro area followed by Raleigh, Wilmington and Atlanta.

VII. Old Business:

No old business.

VIII. New Business:

There was a brief discussion about TV coverage regarding a family that died in Mexico in a rent by owner property. There was a brief discussion about upcoming bridge repair.

Mitzi York advised that we reduced the number of restaurants on VisitNC per their new policy. VisitNC put some of the restaurants on hold and asked for more justification for them to be listed. We have advised the partners so that they may add to their listing.

IX. Adjourn:

Buddy Rudd motioned to adjourn, seconded by Whitney Sauls. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:44 pm.

NEXT MEETING: April 24, 2018 at 3:00 pm at the TDA's offices in the Red Apple Building, 712 Village Rd SW Unit 105 in Shallotte.