

**Mercer County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Board Meeting
August 14, 2023**

Members Present: Henry Jones, John O'Neal, Jeff Disibbio, Sam Lusk, Carmen Hendrick, Ansel Ponder, Kim Jones, Jim Spencer-ZOOM

Members absent: Kitt McCarthy, Greg Puckett, Mandy Fink, Patrice Belcher, Marty Gearhart, Phil Lane

Guests: Alexa Nagy, Pat Strader, Sofie DeWulf, Shephanie Harper

Staff: Jamie Null, Karen Morris

Call to Order:

Jeff Disibbio, Vice President, called the meeting to order at 9:04 A.M. Guests were welcomed. The June minutes and financials were passed.

New Business

- A. **Presentation:** John O'Neal gave a presentation on The Ridges Sportsplex & Expo Center that is currently in the planning stages. It will be off of exit 9, will house multiple sports fields, meeting space, lodging, dining, and shopping.
- B. **Rental Space:** Jamie told the board about renting office space from Community Connections in Princeton for \$500 a month temporarily for 1 year. Board members voted and approved. (Jeff recused himself from voting)
- C. **DR Update:** Alexa gave an update on the previous quarters numbers. She also updated the board on the Summer campaign that is running now through August 15th. She also discussed the Uniquely Appalachian messaging that the CVB will be using in advertising. The Fall campaign will run August 16th through November 1st. Alexa gave the social media numbers, visitors guide request numbers and website numbers. Pat talked about Google analytics.
- D. **Pineapple PR:** Sofie gave an update on the Tourism pitches to garner stories about the area. There have been 25 stories written about the area so far. She told the board the earned media numbers so far. She also listed pending coverage and upcoming initiatives.
- E. **Staff Update:** Jamie informed the board that Valerie Hendricks would be joining the CVB staff. Her position will be Community Marketing Partner and she will start work on August 28.

Old Business

- A. **Appalachian Ambassador program:** Jamie told the board that the ambassador program is doing well. She is starting to work on the fall bucket list for the ambassadors.
- B. **Industry newsletter:** The newsletter will start again and the first one will go out in August.
- C. **Financial Information:** Kim told the board about WV Board of Treasury Investments. The CVB is eligible, interest is over 5%, not FDIC insured, it is AAA rated, no transaction limit and the funds

are accessible anytime. It was decided that a Zoom meeting would be held to further discuss and vote on whether the CVB should move forward on this investment option.

Next meeting: October 23 in Bluefield

Meeting adjourned: 10:19 A.M.

Ansel Ponder, Secretary

Mercer County CVB Board