

NORTH CAROLINA TRAVEL AND TOURISM BOARD



MEETING MINUTES

February 5, 2008

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Donna Bailey-Taylor, Chris Cavanaugh, Teresa Damiano, Randy Kolls, James Meacham, John Meroski, Lynn Minges, Doyle Parrish, Thomas Pashley, Ed Phillips, Jamie Reibel, Senator A. B. Swindell, Steve Thanhauser, Representative Alice Underhill

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Doug Brindley, Mike Butts, Haddon Clark, Senator Walter Dalton, Joyce Dugan, Lew Ebert, Secretary Jim Fain, Representative Phillip Haire, Davin Olsen, Harris Prevost, Leonard Rigsbee, Tom Ruff, Susan Spangler, Anne Steketee

LIAISONS, STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT: Amy Berenson, Jenna Bryant, Holly Crosby, Scott Gilmore, Jim Hobbs, Christine Mackey, Amy McConkey, Melanie McCullough, Susanne Streb, Connie Wilson

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Chris Cavanaugh called the meeting to order at 11:10 am.

COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

After introductions, a motion was made and seconded to approve the board meeting minutes from December 12, 2007, as written. The motion unanimously passed.

New Chairman Cavanaugh reviewed the December meeting. He briefly revisited the presentation given by Chad Prosser, the director of the South Carolina Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism, and followed up on the discussion of litter in North Carolina. He said he will focus on competitiveness – in marketing, litter and support for small business. Chris also reviewed the need for more funding for the Division.

NC DIVISION OF TOURISM, FILM & SPORTS DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Lynn Minges provided an update on the overall state of the industry in North Carolina and a review of 2007. The numbers used were from Smith Travel Data.

- Occupancy growth slowed in 2007. It was up about 1 percent statewide from 2006.
- 2007 room rates were up 7 percent from 2006.
- 2007 RevPAR was up 7.9 percent from 2006
- Overall inquiries were up 13.4 percent with more than 4.2 million requests for North Carolina travel information.
- There was a 41 percent increase in web traffic to VisitNC.com, and 6.8 million visits to the website.
- Public relations highlights: 400 articles published, generating \$5 million in publicity. "Dr. Beach" generated an additional \$7 million in publicity.
- Welcome centers hosted 8 million visitors and booked 12,000 room nights at \$81/night.
- 100,400 visitors attended the US Women's Open, with an economic impact of \$52 million.
- Thirty NC industry delegates travelled to Washington, DC, for the Travel Leadership Summit, where they met with our Congressional delegates about tourism issues, including the Travel Promotion Act. About 150 House members have signed on to support the bill, including 10 North Carolina members of Congress.
- NC Wine sponsored the map in the travel guide.

- NC Film – “Leatherheads” and “Nights in Rodanthe” were filmed in North Carolina and will be released in 2008.
- Current Initiatives
 - New York Media Mission was a great success. More than 40 people from NC travelled to New York to meet with 100 of the most influential leaders in the national media.
 - ABA Marketplace 2008 and 2009. The ABA Marketplace is in Virginia Beach this year, with Visit Charlotte and the Division co-hosting a dinner. The Division will be a \$250,000 sponsor next year with the Marketplace in Charlotte.
 - The Governor’s Conference on Tourism is March 16-18 in Winston-Salem. Daniel Pink, Peter Yesawich and Dennis Snow will be the keynote speakers. Dana Simpson, Paul Stone and Connie Wilson will participate in the policy panel, hosted by UNC-TV’s Eszter Vajda. The breakout sessions will focus on Internet marketing, outlook on accommodations, sustainable tourism, public relations and small towns accomplishing big things.
 - UK Sales Mission is April 6-11. There will be media events in Dublin and London.
 - DOT Spring “Litter Sweep” – a statewide effort – is April 19-May 3. Several partners have expressed interest. Wake County has increased enforcement of its litter laws.
 - National Tourism Week is May 10-18. The state’s nine Welcome Centers will celebrate the 40th anniversary of the NC Welcome Center program during the week.
 - Tourism Day is May 13. The NCTIA will host a reception at the NC Museum of History from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
 - The new Randolph County Visitor Center will be built on 100 state-owned acres just north of the Montgomery County line in Randolph County on 1-73/74. It will have a “green” design and construction. Opening is anticipated in fall 2009.
- Media Plan Overview
 - LKM received more than 130 responses to the media RFP.
 - Lynn Minges presented the advertising objectives and visitor profile.
 - Major print programs – corporate partners – Southern Progress, Meredith Travel and Martha Stewart
- **Expansion budget request**
 - Lynn Minges presented the Division’s plan to secure an additional \$5 million to expand the state’s marketing efforts.
 - Chris Cavanaugh emphasized that Lynn can not lobby for this initiative, that the industry must make it happen.
 - **Ed Phillips motioned to support the budget request and John Meroski seconded the motion. Doyle Parrish suggested drafting a resolution in support of the budget expansion, which was unanimously supported.**

LICENSE PLATE REPORT

Representative Underhill reported that Lynn Minges and Representative Dickson met to discuss the possible re-design of North Carolina license plates. Rep. Dickson is not opposed to including visitnc.com on the plates. Representatives Dickson and Underhill will meet with the Senate to continue the discussion.

LEGISLATIVE REPORTS

Hospitality Alliance of NC

Jim Hobbs reported that the Hospitality Alliance is working with the Travel & Tourism Coalition, Keep America Beautiful and Boy Scouts to facilitate or enhance existing litter programs.

NC Restaurant and Lodging Association

Susanne Streb reported that the NCRLA has been working with environmental issues such as the coastal setback issue. They are also working on occupancy tax issues and with the ABC Commission on the training requirement for new permittees.

NC Travel Industry Association

Connie Wilson reported that the NCTIA will once again host a reception and tire changing event on Tourism Day. Other issues addressed were gross receipts (what's taxable, what's not, looking for consistency and understanding); school calendar law; House Bill 346, the sales tax refund for TDAs; and litter.

NC Travel and Tourism Coalition

Amy McConkey reported that the Travel and Tourism Coalition is participating in litter stakeholder meetings. Other issues important to the Coalition are gross receipts and the Division's request for increased funding.

James Meacham motioned to adopt a resolution to support TDAs gross receipts bill. The motion was seconded by Donna Bailey-Taylor.

FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

The next NC Travel and Tourism Board meeting is scheduled for May 13, 2008, in the NC Department of Commerce Board Room in Raleigh. The other 2008 board meeting dates are August 19 and December 9.

No other business.

Meeting adjourned at 1:50 pm.