



May 25, 2017  
2nd Floor CVB Conference Room  
Meeting Minutes

### **Members Present**

Bureau: Jenny Bell, Jessica Bennett, Angie Brady, Kelly Brill, Stephanie Decatur, Myron Jones, David Nash

Members: Lily Aguilar Schmidt, Beth Buckingham-Rivas, Tonie McKnight, Manish Mehta, Ramona Moore, Deanna Morgan, Mylyn Sargent, Nicole Wilson

### **Summary / Group Information Sharing**

Myron Jones called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. He welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending the meeting, noting the change in breakfast from Kinlaw's to Vicki's Biscuits. He then asked Tonie McKnight to introduce herself to the group. Tonie introduced herself as the Sales Manager for Ramada Plaza. Ramona Moore announced the Ramada has a new General Manager, Mike Gould. Nicole Wilson stated there was no news to report from the Hampton Inn-Fayetteville/Fort Bragg. Deanna Morgan shared the DoubleTree is planning renovations for 2018—to include new carpet in all overnight rooms. Manish Mehta reported Springhill Suites is due to open in December, and they are planning a complete renovation at Hilton Garden Inn. Mylyn Sargent stated they are planning renovations for Holiday Inn Express after Springhill and Hilton Garden Inn are done. Jessica Bennett reported she has finished her third year of marketing college.

### **Speaker**

**Tarshi McCoy, Senior Sales Manager, Greenville-Pitt County Convention and Visitors Bureau**

Tarshi opened her talk by affirming that everyone is in sales, as everyone represents the market. She then shared some of her insights on sales, as well as some of her personal experiences from her years of working in the market. Her insights included the following:

- Establish/maintain a positive attitude.
- Be prepared and be on time.
- If you make a promise, keep it / deliver it.
- Be sincere and believe in your product.
- Do not put down your competition.
- Follow up, follow up, follow up!

Lastly, Tarshi led everyone in a group exercise, “Two Truths & a Lie.”

## **Score Card**

Myron reviewed the Sales Department Score Card.

Jessica Bennett reviewed the Tourism Department Score Card.

Jenny Bell reviewed the Communications Department Score Card.

## **Visitor Profile**

David Nash reviewed the Visitor Profile.

## **Smith Travel Report**

Angie Brady reviewed the Smith Travel Report, noting a slight dip in occupancy for the county and an overall dip in occupancy for the state.

## **Estimated Economic Impact (EEI) and Contracted Revenue**

Myron and Jessica reviewed the EEI and Contracted Revenue for verbal and definite leads.

## **Tourism Report and New Products**

Angie reviewed the Tourism Report and New Products.

- She encouraged the hoteliers to either update the extranet or email their summer specials for publication on the FACVB website.
- She then explained the Content Marketing strategies that the CVB is putting into place with 219 Group. The goal of these efforts is to create awareness to drive demand for Cumberland County accommodations, and the overall objective is to create paid web traffic to reservation pages to increase bookings across Cumberland County accommodations. These initiatives include remarketing to web and Facebook, Facebook direct marketing, and call tracking. She reported initial success from these efforts, as confirmed by the statistics, and stated she would continue to share the stats at each S&M meeting.

## **Communications Report**

Jenny reviewed the Communications Report. She shared with the members that the writer visits Melody had organized were a big success, resulting in great web and social media coverage of our attractions and hotels. She also shared that Melody had secured two national pieces of press coverage recently, in USA Today and Fox News.

## **Visitors Center Report**

Jenny reviewed the Visitors Center Report.

## **Group Information Sharing**

Myron led the members in an in-depth discussion about the importance of tracking our visitors and capturing information about why they are visiting. He pointed out that some technological changes in the industry appear to be making it more difficult for hoteliers to interact with their guests upon check-in, i.e., guests using phones to unlock their doors. This led to the members sharing their own struggles with their front-desk staff not tracking the reason guests are visiting. One issue is a fear of prying into people's business if too many questions are asked. Manish Mehta discussed the importance of TDA groups owning their responsibility for their group's data, noting the TDA will not approve funding for repeat events if the group did not meet the basic requirements for the previous one. Myron mentioned two large groups—International Kingdom Covenant Churches and Positive Direction for Youth—that are holding events here soon, asking the hoteliers to please track numbers for these.

**Next Meeting** – June 22, 2017, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor CVB Conference Room

**Meeting Adjourned**