

MINUTES
MOORESVILLE TRAVEL AND TOURISM AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021
9:00 AM VICTORY LANES BOWLING CENTER, MOORESVILLE, NC

Present: Amit Govindji, Mitch Abraham, Grant Hutcheson, Deborah Hockett, Leah Mitcham, Cathy Carpenter

Guests: Judy Randall, Rachel Jones, Tony Bassat, Christine Patterson,

Amit Govindji called the meeting to order at 9:07 AM. A quorum was present.

1. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Govindji called for approval of the minutes.

Mitch Abraham made a motion that the minutes from the March 4 meeting be approved. Grant Hutcheson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

2. Executive Director's Report:

The CVB assisted 49 visitors, more than double from last month, had 67 visitor guide requests or downloads, distributed 840 visitor guides and provided goody bags for the Chamber golf event. This is the first time since the pandemic started that we have received requests for visitor guides from the NC Welcome Centers.

Leah reported occupancy for February was 36% down 39.9% from last year, ADR was \$79.35 down 21.6% and Revenue was down 43.7%.* Data from STR

STR reported for week ending March 20 U.S. occupancy was at 58.9% and weekend occupancy was even stronger at 71.7%. Both were the highest in the country since March 2020.

Leah reported the CVB website's key performance indicators for the month of March showed 4,686 users, an increase of 58% from last month and 8,787 pageviews, an increase of 61% from last month. Bounce rate was 69%, a decrease of 9.53% from last month, which means people stayed on the website longer. Our goal completion rate was 11.4% an increase of 121%. Goals are 3+ pages per session, events page view, hotels page view and visitor guide view/download. The Facebook/Instagram ad campaign had 168,000 impressions, the weddings campaign had 2,121 clicks and a

CTR of 3.40% and the plan your summer vacation campaign had 1,606 clicks and a CTR of 1.52%.

Leah reported the CVB website has changed the home page of the website to include Get A Taste of Mooresville and Fun Day Trips from Mooresville. The Plan Your Vacation Now has been changed to Dreaming of an Escape.

Bound reported targeted visitors made up 46% of website traffic February 15-March 15. There was a greater percentage of visitors seeing targeted content and website engagement from targeted visitors continued to increase.

There were more impressions on the Visitor Guide modal this month and CTR continues to sit above 8%.

The hotel fly-ins had more overall impressions this month with an average CTR of 1.5%.

The taste of Mooresville fly-in added last month had great engagement with over a 2% CTR.

The weddings guide fly-in continues to perform well with a 2.73% CTR this month.

The plan your vacation had a 1.3% CTR which was slightly lower than last month but still higher than expected.

Leah reported research from Destination Analysts for Visit NC shows the pandemic has changed travelers' outlook on life and travel. Despite feeling safer about travel and more positive about the safety of travel, many Americans report they expect long-term impacts from the pandemic on their travel. Nearly 60% say that the pandemic has changed their outlook on life in general and 20 percent say that it has changed their outlook significantly. As a result nearly half of Americans agree that they will put more effort into visiting bucket-list destinations in the next few years. 73% say they will be more safety-conscious when traveling in the future. The pandemic has also had significant changes to destination preferences. Travelers are much more interested in destinations with outdoor activities, such as beaches, national parks, regional parks, rural destinations and mountain destinations. More than half of American travelers say that, as a result of the pandemic, they will be visiting more outdoor-oriented destinations during the next few years.

Leah reported Visit NC has a new program entitled Drive Thru Vacations and Lazy 5 Ranch is featured for the Piedmont.

Leah reported she met with a volleyball organization to discuss hosting tournaments.

Leah reported the CVB will offer a promotion for spring and summer called Mooresville Escape. The promotion offers specials from participating attractions when visitors book a hotel stay.

Leah reported Perfect Game's Coastal Select Championships baseball tournament had 10 teams with an estimated room demand of 20 and total estimated economic impact of \$26,408. The girls softball Spring Kickoff had 16 teams with an estimated room demand of 6 and total estimated economic impact of \$29,802. Perfect Game is a national organization and this is the first year hosting their tournaments.

Leah reported Teammate Basketball's Hoops State Heat had 39 teams, all from NC, with an estimated room demand of 17 and total estimated economic impact of \$65,585. With only 10 days to host, they did a great job pulling this tournament together.

Leah reported NCAAU's Battle on Tobacco Road had 36 teams from NC, SC, VA and one from Arkansas. The estimated room demand was 161 and total estimated economic impact was \$127,674.

Leah reported the Charlotte Independence's Race City Classic had 278 total teams and 74 teams playing at Mazeppa Park. The estimated room demand was 153 and total estimated economic impact was \$184,413. T2C Sports reported 344 room nights in Mooresville.

Leads were sent for Teammate Basketball Hoops State Heat, NCAAU Battle on Tobacco Road, Limitless Sportz One Day and The Nationals, USSSA Baseball Season, PBA Junior Regional, NCAAU State Championship, NCAAU Mooresville Fastbreak, Teammate Basketball State Championship

Leah reported the Carolina JVA Volleyball tournament scheduled for May 1-2 moved to Rock Hill and Carolina Courts in Concord.

Leah reported the Top Gun Flag Football East Coast Regionals scheduled for April 4-5 moved to Nashville.

Leah reported upcoming events: NC Bowling Congress' Youth Championships April 17-18, April 24-25, May 1-2; NCAAU Mooresville Fast Break Basketball Tournament April 24-25, NCAAU Girls State Championship April 30-May 2, GoPro Motorplex Stars Championship Series April 9-11; Perfect Game Baseball April 10-11, USSSA Super NIT April 10-11, Top Gun Softball Spring National Championships April 17-18, ISSA East Coast Regionals April 30-May 2, NCAAU State Championships April 30-May 2

National Travel and Tourism Week is May 2-8.

3. Director of Sales Report:

Cathy reported the new Mooresville Brew HA-HA Tour has been scheduled for April 24. The event has sold 12 tickets and expect the numbers to increase after the Easter holiday. Cathy presented the poster that is on display in breweries and taphouses.

Cathy reported she met with Charlotte Special Events on March 2 to discuss the upcoming winery tour April 17, brew tour April 24 and distillery tour May 8. All of these tours are posted on the CVB website. Look for information on walking food tours and more events coming soon.

Cathy reported the new Hoptown Brewing opened on March 22 and the ribbon cutting was held March 24.

Cathy reported she is working with Wobbly Butt Brewery on a new Ale Trail brochure. She met with all the brewery owners to get their input for the brochure so it will be ready for distribution by summer.

Cathy reported she is working with an elite tours company to create executive board retreats and incorporate race teams and unique venues. The retreats are mostly one-day tours but could bring an overnight tour in the future.

Cathy reported Cvent leads have picked up for small meetings, some meetings going to Charlotte, some still getting cancelled even after re-booking but at least we are seeing leads being generated.

Cathy reported Cvent leads sent out in March were NORM CLT, CHANCE Engineering Seminar, CDISC 2021 Staff Retreat and DPP Dealer Meeting.

Cathy reported the TIAA Meeting Planner FAM tour has re-booked for April 14 and another meeting planner is looking to tour in early June.

4. Financial Report:

Deborah Hockett reported cash in the bank is \$742,427. Revenue from occupancy tax for January and February was \$88,120. Total revenue for July-March is \$363,765 for occupancy tax, \$18,000 for a grant and \$133 for interest and other income for a total of \$381,898. Total expenses for July-March are \$555,508. Expenditures exceed revenue by \$173,610. The ratio of expenses to revenue is 44% revenue and 39.7% expenses.

Deborah Hockett reported Cobb, Ezekiel, Loy and Company submitted an audit contract for the FY2021 audit. The audit fee is \$7350 and includes a \$300 increase from FY2020.

Mitch Abraham made a motion to accept the proposal from Cobb, Ezekiel, Loy and Company for the audit contract for FY2021.

Grant Hutcheson seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously and the audit contract was approved.

5. Randall Travel Marketing

Judy Randall with Randall Travel Marketing reviewed the lodging market mix submitted by the hotels. Judy gave a summary of the visitor research. Visitors like the location, Lake Norman, friendly people, shopping, and dining. Visitors dislike traffic/construction, crowds, nothing. Visitors want improvements in traffic flow, access to Lake Norman, village-style shopping, dining, entertainment district, continue developing Downtown including evening amenities and lakefront resort.

Based on research and cumulative work, Randall Travel Marketing recommends the following initiatives: improving traffic flow as the people who visited frequently were vocal about the traffic, lakefront facility for weddings/small meetings that is attached or very close to lodging, continued development of Downtown Mooresville with an emphasis on nighttime and continue to expand daytime appeal, continue to develop sports visitation, determine underserved sports niches and potential development of facilities.

Recommendations for strategic plan are to determine new products to be developed over the next 5-10 years, define product, identify potential customers, and conduct specific research to build to exact expectations.

6. Old Business

Deborah Hockett stated the potential buyer for the property on Mazeppa Road backed out and asked if the Board wanted to request a proposal from another buyer.

Amit Govindji stated the Board wanted to hold onto the property for now.

7. New Business

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Mitcham
Executive Director