



# Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

## Wednesday, April 27, 2022, | 2 PM

Randolph Cooperative Extension Office  
1003 S Fayetteville Street | Asheboro

### **I. Call to Order – David Caughron, Chairman**

The Randolph County Tourism Development Authority Board of Directors meeting was called to order by David Caughron, Chairman, at 2:00 PM on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, at the Randolph Cooperative Extension Office, 1003 S Fayetteville St, Asheboro.

### **II. Roll Call of Board Members – Amber M. Skeen, Clerk to the Board**

**Board Member Present IN PERSON:** David Caughron, Chairman, Luke Hollingsworth, Ross Holt, Barbara Gallimore, Rebecca Petty Moffitt, and Diane Villa

**Board Members Present by ZOOM:** Leslie Brown

**Board Members Absent:** Pam Brown, and Shawn Patel

**Staff Members Present IN PERSON:** Amber Scarlett, Executive Director; Amber Skeen, Clerk to the Board; Suzanne Dale, Finance Officer; Melody Varner, Tourism Marketing Coordinator

**Guests Present IN PERSON:** Kenny Kidd, Randolph County Commissioner; Richard Schoenberger, Manor House Graphics; Aimee Scotton, County Attorney

### **III. Request to Approve April 27, 2022, Agenda – David Caughron**

Caughron asked to table agenda item containing the monthly public relations report from Susan Dosier until the next board meeting.

A motion to approve the agenda for April 27, 2022, with the tabled agenda item as presented was made by Luke Hollingsworth and seconded by Rebecca Petty Moffitt and the motion was unanimously approved.

**IV. Request to Approve Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2022 – David Caughron**

A motion to approve the Board of Directors Meeting Minutes from March 16, 2022, as presented was made by Diane Villa and seconded by Ross Holt and the motion was unanimously approved.

**V. Update on Occupancy Tax Collections – NCDR – Aimee Scotton, County Attorney**

Scotton updated the TDA Board that the County Tax Department received a letter from an attorney's office in New York. This letter stated that they represented a client that may owe the TDA money for past occupancy tax collections. The letter stated that their client in the past years had received money from reservations and placed that money on a credit card to be given to the participating hotels. It was later found that the hotel properties had only collected payment for the room reservation and left the various taxes (local/state/occupancy) on the credit card. So, therefore, there was extra money left on the Credit Card. The letter received states that this could have happened from January 2011 to September 2020. Scotton said that the letter did not disclose how much money was to be paid out to the TDA. Scotton has also been in contact with other County attorneys across the state of North Carolina and was informed that almost every county received a letter as well. The letter also asks for the TDA to sign the letter and return it and a check would be mailed out in 60 days. But, Scotton has spoken to other county attorneys, and they have decided that they are going to hold off on signing the letter until everyone's county attorney has been contacted and will await direction from the NC Department of Revenue, as they have received a letter as well. Scotton informed the Executive Committee that she is not certain about a timeline but will inform us as information is provided.

**VI. Introduction of Tourism Marketing Coordinator, Melody Varner – Amber Scarlett, Executive Director**

Scarlett introduced Melody Varner as the new Tourism Marketing Coordinator. She will serve as a liaison to our hoteliers, attractions, and event coordinators; assistant project director; group tour sales contact – and much, much more! In her first two weeks, she has hit the ground running and is already building relationships with many of our tourism partners throughout the County!

Varner joins our organization as a recent graduate from the University of North Carolina at Greensboro with a BA in Sustainable Tourism & Hospitality – she also attended Randolph Community College and Providence Grove High School in Climax. She enjoys spending time with her friends and family, especially her long-haired dachshund Zoey.

One of her beloved pastimes is checking out the newest movie at the local theater with popcorn. She has recently found a love of cooking and is always searching for new recipes. Varner is excited to grow with our organization and looks forward to making a difference in her home, Randolph County.

**VII. Update on SETCA Annual Conference – Amber Scarlett and Amber Skeen**

Scarlett updated TDA Board on the Southeast Travel Counselors Alliance 2022 Conference in Concord, NC on April 19 – 21, 2022. She and Amber Skeen attend this conference. They both were able to network and connect with Visitor and Welcome Center managers and administrators from not only North Carolina, but Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, and Maine. Throughout our conference, we learned from Betty Marrow-Taylor, NC Department of Commerce’s Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer on ways in which we can provide a better environment for our visitors and our staff members when taking DEI initiatives. They heard from the state of Georgia on key marketing tactics including social user-generated content regarding their experiences at welcome/visitor centers.

They learned that we are not the only ones dealing with

- print media distribution issues
- lack of funding
- retaining personnel
- getting visitors in the doors

We were able to contribute several ideas:

- bookmark with guest registry and other links was a HUGE hit
- outside tables for encouraging visitation to our buildings
- 12 Days of Christmas Pottery Ornament giveaway
- Operation Thank You event
- Care Cup/Kiddie Cup giveaways

**VIII. Presentation of 2022\23 Authority DRAFT Budget Proposal – Suzanne Dale, Finance Officer, and Amber M. Skeen**

Dale and Skeen presented the DRAFT 2022-23 Authority Budget.

**See ATTACHMENT #1**

**IX. Finance Reporting – Suzanne Dale**

- **Finance Report for Month-Ending March 31, 2022**

Dale reviewed the year-to-date report on the revenues and expenditures for the month ending March 31, 2022.

**SEE ATTACHMENT #2**

**X. Hotel Data Reporting – Amber Scarlett**

- **Hotel Data Report for Month-Ending February 28, 2022**

Scarlett presented the Hotel Data Report for the month-ending February 28, 2022.

**SEE ATTACHMENT #3**

- **Hotel Data Report for Month-Ending March 31, 2022**

Scarlett presented the Hotel Data Report for the month-ending March 31, 2022.

**SEE ATTACHMENT #4**

- **Hotel Data Report for 1st Quarter Ending March 31, 2022**

Scarlett presented the Hotel Data Report for the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter ending March 31, 2022.

**SEE ATTACHMENT #5**

**XI. I-73/74 Visitor Centers Data Reporting – Amber Skeen**

- **Attendance Data Comparison & Guest Registrant Reports for Month-Ending Ending March 31, 2022**

Skeen presented Visitor Centers Data Reports for the month-ending March 31, 2022.

**SEE ATTACHMENT #6 & 7**

- **Attendance Data Comparison Report 1st Quarter Ending March 31, 2022**

Skeen presented the Data Comparison Report 1st Quarter ending March 31, 2022

**SEE ATTACHMENT #8**

**XII. Manor House Graphics Visual Advertising Reporting – Richard Schoenberger, Manor House Graphics**

Schoenberger presented the Visual Advertising Report for the month-ending March 31, 2022.

**SEE ATTACHMENT #9**

### **XIII. Update on Tourism Recovery - Amber Scarlett**

Scarlett updated TDA Board that American Travelers in April of 2022 were concerned about inflation and gas prices potentially impacting trip volume, Americans' strong excitement for travel sustains.

COVID continues to retreat, while Americans' strong excitement for travel sustains.

- 87.6% have current trip plans.
- 81.0% of American travelers report strong excitement for their travel this year
- 71.8% of Americans did some trip dreaming and planning in the last week.
- A record-high 57.9% feel we are closer to normal in the U.S.
- Americans' perceived impact of COVID on their ability to have meaningful travel experiences is at a record low of 35.9%.
- Avoidance of conventions and conferences reached a record low of 40.9%.

Financial Sentiment - Inflation and gas prices are an issue for trip volume, but Americans still plan to spend on travel.

- 24.7% said that recent inflation in consumer goods has led them to cancel an upcoming trip.
- 55.8% say that if gasoline prices don't come down, they will be taking fewer road trips this spring/summer; with 59.8% staying closer to home on road trips this spring/summer.
- 61.3% still say travel is a high-budget priority for them.
- 40% still say luxury travel experiences are an important part of their trips.

The Post-Pandemic Traveler

- Americans will be seeking out new experiences for travel; 55.7% prefer places they have not been to before
- 23.2% will take trips shorter in length
- 32% will take trips closer to home
- 56.5% will be more careful in planning trip details
- 46.9% are more motivated to travel
- 24.2% are more interested in visiting cities
- 42.2% are more interested in outdoor destinations
- 64.2% are more sympathetic to frontline travel/hospitality staff

### **XIV. Board Member Updates – David Caughron**

Leslie Brown updated TDA Board Members that The Liberty Theater would be hosting an event for a local family in need this Sunday if anyone would like to come out and support this family.

Rebecca Petty Moffitt updated TDA Board Members they would be hosting the Petty Fest and the Blue Jeans and Boots event.

Luke Hollingsworth updated TDA Board Members of the completion of renovations and additions to the bar and grill area. They are also working on getting the golf simulators open in the next few weeks.

Ross Holt updated TDA Board Members that the Sunset Signature Series was making plans for late summer, early fall with new leadership in Owen George.

Barbara Gallimore updated TDA Board Members that Downtown Asheboro would be hosting Friday night concerts beginning on May 20<sup>th</sup>, along with the traditional beach music evenings on Sunday evenings at Bicentennial Park.

Diane Villa updated TDA Board Members that the North Carolina Zoo was very busy – outpaced previous attendance records in the month of April. She also invited everyone to the Business After Hours event being held in the Africa section of the Zoo on Thursday, May 26<sup>th</sup>.

David Caughron updated TDA Board Members that Randleman was gearing up for Market & Music events in Downtown Randleman, with the first one scheduled for May 6<sup>th</sup>. The NC Food Truck State Championship is in its 9<sup>th</sup> year and is scheduled for Saturday, June 18<sup>th</sup>.

**XV. Adjourn – David Caughron**

A motion to adjourn the TDA Board Meeting on Wednesday, April 27, 2022, was made by Luke Hollingsworth and was seconded by Rebecca Petty Moffitt, and the motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 3:17 PM.

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**NORTH CAROLINA  
RANDOLPH COUNTY**



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**David Caughron, Chairman**

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A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amber M. Skeen". The signature is written in a cursive style and is set against a light yellow rectangular background.

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**Amber M. Skeen, Clerk to the Board**