

MINUTES
MOORESVILLE TRAVEL AND TOURISM AUTHORITY
THURSDAY, JANUARY 7, 2021
9:00 AM VICTORY LANES BOWLING CENTER, MOORESVILLE, NC

Present: Ron Johnson, Eddie Dingler, Amit Govindji, Mitch Abraham, Grant Hutcheson, Deborah Hockett, Leah Mitcham, Cathy Carpenter

Guests: Tony Bassat, Beth Compton, Debbie Furr, Deanna Groeger, Beau Falgout, Jacob Urbanek

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 9:04 AM. A quorum was present.

1. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the minutes.

Mitch Abraham made a motion that the minutes from the November 5 meeting be approved.

Amit Govindji seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the minutes from the November 5 closed session.

Mitch Abraham made a motion that the minutes from the November 5 closed session be approved.

Eddie Dingler seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

Mr. Johnson called for approval of the minutes from the November 16 called meeting.

Amit Govindji made a motion that the minutes from the November 16 called meeting be approved.

Eddie Dingler seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously and the minutes were approved.

2. Mr. Johnson stated he needed a motion to make an adjustment to the agenda for closed session.

Mitch Abraham made a motion to make an adjustment to the agenda for closed session.

Amit Govindji seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Executive Director's Report:

The CVB assisted 43 visitors and had 73 visitor guide requests. We provided goody bags for 3 events.

Leah reported occupancy for October was 44.2% down 37% and November was 38% down 38.6%. ADR for October was \$86.20 down 17.4% and November was \$82.97, down 15.3%. Revenue was down 38.5% in October and 41.4% in November. The YTD occupancy is 38.4%, down 41.5%.* *Data from STR

STR reports U.S. occupancy for the week ending December 26 fell to its lowest weekly level since May. Occupancy was 32.5%, down 33% from the same time last year, ADR was \$92.08 down 28.8%, and RevPar was \$29.94, down 52.3%.

Leah reported the CVB website for the month of November had 4,859 users with 92.2% being new and 6,967 pageviews with top user locations coming from Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina, Georgia and Washington DC.

Leah reported the CVB website for the month of December had 1,695 with 92.4% being new and 3,279 pageviews with top user locations coming from North Carolina, Georgia, Virginia, California and Oregon.

Leah reported the marketing co-op credit campaign with Visit NC analytics which ran in October and November.

Leah reported the Bound targeted marketing from October 15-November 15 showed significant increase in visitors seeing targeted content. Over 50% of visitors saw either the fly-in, modal or personalized homepage components. The modal targeted to specific ad visitors had double the CTR and best engagement is from Paid Social visitors. The new modal targeting visitors specifically entering the homepage had a 1% CTR and helped lower the homepage bounce rate. The Visitor Guide modal CTR increased from the previous month. The Fun Things To Do personalization had just shy of a 2% CTR. There were increased page views for the visitor guide, hotel page and getaway page. From November 15-December 15 over 60% of visitors saw either the fly-in, modal or personalized homepage components. The modal targeted to specific ad visitors continues to see over a 3% CTR. The Visitor Guide modal CTR increased from last month and was much closer to the summer average. The Fun Things To Do personalization had over a 2% CTR for this month. While we had less total visitors to the website this month, the targeted visitor guide and hotel page view conversion rates increased.

Leah reported the CVB was awarded a NC Tourism Recovery Grant in November. The grant was used to produce a video to showcase meeting venues following COVID-19 guidelines to host safe meetings, sponsorship with Meeting Planners International Carolinas Chapter to promote safe meetings venues, and attendance at two virtual trade shows through Visit NC and Northstar Meetings Group.

Leah reported she met with KPAC Gymnastics about their March event and toured the Langtree Charter gym.

Leah reported she worked with the tournament directors and submitted the 2021 tournament dates to Park and Recreation. Indoor tournaments currently are not being held due to the Governor's Executive Order.

Leah reported Big Shots moved their February basketball tournament to Rock Hill.

Leah reported she is working with Insider Exposure to find another location for their February basketball tournament.

Leah reported Charlotte Independence Soccer Club has moved the Independence Showcase tournament to January 22-24 and combined it with the Independence Friendlies tournament.

Leah reported the Charlotte Independence Fall Classic soccer tournament November 14-15 and 21-22 had a total 153 teams, down 79 teams from last year. The estimated economic impact was \$119,051.

Leah reported the Professional Bowling Association's PBA50 held at Victory Lanes November 27-29 had 69 participants and an estimated economic impact of \$50,974 and estimated room demand of 56.

Leads were sent for Major League Fishing's Phoenix BFL Tournament.

Leah reported upcoming events: January 22-24 Charlotte Independence Soccer's Independence Showcase, February 13 Queen City Kayak Bass Fishing Tournament, February 19-21 Independent School National Championship, February 21 Major League Fishing's Phoenix BFL Tournament

Leah congratulated Maya Hotels on the opening of the Aloft Hotel on December 3.

4. Director of Sales Report:

Cathy reported she met with Kim Atkins from the Downtown Commission and CLT Special Events President, Peter Cuocolo, to discuss brew tours and walking foodie tours in Mooresville. The first brew tour will be February 13.

Cathy reported the CVB applied for and received a Grant through the North Carolina Tourism Recovery Act.

Cathy reported part of the grant funds were used to make a video of meeting venues following COVID guidelines to host meetings safely. (Video was shown.)

Cathy reported part of the grant funds was used for two virtual trade shows held by Visit NC and NorthStar Meetings Group in conjunction with the Count on Me NC Safe Meetings Campaign on November 17th and December 14th. Cathy reported there were 18 virtual appointments completed on November 17 and 16 virtual appoints on December 14 with meeting planners. The new video was sent to the planners.

Cathy reported part of the grant funds was used for a safe meetings campaign on multiple Meeting Planners International platforms to enhance our reach and visibility dramatically to groups and meeting planners.

Cathy reported she continues to work on the Meeting Planners International Programing Committee for upcoming virtual spark sessions and meetings with education sessions to stay involved and visible within the Association.

Cathy reported the AENC Annual Trade Show December 9th at the Raleigh Convention Center was cancelled due to the on-going pandemic. The CVB will continue with our sponsorship commitment and be involved in 2021.

Cathy reported the Rendezvous South Annual Convention for March 1-3 was moved to May 10-12 this year. We updated our ad in the drive-in meetings publication.

5. Financial Report:

Mr. Johnson reported the unaudited financials for July-January were \$153,154.67 for revenue, \$138,540.37 for personnel, \$87,742.64 for operations and \$169,429.67 for marketing and promotions.

Grant Hutcheson asked if the budget had been adjusted to account for COVID.

Deborah Hockett reported the budget was adjusted to account for COVID.

Amit Govindji reported the CVB was running lean and doing a good job with expenses.

6. Mazeppa Park Artificial Turf Project:

Ron stated Park and Recreation has submitted a proposal for the artificial turf project at Mazeppa Park.

Beau Falgout reported the total cost of the project is \$2,270,000 to replace the two existing artificial turf fields and replace two grass fields with artificial turf.

Beau stated the confirmed funding is \$1,850,000

Town of Mooresville: \$750,000

Charlotte Independence Soccer Club: \$750,000 (\$350,000 up front; \$400,000 over 10 years (\$40,000 annually)

Visit Mooresville: \$175,000 upfront; \$175,000 year two

Beau stated to fund this project, Visit Mooresville can help by making a \$400,000 investment over 10 years (\$40,000 annually)

Grant Hutcheson stated we need to expand the fields.

Mitch Abraham commented rain impacted the November tournament.

Mr. Johnson reported when the Town cancels tournaments at the last minute, the hotels lose room nights.

Ron stated the CVB would need to get approval from the LGC to make sure it fits within the guidelines.

Mitch Abraham stated when the first proposal came out for the project, the Town was going to give \$1.3 million dollars.

Beau Falgout stated the original ask was \$350,000 and \$80,000 for ten years.

Beau Falgout stated Charlotte Independence wants to move forward.

Amit Govindji asked if Charlotte Independence would be able to raise their commitment.

Beau Falgout stated not without more control.

Deborah Hockett stated according to statute, if they do not fund it, it is not legal.

Deborah Hockett stated in the first agreement with the Town, the \$120,000 contribution was to assist with the debt for Mazeppa Park soccer fields.

Ron stated the CVB paid for the turf fields which included interest.

Eddie Dinger asked if there was a rush with the project? He stated he did not think people were not for the project but with the pandemic we need to be responsible.

Beau Falgout stated the only rush is to try to minimize the tournament interruption and start the project in July.

Deborah Hockett stated the Town has not funded this project.

Grant Hutcheson asked if CI was going to take the project somewhere else.

Beau Falgout stated they want to move forward and start the project in July.

Ron stated with the COVID situation we need to be fiscally responsible.

Eddie Dinger made a motion to revisit the proposal in July.

Amit Govindji seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

7. Mr. Johnson stated the Board needs to approve the 2021 Board meeting dates.

Eddie Dinger made a motion to approve the 2021 Board meeting dates.

Amit Govindji seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

8. New Business

Mr. Johnson introduced Beau Falgout with the Town of Mooresville.

Beau Falgout stated the Town Board asked staff to review Boards and Commissions. The recommendation was made to expand the CVB Board after reviewing comparable Boards in the area.

Beau reviewed the proposal from the Town Board to expand the CVB Board as follows:

Mooresville South Iredell Chamber Representative	1
Hotel Motel Owner/Operator/Representative	3
Mooresville Town Board	1
Sites/Attractions*	2
At Large (not any of the above)	1
Alternate Vacation Rental Owner/Operator	1
*Sites and Attractions, Event/Meeting Space Representative, Restaurant, Business that attracts visitors	

Beau stated other suggested changes included:

1. Giving the Mooresville Town Board the authority to raise the tax from 4% with a not to exceed 6%
2. Change the promotions to capital expenditure ratio from 75%/25% to 66.66%/33.33% to allow flexibility for increased capital expenditures should the CVB Board desire to do so.
3. Restrict Board reappointments to 2 successive 2-year terms (mandated 1 year off for reentry)
4. Change rotation of appointments so 4 go off one year and 5 the next (increased continuity)

Amit Govindji stated he was concerned with the rental owners being on the Board. He stated the County collects the tax.

Beau Falgout asked if the CVB collected tax from vacation rentals.

Mitch Abraham stated most vacation rentals are in the County so that tax goes to Statesville.

Ron Johnson stated when the CVB went to Raleigh in 2001 to increase the tax, they were going to ask for 5% but Raleigh wanted to leave 2% for the County.

Mitch Abraham stated this CVB Board is not comparable with the other Boards. He asked if the term limits were for all the Boards or just the CVB?

Beau Falgout stated that was in discussion.

Beau Falgout stated the Town Board is not wanting to raise the tax to 6% now. They are just asking for the authority to raise it in the future.

Ron Johnson stated the reason Tourism Development Authorities were set up by the State was because tourism dollars were not being spent on tourism.

Grant Hutcheson asked if sites and attractions were on there because they are paying occupancy tax?

Beau Falgout stated they are part of tourism.

Beau Falgout stated the Town Board was moving forward with the resolution.

9. Ron Johnson stated the CVB needed a motion to go into closed session.

Amit made a motion to go into closed session.

Eddie Dingle seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Ron asked Leah to take minutes.

Amit made a motion to come out of closed session.

Eddie Dingle seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Mitcham
Executive Director