



**MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING**

Monroe Science Center  
318 E. Franklin Street  
Monroe, NC 28112  
November 21, 2024 – 8:30 a.m.

**AGENDA**

1. Approval of Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Meeting of September 18, 2024
2. Finance/Occupancy Report
3. Audit Presentation
4. Dowd Center Theatre Update
5. Air Show Update

**MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**REGULAR MEETING**

**CONFERENCE ROOM**

**300 W. CROWELL STREET, MONROE, NC 28112**

**SEPTEMBER 18, 2024 – 8:30 A.M.**

**MINUTES**

**Present:** Chairman Robert Burns, MaryAnn Rasberry, Sheila Crunkleton, Joyce Rentschler, Ron Hinson and Gina Day

**Absent:** Arpan Bhakta and Vice Chairwoman Pat Kahle

**Staff Present:** Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director Pete Hovanec, Finance Director Lisa Strickland, Accounting Manager Ashley Ivey, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Administrative Services Supervisor Alison Nichols, Monroe Science Center Supervisor Lauren Fike, Communications Specialist Bradley Lucore, Senior Staff Attorney Terry Sholar, and Assistant to the City Manager Lisa Hollowell

**Staff Absent:** Dowd Center Theatre Supervisor James Vesce

**Visitors:** Lisa Peebles and Julian Garrett (left 9:05 a.m.)

Chairman Burns called the Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of September 18, 2024 to order at 8:31 a.m.

**Item No. 1 Approval of Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of June 13, 2024** Ms. Rentschler made a motion to approve the Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of June 13, 2024. Ms. Rasberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Rasberry, Rentschler, Day, Hinson, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

**Item No. 2 Finance/Occupancy Report** Ms. Ivey presented the finance report. Numbers are right on with last year's numbers, and it is hopeful that numbers will increase this year. The audit is still in progress, and numbers line up with their draft. Ms. Ivey reviewed the preliminary operating fund balance, the capital project fund, and the special revenue fund. Discussion followed regarding the distributions of money to the capital and operating funds and how they are displayed on the reports.

**Item No. 3 Skate Park Discussion** Mr. Hovanec discussed his new role as Parks & Recreation and Tourism director and introduced the topic of a skate park in Monroe supported by a natural pairing of Tourism and Parks & Recreation. There will have to be consideration of location, degree of difficulty, funding, and timing.

Chairman Burns discussed background of local interest in a skate park and the involvement of Julian Garrett, owner of Funroe Board Company in Monroe.

Mr. Garrett presented his ideas about a skate park or extreme sports complex that would be accessible to all and would draw in people from all over the region. Topics of the presentation included the following:

- Lights, admission costs, fences
- Area of concrete needed
- Tournaments and fundraisers
- Possible locations, including Belk Tonawanda Park
- Features needed at the park
- Potential skate park builders
- Locations of other successful skate parks
- Benefits of skate parks

Mr. Hovanec spoke about the reality of the time a project of this magnitude would take with fact finding, legal consultations, planning, budgeting, and approvals. Discussion about security and legal ramifications of a skate park ensued.

The Board continued discussions about cost and potential locations. While having the skate park near or in Downtown would make it accessible to those who live in Downtown and cannot drive, having the skate park on the outer limits of the City might provide more parking and space. The goal is to make the skate park something that draws people into Monroe. The City land on 74 near the golf course was brought up as another possible location. All agreed that there is support for a skate park and that investigations and discussions should continue.

**Item No. 4 Dowd Center Theatre Update** Mr. Hovanec presented the Dowd Center Theatre's movie schedule and upcoming show lineup on the screen and announced the addition of a family-friendly movie night.

The Board discussed the strategic plan, which has not been finalized, and the possibility of implementing age restrictions for unaccompanied minors at the theater. Some argued that an age restriction would cause the theater to lose a good deal of business, especially at movies, and would give the theater a bad reputation among residents. Others asserted that unaccompanied minors are a liability to the City and that the theater is not a daycare.

Chairman Burns wants to keep in mind the mission of the theater, which is to highlight the arts, and establish policies and procedures that will last in light of the strategic plan's findings. As mayor, he has appointed a subcommittee to help with theater direction and programming so it is not all on staff. He stated that he would like to have the TDA have more marketing and programming input.

Mr. Hovanec announced that there would be some staffing changes at the theater with details to follow in a later email. The final report from the consultant will be ready in the next month or so; in the meantime, anyone who feels they have more input for the consultant can send it to Mr. Hovanec.

**Item No. 5 Science Center Update** Ms. Fike shared a spreadsheet with all the Science Center's latest attendance and revenue numbers on the screen, followed by a list of events Science Center staff would be participating in/attending. The Science Center saw very strong numbers throughout the summer, and there has been a drop off since school started. Those numbers are anticipated to climb again as the holidays approach and parties and school field trips resume.

Mr. Hovanec described the new virtual reality chairs at the Science Center.

Ms. Fike explained that a class at UNC-Charlotte has been building an earthquake shaker table exhibit for the Science Center, which will fit in nicely with some of the other weather-related exhibits. The class has asked if they can do another exhibit for the Science Center. This is all free of charge and is a mutually beneficial partnership.

**Item No. 6 Air Show Update** Mr. Hovanec distributed air show posters and passes to board members. The air show is November 9-10, and staff is working on contracts and planning. Costs have gone up a great deal. Last year the air show cost the City about \$25,000 overall; but it brought in about 50,000 people over two days, increasing hotel and restaurant revenues and providing national exposure. There is a lot of construction at the airport, which is ultimately a good thing; but this limits what the air show can do and will be able to do in the future. It is uncertain how long the air show can continue in light of this.

The group briefly discussed the hotel occupancy tax on the Indian Trail ballot for the November election.

Ms. Crunkleton made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Hinson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Raspberry, Rentschler, Day, Hinson, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:33 a.m.

ATTEST:

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Robert Burns, Chairman

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Alison H. Nichols

MTDA/9-18-24

**CITY OF MONROE, NORTH CAROLINA  
HOTEL OCCUPANCY TAX COLLECTIONS HISTORY**

Month	Collections										Inception	
	FY2015	FY2016	FY2017	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021	FY2022	FY2023	FY2024		FY2025
July	\$43,035.55	\$50,935.50	\$57,757.87	\$49,237.75	\$52,555.67	\$50,502.69	36,361.82	\$58,632.48	\$77,203.59	\$71,311.91	\$70,875.15	
August	36,977.80	48,845.23	56,430.47	53,328.43	53,326.15	56,119.30	33,717.52	\$57,897.52	\$72,112.89	\$70,250.44	\$76,578.66	
September	36,170.00	43,971.63	52,501.28	49,280.40	57,322.54	54,601.79	36,333.99	\$57,646.95	\$67,860.45	\$70,961.74	\$80,412.65	
October	39,730.02	50,450.31	62,852.14	54,883.77	61,478.56	58,576.63	47,918.88	\$60,324.82	\$72,465.20	\$78,388.15	\$0.00	
November	36,201.55	44,935.28	53,718.49	52,159.03	52,344.58	44,677.93	33,689.77	\$62,776.88	\$69,846.82	\$66,133.93	\$0.00	
December	29,698.95	37,857.15	42,905.99	43,020.41	41,248.49	35,855.88	30,608.58	\$55,627.44	\$58,041.30	\$61,688.92	\$0.00	
January	33,174.57	47,446.36	49,314.76	44,917.89	45,790.70	37,998.34	34,555.26	\$47,425.62	\$57,371.07	\$66,446.68	\$0.00	
February	43,506.47	49,690.07	50,786.19	49,090.46	50,174.09	41,074.64	35,790.58	\$55,074.93	\$64,640.72	\$62,730.49	\$0.00	
March	45,588.42	54,238.06	58,370.59	58,151.91	55,628.08	44,213.52	49,982.86	\$68,473.24	\$77,373.44	\$73,443.47	\$0.00	
April	44,006.59	56,185.32	54,463.65	55,541.22	52,298.83	24,603.84	54,315.36	\$72,023.49	\$69,155.17	\$68,463.29	\$0.00	
May	46,174.97	55,415.35	59,183.07	56,465.45	58,606.08	30,748.09	57,003.16	\$72,299.75	\$76,655.92	\$77,856.16	\$0.00	
June	46,835.97	56,036.83	53,968.10	56,273.88	54,481.57	36,285.75	57,435.41	\$72,729.08	\$74,197.82	\$80,517.94	\$0.00	
Penalties/Interest	130.10	40.29										
<b>Total Collections</b>	<b>\$481,230.96</b>	<b>\$596,047.38</b>	<b>\$652,252.60</b>	<b>\$622,350.60</b>	<b>\$635,255.34</b>	<b>\$515,258.40</b>	<b>\$507,713.19</b>	<b>\$740,932.20</b>	<b>\$836,924.39</b>	<b>\$848,193.12</b>	<b>\$227,866.46</b>	
<b>Distribution of Collections</b>												
Administrative Fee	\$14,436.93	\$17,881.42	\$16,522.53	\$16,415.73	\$16,352.55	\$15,152.58	\$15,077.13	\$17,409.32	\$17,296.09	\$18,481.93	\$6,835.99	\$458,425.10
Operating (2/3)	\$273,630.07	\$385,443.97	\$423,820.05	\$403,956.58	\$412,601.86	\$333,403.88	\$328,424.04	\$482,348.59	\$546,418.86	\$553,140.79	\$147,353.64	\$5,361,586.32
Capital (1/3)	\$193,163.96	\$192,721.99	\$211,910.02	\$201,978.29	\$206,300.93	\$166,701.94	\$164,212.02	\$241,174.29	\$273,209.43	\$276,570.40	\$73,676.82	\$4,343,708.11
	<b>\$481,230.96</b>	<b>\$596,047.38</b>	<b>\$652,252.60</b>	<b>\$622,350.60</b>	<b>\$635,255.34</b>	<b>\$515,258.40</b>	<b>\$507,713.19</b>	<b>\$740,932.20</b>	<b>\$836,924.39</b>	<b>\$848,193.12</b>	<b>\$227,866.46</b>	<b>\$10,163,719.52</b>

**Operating Fund Activity:**

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue*	Operating Expense	Capital Fund Transfer Out	Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets	Fund Balance
2004	\$ 172,430	\$ 249	\$ 114,830	\$ 57,351	\$ 57,351
2005	245,420	49,354	163,613	32,453	89,804
2006	268,539	70,628	176,514	21,397	111,201
2007	292,730	69,590	191,873	31,267	142,468
2008	319,940	79,519	210,593	29,828	172,296
2009	327,232	85,108	217,376	24,748	197,044
2010	286,292	105,147	190,079	(8,934)	188,110
2011	306,323	141,300	199,809	(34,786)	153,324
2012	338,380	218,328	214,473	(94,421)	58,903
2013	366,349	157,025	223,162	(13,839)	45,064
2014	389,562	132,144	239,765	17,653	62,717
2015	505,323	229,769	193,164	82,390	145,107
2016	603,262	324,214	192,722	86,326	231,433
2017	677,786	243,750	211,910	222,126	453,559
2018	634,804	270,913	201,978	161,913	615,472
2019	643,745	257,345	206,301	180,099	795,571
2020	599,412	270,236	166,702	162,473	958,044
2021	501,615	385,603	164,212	(48,200)	909,844
2022	732,524	459,705	241,174	31,645	941,489
2023	973,580	720,369	273,209	(19,999)	921,490
2024	1,068,593	788,070	276,570	3,953	925,443

**Fund Balance as of June 30, 2024** \$925,443

**Capital Expense History:**

Professional Fees for Civic Center	86,838
Monroe Park Master Plan and Site Assessment	23,058
Air Museum Advance Planning	19,240
Purchase of "The Tinker Belle"/Capital Upgrades	255,177
Storage Building	8,175
Tourism Study	7,500
Snow Machine	6,129
Center Theatre Property/Adjacent Property Purchase	508,770
Purchase of 318 E. Franklin Street Property for Science Center & Capital Improvements/Consulting/Fun	5,034,446
Capitalized Equipment/Exhibits - Science Center	724,670
Center Theatre Expansion	332,497
Branding Initiative/Website Design	33,830
NC DNCR Grant Capital Equipment Expenses - Science Center Exhibits	100,000

**Cash Balance of the Capital Project Fund  
as of October 25, 2024**

Projects:	
Monroe Science Center Building	0.00
Science Center Exhibits	58,760.35
Rotary Picnic Shelter Project	74,484.37
	<u>133,244.72</u>
	<u>\$ 133,244.72</u>

**Occupancy Tax Special Revenue Fund Operating Activity FY 2025**

		<u>Budget</u>	<u>FYTD Actual</u>
Revenue:	Occupancy Tax	273,863	\$ 47,677
	Sales of TinkerBelle	-	-
	Investment Earnings	17,481	4,237
	Appropriation of Fund Balance	-	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>291,344</b>	<b>51,914</b>
Expenses:	Debt Service - Principal & Interest	253,973	29,086
	Debt Service - Bond Admin Fees	1,056	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>255,029</b>	<b>29,086</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>		<b>36,315</b>	<b>22,828</b>

**Fund Balance History of the Occupancy Tax Special Revenue Fund**

Fiscal Year	Total Revenue*	Debt Service Expense	Capital Fund Transfer In/(Out)	Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets	Fund Balance
2022	\$ 241,649	\$ 254,351	\$ 260,565	\$ 247,863	\$ 247,863
2023	278,051	258,403	-	19,648	267,511
2024***	406,745	256,665	(70,000)	80,080	347,591

\*\*\* Preliminary as of June 30, 2024 - Pending Financial Audit

**Monroe Science Center Operating Activity FY 2025**

		<u>Budget</u>	<u>FYTD Actual</u>
Revenue:	Admission Fees	350,000	\$ 60,234
	Gift Shop Sales	-	10,236
	Birthday Party Packages	10,000	587
	Misc Annual Membership	5,000	-
	Rent Science Center Facility	10,000	-
	<b>Total</b>	<b>375,000</b>	<b>71,058</b>
Expenses:	Salaries & Benefits	412,645	112,482
	Bank Service Charges	2,500	2,462
	Technical Contracted Services	10,002	1,711
	Repairs & Maintenance - Buildings & Equipment	9,186	2,303
	Software License & Support	21,000	18,930
	Repairs & Maintenance - Copiers	1,000	109
	Property Damage/Wellness & Clinic Cost	3,871	3,871
	Marketing & Promotions/Printing	29,875	10,967
	Training and Travel Exp	4,535	1,620
	General Supplies	3,000	1,371
	Small Equipment	500	176
	PC's Peripherals	6,229	858
	Utilities & Telecommunications	31,960	8,520
	Items for Resale - Giftshop	28,821	6,545
	Organizational Dues	1,000	-
	Subscriptions & Publications	550	-
	Special Events	10,000	-
	Other Operating Expense & Cost Allocations	5,638	4,357
	<b>Total</b>	<b>582,312</b>	<b>176,281</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>		<b>(207,312)</b>	<b>(105,223)</b>



## **STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Tourism Development Authority

**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager

**DATE:** November 21, 2024

**FROM:** Ashley Ivey, Assistant Finance Director

**SUBJECT:** Presentation of the Fiscal Year 2024 Audit Report

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### **SUMMARY STATEMENT**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Board that on November 21, 2024, Mr. Christopher Turpin, of Martin Starnes & Associates, CPAs, P.A. will present the audited financial statements for the Monroe Tourism Development Authority for the year ended June 30, 2024.

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### **REVIEW**

Mr. Turpin will present the audited financial statements, highlighting the results of the annual audit performed on the Authority's financial records. A printed copy of the audited financial statements will be provided to you.

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### **RECOMMENDATION**

No action required. For information only.



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Tourism Development Authority  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** November 21, 2024  
**FROM:** Pete Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director  
**SUBJECT:** Dowd Center Theatre Update

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

The TDA will be presented an update on events for the Dowd Center Theatre.

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**REVIEW**

Initial theater committee met on October 3, 2024 to discuss general operations of the Dowd Center Theater.  
Attendance numbers for the past three performances:  
Ambrosia 252  
Beatles Tribute: 235  
Pablo Cruise: 204  
Remaining performances for the year are Peabo Bryson, Noel and Maria and our scheduled movie series.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

No action is needed at this time.



**STAFF REPORT**

**TO:** Tourism Development Authority  
**VIA:** Mark Watson, City Manager  
**DATE:** November 21, 2024  
**FROM:** Peter Hovanec, Communications and Tourism Director  
**SUBJECT:** Air Show Update

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**SUMMARY STATEMENT**

The TDA will be presented a recap of the Warbirds Over Monroe Air Show.

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**REVIEW**

The annual Warbirds Over Monroe Air Show took place on November 9-10 at the Charlotte-Monroe Executive Airport. The air show serves as the largest event in Union County, drawing tens of thousands of people over the duration of the event, and the Monroe Tourism Development Authority is its largest sponsor.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):