



NORTH CAROLINA TRAVEL & TOURISM BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
August 23, 2022

Travel and Tourism Board Meeting, August 23, 10:30 a.m.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Jim Beley, Rolf Blizzard, Christopher Chung, Dennis Edwards, Jonathan Fussell, Lynn Minges, Lee Nettles, Steven Pasquantonio, Rep. Ray Pickett, Andrew Schmidt, Sharon Sexton

MEMBERS ABSENT: Kimberly Albritton, Tamara Daniels, Sen. Chuck Edwards, Rep. Bobby Hanig, James Meacham, Sec. Mabelle Baker Sanders, Sen. Bob Steinburg, Vivek Tandon

LIAISONS, STAFF AND GUESTS PRESENT: Christy Agner, Katie Bailey, Scott Dupree, Ashton English, Chuck Fuller, Guy Gaster, Scott Gilmore, Bryan Gupton, Margo Metzger, Scott Peacock, Kathy Prickett, Kylee Sprengel, Marlise Taylor, Cyndi Tomblin, Wit Tuttell, Heidi Walters, Kara Weishaar, Graham Whitaker

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

WELCOME/COMMENTS FROM THE CHAIR

Roll call was taken of board members present. Rolf reminded members of the Ethics Statement, in accordance with Executive Order No. 35. Rolf 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 discussed topics for the NCGA’s short session and budget adjustments. Topics included school calendar and occupancy tax. Also noted upcoming planning meeting in Wilmington on Nov. 14.

Lynn Minges, NC Restaurant & Lodging Association – Reviewed the NCRLA \$5M workforce development grant and it’s \$1.1M training grant.

Andrew Schmidt, NC Travel Industry Association – NCTIA working with Tourism Education Foundation to launch several workforce training events in Charlotte. Working with the Charlotte/Mecklenburg Schools and uptown hotels. Also working with TEF for tourism retention workshop in Charlotte for late summer; the purpose is to teach workers how to progress in hospitality/tourism fields.

NCTIA’s Leadership Conference to be held Nov 16-17 in Charlotte.

James Meacham, Destination Marketing Association of North Carolina – wasn't available for an update.

Scott Dupree, NC Sports Leadership Council – Council formed in Fall 2020 to serve as the voice of the NC sports industry to the legislature and Governor's office. Currently working on aspects of the sports betting bill and exploring a state funded sports grant program.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Rep. Ray Pickett thought the sports gaming bill would be considered again in the long session.

EDPNC UPDATE

Christopher Chung noted that activity continues to be very busy within the state, with manufacturing and industrial as the busiest sectors. He noted that attracting office-based companies is difficult as many companies are choosing the remote workforce concept.

VISIT NC UPDATE

Wit Tuttell was awarded State Travel Director of the Year by the National Council of State Travel Directors. Visit NC also won awards for Special Projects and the People's Choice for Drive Through Vacations. Marlise Taylor presented some of the latest research, including 2021 Statewide Spending Results with all 100 counties seeing increases, 2022 YTD Lodging Summary and YTD KPIs. Scott Peacock offered an update for Visit NC's "First That Last 2.0," which includes the Firsts That Last Film Series; he also discussed a new campaign to focus on attracting the right visitor at the right time. Margo Metzger showcased PR efforts and successful media placements. Guy Gaster provided an update on the film industry's numbers to date, which included the number of projects, job opportunities and spending. Heidi Walters did an update on Outdoor NC, Group Travel, RetireNC, Community Relations and the international market. A copy of the presentation is noted in the record.

COMMERCE UPDATE

No report from Commerce.

WELCOME CENTER UPDATE

Bryan Gupton reported that Welcome Center traffic has been relatively flat. Welcome Center managers will meet in Greensboro in November. Calls at the Call Center are up 13%. DOT makes up 90% of the calls.

CLOSING

Rolf asked if there was any other business to discuss; nothing more was noted. Lee Nettles made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Sharon Sexton.

Meeting adjourned at 12:26 p.m.

The next board meeting is scheduled for Nov. 22.