



**Convention & Visitors Bureau
Pinehurst, Southern Pines, Aberdeen Area**

**Board Meeting
Monday January 6, 2025**

Members present: Kelly Miller, Tom Pashley, Bonnie McPeake, Andy Hofmann, Matt Hausser, Linda Parsons, Natalie Dean-Hawkins, Nick Picerno, Caroline Xiong

Not present: Warren Lewis, Wayne Vest

Staff present: Phil Werz, Donna Murphy

The meeting was called to order at 4:01 p.m. by Chairman Miller.

A moment of silence was observed in memory of George W Little, one of the founding members of the CVB, who passed away, on October 11, 2024.

The board presented a Heritage Flag to former County Commissioner and CVB board member, Frank Quis, in appreciation of his time served on the board. We then welcomed Nick Picerno, the new County Commissioner representative member, to the CVB board.

Chairman Miller entertained a motion to approve the September 24, 2024, minutes. Member Pashley made the motion to approve the minutes, Member McPeake seconded it, and the motion passed.

Financial Report-Matt Hausser
Room Tax Collections:

For the first five months of the 2024-2025 fiscal year (July*November), lodging occupancy tax collections are slightly more than \$1.7 million. This represents an 8% increase from the same five month period as last fiscal year. For the last reporting month of November, collections surpassed \$284,000, an increase of 10.5% from last November.

Expenditures:

Based on the latest financial report for November, the CVB remains in a strong financial position. Blending in the unencumbered sum of \$500,000, the CVB is \$25,000 flat to forecast and budget. The CVB will incorporate unencumbered funds into the budget, if needed, in the final quarter of the fiscal year.

Statement of Financial Position (Balance Sheet):

Also, you were provided a copy of the Balance Sheet/Statement of Financial Position as of January 3, 2025. The balance sheet showed a little more than \$3.1 million in total assets, \$656,000 in total liabilities, for a total fund balance of a little more than \$2.5 million.

Chairman Miller entertained a motion to approve the Financial Report. Member Pashley made the motion, Member McPeake seconded it, and the motion passed.

President & CEO Report-Phil Werz

Phil introduced Reg Jones of the USGA for a review of the 2024 US Open and its impact on the destination. Also with Reg was Leighton Schwob, who worked closely on preparations for the Open. Reg stated that 2024 was a very special year for his organization, and he feels like this was probably the best championship they've had, during his 21 years, with the USGA. One of the things they did differently, for this championship, was to move corporate hospitality out onto the golf course, to help boost sales. They worked with Pinehurst Resort, to ensure that this didn't disrupt the feel and play of the course, once the Open was over. The USGA invested a great deal into 3 key elements: power, roads, and water, so that when they come back to Pinehurst in 2029, the infrastructure is already in place. One of the biggest challenges he noted was a lack of hotel rooms in our destination. He said that's something he hopes will be better when they return in 2029 for the duel U.S. Opens.

Phil read a statement pertaining to our audit findings from the firm Mauldin & Jenkins, for FY ended June 30, 2024. We were given a clean opinion. There were no audit findings, and no recorded or passed adjustments. They found no issues and stated that they received full cooperation in conducting the audit process. Phil passed out hard copies of our Annual Financial Report.

Room Occupancy collections continue to climb and set all-time record highs. There have been a couple months that were either flat or down slightly from the previous year. Year to date, for FY 24-25, we're at \$1,709,295, which is up 7.9%.

The CVB won two awards in December at the NCTIA Conference in Durham. One was the Leisure Marketing Award for our Johnnie-O "Drive for Style" pre-U.S. Open campaign. The other was the Community Stakeholders Award for our Paradise in the Pines Podcast.

Phil showed a video we produced about the recently opened Southern Pines Skatepark. The CVB Awarded this project a total of \$200,000 in our One Time Project Fund program. The skatepark committee had to raise matching funds, but credit the CVB's monetary award in helping to boost community support to raise the funds they needed, to match the grant.

Phil went over proposed meeting dates for the 2025 calendar year: March 19th, June 24th, September 9th, and December 9th.

Our 2025 Destination Guide is being printed and is set to be delivered in the next week. Phil showed pictures of the cover and some of the pages in the guide. He stated that we outsourced the guide this year and it will be more of a magazine type publication.

Scott Peacock, director of marketing, from VisitNC presented the board with a detailed report on how the state tourism office operates. He also shared numerous slides and data which showed results from a variety of marketing and advertising campaigns statewide, and how they may impact the Piedmont. He also provided an update on relief efforts in western NC, from the impacts of hurricane Helene last Fall and how VisitNC reacted to influence consumer perceptions of damage not only in western NC,

but how it also affected other areas of the state. He explained how VisitNC devised a plan to influence future visitors to the state in a positive way. He concluded by stating that while NC is the fifth most visited state in the country, it is also one of the most unfunded. Surrounding states like VA, SC, TN and WV have significantly higher budgets and VisitNC is hoping to get additional funding from the NC legislature, in the upcoming session.

Board Member Reports

There were no board member reports.

Unfinished Business

There was no unfinished business.

New Business

There was no new business.

Chairman Miller stated that the next meeting will be March 19, 2025, and the meeting was adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt", followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends to the right.

Matt Hausser, Secretary/Treasurer