

NORTH CAROLINA TRAVEL AND TOURISM BOARD



MEETING MINUTES

August 17, 2010

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Deputy Secretary Dale Carroll, Randy Cobb, Secretary Keith Crisco, Teresa Damiano, Vimal Kolappa, Lynn Minges, Robert O'Halloran, Davin Olsen, Harris Prevost, Thomas M. Pashley, Joan H. Pulley, Steven Thanhauser

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Sally Ashworth, Secretary Linda Carlisle, Chris Cavanaugh, Senator Don Davis, S. Lewis Ebert, Denny Edwards, Randy Kolls, Representative Phillip Haire, Kimberly Hufham, John Meroski, Senator Joe Sam Queen, Jamie Reibel, Leonard Rigsbee, Tom Ruff, Penny Leary-Smith, Susan Spangler, Richard Thigpen, Mitzi York

LIAISONS, STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT: Juli Cooney, Bryan Gupton, Jennifer Jenkins, James Kirby, Margo Metzger, Andre' Nabors, Mike Sprayberry, Eleanor Talley, Wit Tuttell

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Steve Thanhauser called the meeting to order at 11:05 a.m.

COMMENTS AND INTRODUCTIONS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Steve Thanhauser welcomed the two newest members to the Board: Randy Cobb, Abercrombie Oil Co., and Denny Edwards, President and CEO of the Greater Raleigh Convention and Visitors Bureau.

MINUTES APPROVED

Dave Olsen motioned to approve meeting minutes from August 17, 2010. Joan Pulley seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS FROM CHAIR

Steve Thanhauser read the Statement of Duty aloud (Ethics policies EO 34 and EO 35).

Steve gave a brief overview of the agenda highlighting the cancellation of the Travel Leadership Summit in Washington, DC, and the new format for Mid Year Marketing Update (MYMU) as a webinar and corresponding conference call for 2010.

DIVISION UPDATE BY LYNN MINGES

Lynn Minges informed the board of Cindy Curry's passing after a battle with cancer. Mrs. Curry served on the Travel and Tourism Board and was an active partner in the Tourism Industry.

Lynn Minges discussed the outcomes of the 2010 Legislative session by pointing out the inclusion of Tourism in the Small Business and Recovery Act monies by Governor Perdue. This provided \$1 million in marketing funds. The Division of Tourism did lose the Matching Grant Funds program. After much deliberation the Welcome Centers were fully funded. The Wine and Grape budget was cut 13%.

The film incentives bill passed allowing North Carolina to once again be a competitive state for films. A 25% tax credit and a cap of \$20 million, raised from \$7 million, were two of the items that allow the state this competitive edge.

North Carolina had a good summer season, and the year-to-date numbers have been up 6 months in a row.

The Travel Promotion Act implementation will begin in September with the US charging a \$14 visa entry fee to fund the program. The tourism industry must raise matching funds, and an executive director should be in place by the end of the year.

The division will post an RFP for its advertising in late fall of 2011.

Research continues to be the best and most used tool to determine how and where tourism marketing dollars should be spent. The 2009 Regional Visitors Report, contracted through TNS, is available online. This report shows, among other statistics, that one-third of North Carolinians choose to stay in the state they live to vacation.

COMMENTS FROM WIT TUTTELL, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING FOR THE DIVISION

A new digital marketing program has been implemented using QR Codes, available on visitnc.com tent cards and window decals, which can be scanned by a traveler's smart phone resulting in visitor discounts, restaurant ideas, and other information about the local area and visitor attractions.

Product placement and packaging through a co-op with Nature's Own and Family Circle has produced more than 30,000 entries to date. Additional co-ops include Oprah magazine and expansion of video feeds through visitnc.com to help position the North Carolina brand to the visitor.

The upcoming fall season will launch the Fall Color 2010 campaign. Visitnc.com will focus on interactive social media options including a professional leaf expert, fishing expert, and reports from locals in the area of the fall colors and fishing. The social media aspect includes Twitter, Facebook, blogs and other social media. Fall Color 2010 will be represented on the Weather Channel and in other media outlets.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- Mid Year Marketing Update (MYMU)
- 2009 Annual Report

WELCOME CENTER UPDATE FROM BRYAN GUPTON, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

The 2010 Legislature fully funded the Welcome Centers. The division has thoroughly reviewed other state's revenue generating programs; none are producing the required revenue stream to fully fund their Welcome Centers.

COMMENTS FROM DAVE OLSEN, RBC CENTER

North Carolina will host the 2011 NHL All-Star Game. The festivities will begin on January 26 and end on January 30 with the game hosted at the RBC Center. The weekend event will bring international exposure to NC with media from all over the world. It is estimated that 8000 hotel nights will be booked. The Division of Tourism, Film and Sports Development is a contributing sponsor of the All-Star Game and weekly events.

PRESENTATION BY MIKE SPRAYBERRY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND OPERATIONS CHIEF OF THE NC DIVISION OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Mike Sprayberry presented an overview of the State Emergency Response Team (SERT), a unified command system when disasters or other emergency events occur in North Carolina. They integrate all the state agencies in response to emergency events. A detailed overview of the system, capabilities, materials and abilities of the agency was presented.

The Division and its partners are highly engaged in this process and responsive to the events at all times. This was demonstrated during the oil spill as North Carolina prepared a response plan well before the coast could have been affected.

Meeting adjourned at 1:30 p.m.