



NORTH CAROLINA TRAVEL & TOURISM BOARD MEETING MINUTES

N.C. Travel and Tourism Board Meeting, November 22, 10:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Kimberly Albritton, Jim Beley, Rolf Blizzard, Sen. Dave Craven, Dennis Edwards, Shannon Finucane, Art Fisher, Sen. Bobby Hanig, Lee Nettles, Lynn Minges, Lee Nettles, Rep. Ray Pickett, Andrew Schmidt, Vivek Tandon, Greg Walter

MEMBERS ABSENT: Christopher Chung, James Meacham, Rep. Charles Miller, Sec. Mabelle Sanders, Steven Pasquantonio

LIAISONS, STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT: Katie Bailey, Denise Desatnick, Scott Gilmore, Dana Grimstead, Bryan Gupton, Brooks Luquire, Margo Metzger, Scott Peacock, Kathy Prickett, Stephanie Spicer, Kylee Sprengel, Marlise Taylor, Wit Tuttell, Heidi Walters, Kara Weishaar

Rolf Blizzard, chairperson, called the meeting to order at 10:30 am. The meeting was held in-person and remotely.

WELCOME/COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Roll call was taken of board members present. Blizzard reminded members of the Ethics Statement, in accordance with Executive Order No. 35. Blizzard asked for approval of the May meeting minutes. Lynn Minges made the motion to approve, seconded by Andrew Schmidt; the minutes were unanimously approved.

INDUSTRY PARTNER UPDATE

Kara Weishaar, NC Travel & Tourism Coalition – Group held its retreat earlier this month in Wilmington, which included welcoming new board officers. The same issues continue to be top priorities, such as the school calendar law and its protection; occupancy tax policy and protecting those resources; and potential gaming legislation. In addition, the group discussed a recap of the mid-term election results and the effects on the next legislative session.

Lynn Minges, NC Restaurant & Lodging Association – In early December, the group will review its legislative agenda with a strong focus on workforce recruitment. The NCRLA is working on a \$5 million recruitment campaign; and will conduct research in two phases: with businesses about the impact of worker shortages and with current and former employees about their work and careers. NCRLA hopes to have an RFP for an agency to oversee the research process, as recruitment awareness is its primary focus right now.

Andrew Schmidt, NC Travel Industry Association – NCTIA held its Leadership Conference in Charlotte last week. Topics discussed included occupancy tax protection, school start and heavy

emphasis on workforce development. NCTIA also honored Sen. Todd Johnson as Legislator of the Year.

Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina – No report provided.

NC Sports Leadership Council – No report provided.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Sen. Dave Craven said work on the budget will be the primary task for the legislature when it returns. He noted many states envy North Carolina for its economic development and tourism successes. Sen. Bobby Hanig commended Visit North Carolina for all of its work during the COVID pandemic. Rep. Ray Pickett said he is looking forward to seeing all of the legislative priorities to see what the tourism industry is thinking right now. He noted how important tourism and its impact is to his area and North Carolina and he looks forward to doing more.

VISIT NC INTERNATIONAL UPDATE

Heidi Walters did a presentation on Visit North Carolina's international marketing program, including representations at international offices along with marketing and PR successes.

EDPNC UPDATE

Denise Denatsick provided an overview of the EDPNC's "All in North Carolina" marketing initiative. It was also noted by the group that the EDPNC Board quarterly meeting in Duck earlier this month had strong tourism representation.

VISIT NC UPDATE

Marlise Taylor presented some of the latest research, YTD Visitor Economy Index, January-October Lodging Data, and Lodging Demand Recovery compared to 2019. Scott Peacock offered a "Firsts That Last 2.0" marketing campaign update, including High Level Key Performance Indicators. Margo Metzger showcased PR efforts, such as recent media missions, and successful media placements. The FilmNC update noted direct in-state spend by productions to date. Heidi Walters did an update on a recent marketing campaign in Canada, Outdoor NC, SportsNC, and Visit NC's webinar series. The presentation concluded with a reminder of the 2023 Visit North Carolina Tourism Conference, March 6-8 at the Omni Grove Park Inn in Asheville.

COMMERCE UPDATE

No update provided.

WELCOME CENTER UPDATE

Bryan Gupton reminded everyone the I-95 South NC Welcome Center location is currently closed as the old site was raised and is being rebuilt; possible reopening is next summer. Broadband improvements are coming to six locations. The Welcome Center managers had a successful annual meeting in Greensboro earlier this month. In addition, Gupton said Sec.

Machelle Sanders had visited the I-77 South NC Welcome Center earlier this month he noted this was the first formal visit by a Commerce Secretary in several decades.

CLOSING

Rolf Blizzard asked if there was any other business to discuss; nothing more was noted. Sen. Dave Craven made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Lee Nettles.

Meeting adjourned at 12:12 p.m.

The 2023 board meeting schedule is being finalized.