

**SALISBURY**  
**ROWAN COUNTY**  
*Authentic North Carolina*

**SALISBURY-ROWAN COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**  
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**Name:** Destination Marketing Committee

**Date of Meeting:** October 1, 2015

**Committee Chair:** Krista Osterweil

**Date of Next Meeting:** November 5, 2015

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**Committee Members Attending:** Suzanne Jones, Kelly Alexander, Karen Windate, Thad Howell, Gretchen Witt, Krista Osterweil, Amie Boudoin, Justin Dionne, Michelle Patterson, Vivian Hopkins

**Tourism Staff:** Tara Ludwig, Melissa Murguz, Stephanie Centeno, Allyson Teague

**Not Attending:** Brian Davis

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Krista Osterweil called the meeting to order at 10:10 AM.

**Approval of the Minutes:**

Motion: Suzanne Jones made the motion for the approval of the September 3, 2015 minutes.

Second: Gretchen Witt

Motion: Approved

Tara Ludwig introduced Allyson Teague as the new part time Administrative Assistant to the group.

**Branding and Digital Infrastructure Update:**

Ludwig informed the committee that the SRCCVB was supposed to have a photoshoot with Aristotle on Friday, October 2, but the bad weather pushed back the shoot until Tuesday, October 6. The crew flies in Monday afternoon and will be briefed to get ready for the week. Business shots will be completed along with the tourism video and photography, not just tourist locations.

The committee chose Chandlerthinks for the rebranding and the next steps should take place in November. Michelle Patterson expressed her excitement for the progress and is looking forward to getting feedback from the community.

**Marketing Requests:**

Ludwig introduced two new marketing requests.

1) Rowan Cabarrus Community College sent a request for the 2016 Community College Fine Arts Conference. The 2015 Fine Arts Conference produced 44 room nights. This year the conference will be offered to four year colleges and universities. Last year RCCC estimated between 55 and 60 room nights. This year 70 room nights are being estimated. RCCC is requesting support for hospitality, including breakfast and lunch at a total of \$2,808. After reviewing the application Staff suggested not to include tax and gratuity, bringing the total down to \$2,340. This total is about \$800 more than RCCC was given last year.

Suzanne Jones inquired if the SRCCVB would still be paying the \$2,340 if fewer people showed up.

Ludwig thought RCCC expected a large increase from last year. Justin Dionne recounted that last year's conference was a big success and everyone enjoyed the reception. Gretchen Witt asked if more people attend the 2016 conference, will SRCCVB still cover the hospitality needs. Osterweil suggested to determine a set amount because NCIA will take place the same month and the hotels will likely be sold out. Dionne recommended that RCCC should send the committee an invoice so a check can be sent as reimbursement after the event. Osterweil inquired if a cap should be determined on what the SRCCVB covers.

Motion: Gretchen Witt made the motion of approval to cover the per person cost of meals without tax and gratuity. SRCCVB will reimburse RCCC upon receipt of the invoice.

Second: Justin Dionne

Motion: Approved

2) Livingstone College is requesting a package deal for their Commemorative Classic event in November. The request consists of \$1000 for Livingstone's marketing budget and an overnight event ticket package of two free tickets (value of \$40), as well as \$25 Downtown Dollars for a total of \$65.

The committee discussed ways around the \$1000 marketing budget because while the overnight stays are desirable, the committee was unsure about the \$1000 so close to the event date.

Dionne did not feel that the \$1000 would be fair to the other people in the community, especially after the disagreement with Christine Wilson from last month's Destination Marketing meeting and Wilson's subsequent step-down from the committee. Wilson strongly advised that the committee should give cash funds to tourism groups, but the committee decided against going in

the direction of cutting checks for cash expenditures, and would prefer directly generating overnight stays.

Kelly Alexander discussed the NC Transportation Museum doing a package deal and how the committee should continue to do that.

The group communicated alternatives to giving cash, such as assisting with hospitality for receptions.

Motion: Justin Dionne made the motion to approve an overnight package of two free tickets to the game and \$25 Downtown Dollars with the offer to fund hotel rooms for special guests up to \$1000.

Second: Suzanne Jones

Motion: Approved

Ludwig went on to inform the group that the Zombie Walk was canceled for Saturday, October 3 due to the weather forecast. The event will be rescheduled.

Ludwig continued with a PowerPoint presentation including Trolley stats, partnership marketing, group business, marketing support and digital marketing.

### **Trolley**

The Trolley revenue, year-to-date, totals \$52,779 with 43 rentals, 16 tour groups, 661 room nights, and 66 advanced bookings.

The Harvest Tour was a big success with tickets being sold out. There were 58 tickets sold for a total income of \$2,900. This also generated 14 overnight stays. For 2016, the Bloom & Barrels Spring Winery Frolic is being planned.

Tickets are currently being sold for the Wickedly Witty Tour, a haunted comedy performance, which includes both a family and adult tour. Beer and wine can be consumed on the trolley, but no open containers will be allowed on or off. This event begins October 16 and will continue the two following weekends in October.

Trolley shuttles are also continuing for Rowan Cabarrus Community College due to the construction.

### **Partnership Marketing**

Homes & Harmonies, a partnership with Lee Street Theatre, has totaled 13 packages.

Day out with Thomas and Polar Express, a partnership with the NC Transportation Museum, is still ongoing. Staff is estimating 201 overnight stays for Day out with Thomas and 77 overnight stays for Polar Express.

**Group Business/Marketing Support**

Preservation NC was in town recently, but Staff is still working on producing the total overnight stays. The original projection was 400 rooms, but Staff will get a total soon.

Husqvarna reached out for a conference and utilized the hotels and trolleys during their stay. There were 29 projected overnight stays with an estimated visitor related economic impact of \$8,145.

Staff is still continuing to work with the AACA. The projected room nights are 600 and the estimated visitor related economic impact is \$133,583.

Fishers of Men is coming up November 3-7. Ludwig informed the hotels there is not a designated host hotel, but to be aware of the group's arrival.

Ludwig expressed that the team has been very busy this past month and everything is going really well. Ludwig informed the committee that the hard work has generated 417 room nights in just one month.

**Digital Marketing**

Ludwig conveyed that there was not a dip in August. The numbers have continued to stay high. Social media went from 70,294 in August to 68,816 in September. E-mail went from 38,097 to 38,399; website from 45,316 to 61,300. This is an approximate total of 153,707 in August to 168,515 in September.

There were no questions. The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 AM.

Respectfully submitted by:

Allyson Teague, SRCCVB Office Assistant