

**Mercer County Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Board Meeting  
October 23, 2023**

**Members Present:** Kitt McCarthy, Henry Jones, Sam Lusk, Carmen Hendrick, Kim Jones, Jim Spencer, Mandy Fink, Phil Lane, Patrice Belcher, Marty Gearhart

**Members absent:** Greg Puckett, Jeff Disibbio, John O'Neal, Ansel Ponder

**Guests:** Alexa Nagy, Sofie DeWulf, Kaylie Trotman, Grant Bennett

**Staff:** Jamie Null, Karen Morris

**Call to Order:**

Kitt McCarthy, President, called the meeting to order at 2:01 P.M. Guests were welcomed. The August minutes and financials were passed.

**New Business**

- A. **DR Update:** Alexa gave an update on the Summer campaign that ended August 15th. She also discussed that the Uniquely Appalachian messaging will continue being used in advertising. The Fall campaign will run August 16<sup>th</sup> through November 1<sup>st</sup>. The Winter campaign and Candy Cane Trail will run November 2 through December 31. More video will be incorporated into the advertising. Alexa gave the social media numbers, visitors guide request numbers and website numbers.
- B. **Pineapple PR:** Sofie gave an update on the Tourism pitches to garner stories about the area. She stated that the holiday postcards had gone out with a story pitch to writers. She told the board the earned media numbers so far. She also listed pending coverage and upcoming initiatives.
- C. **Governor's Conference on Tourism:** Jamie gave a re-cap on the conference. Kitt talked about her experience and encouraged everyone to start doing videos. Jamie explained her presentation at the conference and the award the CVB won. She encouraged everyone to sign up for the WV Tourism portal.
- D. **Candy Cane Trail:** Jamie told the board that there are 80+ vendors signed up to participate this year, there are more prizes, more advertising, and more sign-ups this year so far.
- E. **Committees:** The committees will stay the same in 2024. Jamie said she would send out the list at a later date.

**Old Business**

- A. **Financial Information:** Kim refreshed 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. A motion was made and passed for the CVB to place \$250,000 into the investment.

- B. Directors Report:** Jamie told the board that she would be getting data from Air DNA. It is a \$6,000 investment, has forecasting information, and will help with ATV lodging data. She will be working with the school system on a Tourism Track program at the vocational school. Planning for 2024 has begun, working on a marketing plan, and working on history trails. Jamie will be traveling to Atlanta on November 2<sup>nd</sup> for a travel writer meet-up and on November 7<sup>th</sup> the whole CVB team will be in Charleston for the National Christmas Tree celebration.

**Next meeting:** December 11 in Princeton

**Meeting adjourned:** 3:01 P.M.

Ansel Ponder, Secretary

Mercer County CVB Board