



**MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
REGULAR MEETING**

City Hall Conference Room
300 W. Crowell Street
Monroe, NC 28112
Thursday, February 13, 2025 - 8:30 AM

AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Meeting of November 21, 2024
2. Finance/Occupancy Report
3. Legislative Agenda Discussion
4. Dowd Center Theatre Update
5. Science Center Update
6. Air Show Update
7. Pickleball Complex
8. Budget Discussion

MONROE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

REGULAR MEETING

MONROE SCIENCE CENTER

318 E. FRANKLIN STREET, MONROE, NC 28112

NOVEMBER 21, 2024 – 8:30 A.M.

MINUTES

Present: Chairman Robert Burns, MaryAnn Rasberry (arr. 8:34 a.m.), Sheila Crunkleton, Joyce Rentschler, Ron Hinson, Gina Day, and Assistant City Manager Lisa Hollowell (ex officio)

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 City Manager Jeff Wells

Staff Absent: None

Visitors: Lisa Peebles

Chairman Burns called the Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of November 21, 2024 to order at 8:33 a.m.

Item No. 1 Approval of Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of September 18, 2024 Ms. Crunkleton made a motion to approve the Minutes of Monroe Tourism Development Authority Regular Meeting of September 18, 2024. Ms. Rentschler seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

AYES: Rentschler, Day, Hinson, and Crunkleton

NAYS: None

Item No. 2 Finance/Occupancy Report Ms. Ivey presented the finance report. Collections for the first three months of the fiscal year are in. September collections were \$80,412, the highest September numbers in history. Ms. Ivey reviewed fund balances of the operating fund, the capital project fund, and special revenue fund.

Mr. Hinson asked if the air show helped these numbers.

Mr. Hovanec responded that the current numbers are only through September and do not reflect this year's air show numbers yet.

Item No. 3 Audit Presentation Ms. Ivey introduced Christopher Turpin, an auditor with Martin Starnes & Associates via Zoom to present highlights of the 2024 audit. Board members were given hard copies of the presentation as well. Mr. Turpin noted that there was an unmodified opinion with no significant deficiencies or material internal control weaknesses identified and a cooperative staff. Mr. Turpin reviewed general fund balances over the last few years and the current fund balance. There has been a very slight decrease from 2023.

Ms. Hollowell asked why the TDA keeps such a high fund balance and asked if it is being saved for something.

Mr. Hovanec replied that in the past the TDA kept that balance for the next phase of a project but also to ensure everything remains sustainable.

Ms. Strickland concurred with Mr. Hovanec, noting that the board and staff were not sure how the Science Center would perform in its first years and have been budgeting to offset any losses until it is established.

Mr. Hovanec said that the Board needs to be charged with determining its next project.

Item No. 4 Dowd Center Theatre Update Mr. Hovanec said that the Dowd committee has recommended age restrictions at the theater to 18 and over unless accompanied by a parent. City Council unanimously approved. The committee will be continuing to discuss private rentals, and Webb Management is working to complete the strategic plan.

Mr. Hovanec announced that James Vesce has retired and staff is in the process of figuring out structure, especially in terms of membership and marketing. Lauren Fike has stepped in to help in Mr. Vesce's absence. Fall programming was robust, and spring promises to be the same. Additional part-time staff has been hired, and staff is taking over concessions to help realize more revenue.

The board discussed the feasibility of alcohol sales at the theater.

The board also discussed unaccompanied minors at the theater and giving parents accountability for children's behavior and viewing choices.

Mr. Hovanec conveyed the need for a marketing and membership staff member, possibly in lieu of a full-time on-site administrative manager, as well as the possibility of a non-profit advisory group dedicated to raising money through grants and donations.

Chairman Burns emphasized the importance of the theater to the community, noting that the reassessment of its structure has been time-consuming but valuable.

Mr. Hovanec said that the theater is finding its way with programming and might not need private rentals eventually.

The board discussed upcoming programming.

Item No. 5 Air Show Update Mr. Hovanec announced that Saturday was the largest crowd at the air show ever, and Sunday was probably one of the largest Sunday crowds. Staff estimates \$60,000 more in

ticket sale revenue than last year; however, expenses were also higher. Overall, the air show was a big success. Next year is in question as new buildings are being built at the airport. The City Manager wants the show to continue, but it may look different. The air show does not want to be in the way of the airport's progress. The air show was a great team effort.

Ms. Rentschler made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Rasberry seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with the following votes:

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

NAYS: None

The meeting adjourned at 9:14 a.m.

ATTEST:

Robert Burns, Chairman

Alison H. Nichols

MTDA/11-21-24

**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	\$90,971.64	
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	\$78,695.22	
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	\$62,565.29	
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										
Total Collections	\$481,230.96	\$596,047.38	\$652,252.60	\$622,350.60	\$635,255.34	\$515,258.40	\$507,713.19	\$740,932.20	\$836,924.39	\$848,193.12	\$460,098.61	
Distribution of Collections												
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	\$13,802.96	\$465,392.06
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	\$297,530.43	\$5,511,763.11
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	\$148,765.22	\$4,418,796.50
	\$481,230.96	\$596,047.38	\$652,252.60	\$622,350.60	\$635,255.34	\$515,258.40	\$507,713.19	\$740,932.20	\$836,924.39	\$848,193.12	\$460,098.61	\$10,395,951.67

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	749,909
Center Theatre Expansion	332,497
Branding Initiative/Website Design	33,830
NC DPCR Grant Capital Equipment Expenses - Science Center Exhibits	100,000

**Cash Balance of the Capital Project Fund
as of January 30, 2025**

Projects:	
Monroe Science Center Building	3,108.06
Science Center Exhibits	33,521.79
Rotary Picnic Shelter Project	(7,527.50)
	<u>\$ 29,102.35</u>

Occupancy Tax Special Revenue Fund Operating Activity FY 2025

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>FYTD Actual</u>
Revenue:		
Occupancy Tax	273,863	\$ 128,536
Sales of TinkerBelle	-	-
Investment Earnings	17,481	8,613
Appropriation of Fund Balance	-	-
Total	<u>291,344</u>	<u>137,148</u>
Expenses:		
Debt Service - Principal & Interest	253,973	29,086
Debt Service - Bond Admin Fees	1,056	1,056
Total	<u>255,029</u>	<u>30,142</u>
Net Income (Loss)	<u><u>36,315</u></u>	<u><u>107,006</u></u>

Fund Balance History of the Occupancy Tax Special Revenue Fund

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Total Revenue*</u>	<u>Debt Service Expense</u>	<u>Capital Fund Transfer In/(Out)</u>	<u>Increase/(Decrease) in Net Assets</u>	<u>Fund Balance</u>
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

Monroe Science Center Operating Activity FY 2025

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Current Year Actuals</u>	<u>Prior Year Actuals</u>
Revenue:			
Admission Fees	350,000	\$ 92,094	\$ 172,846
Gift Shop Sales	-	20,121	31,328
Birthday Party Packages	10,000	587	11,644
Misc Annual Membership	5,000	-	-
Rent Science Center Facility	10,000	-	-
Total	<u>375,000</u>	<u>112,802</u>	<u>215,819</u>
Expenses:			
Salaries & Benefits	412,645	221,284	340,411
Bank Service Charges	2,500	3,760	7,006
Technical Contracted Services	10,002	1,711	8,471
Repairs & Maintenance - Buildings & Equipment	9,186	3,476	4,574
Software License & Support	21,000	-	(5)
Repairs & Maintenance - Copiers	1,000	153	601
Property Damage/Wellness & Clinic Cost	3,871	3,871	3,248
Marketing & Promotions/Printing	29,875	15,748	16,627
Training and Travel Exp	4,535	1,751	1,591
General Supplies	3,000	3,783	7,470
Small Equipment	500	531	1,940
PC's Peripherals	6,229	2,463	-
Utilities & Telecommunications	31,960	14,605	26,332
Items for Resale - Giftshop	28,821	8,396	14,434
Organizational Dues	1,000	-	1,060
Subscriptions & Publications	550	858	517
Special Events	10,000	929	1,765
Other Operating Expense & Cost Allocations	5,638	5,013	5,613
Total	<u>582,312</u>	<u>288,331</u>	<u>441,655</u>
Net Income (Loss)	<u><u>(207,312)</u></u>	<u><u>(175,530)</u></u>	<u><u>(225,837)</u></u>



STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: February 13, 2025
FROM: Peter Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Legislative Agenda Discussion

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Discussion of items for Council’s Legislative Agenda.

REVIEW

The Tourism Development Authority is requested to discuss items for City Council consideration for Council’s 2025 State Legislative Agenda. Staff will provide recommendations for discussion and seek additional recommendations from the Committee.

RECOMMENDATION

Discussion and direction by the Tourism Development Authority regarding Legislative Agenda items for Council consideration.

Attachment(s):



STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: February 13, 2025
FROM: Pete Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Dowd Center Theatre Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

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

REVIEW

Staff has been working on updating operational procedures. We have had successful shows with Stephen Freeman as Elvis (400+ tickets), Mini Kiss (400+tickets) and an Intimate Evening with Priscilla Pressley (Almost sold out with 500+ticktes and 100 additional meet and greet tickets). We are anticipating high numbers for Motown in February and Gangsta Grass in March. Movies will presume in February to celebrate Black History Month.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.



STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: February 13, 2025
FROM: Peter Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Science Center Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The TDA will be presented an update on science center attendance numbers and programming.

REVIEW

Science Center was busy with holiday attendance and we celebrated our two-year birthday with a free community day 1/18 with 600+ people visiting in one day. We are continuously booking school groups for the spring and have sold out birthday parties for February.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):



STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: February 13, 2025
FROM: Peter Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Air Show Update

SUMMARY STATEMENT

The TDA will be presented a recap of the 2024 Warbirds Over Monroe Air Show and plans for the 2025 air show.

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. The 2024 air show was a great success, and overall financial analysis shows very strong numbers. Staff is moving forward with preliminary plans for a 2025 air show while taking into consideration ongoing construction/improvements at the airport that could affect the air show.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):



STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: February 13, 2025
FROM: Peter Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Pickleball Complex

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Staff is in the early stages of developing an Athletic complex dedicated to pickleball. The potential complex would serve as not only a local facility but also a regional tournament complex aimed at attracting individuals and teams for large-scale events. Staff is moving forward with an architectural company on the design for the facility.

REVIEW

Staff was approached by a resident regarding a potential partnership for the construction of pickleball courts near the downtown area of Monroe. Staff has spent time looking at various sites and locations and determined the current Don Griffin Park on Skyway Drive could serve not only as a location for the courts but also as a complex that could become a premier pickleball and paddle sport facility.

These could serve as a public/private partnership with the City’s Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department overseeing the investment.

Initial conversations with the architectural firm indicates that a complex with 20-25 courts (with a few of those serving as championship courts) will fit within the space of that site. Staff is still researching the site but will be moving forward with Labella Architects to complete an initial design showing the best use of the property.

Once the design is complete, staff will move forward with determining the costs and with the process moving forward.

RECOMMENDATION

No action needed at this time.

Attachment(s):



STAFF REPORT

TO: Tourism Development Authority
VIA: Mark Watson, City Manager
DATE: February 13, 2025
FROM: Peter Hovanec, Parks & Recreation and Tourism Director
SUBJECT: Budget Discussion

SUMMARY STATEMENT

Staff is in the early stages of developing the budget for the next fiscal year.

REVIEW

Staff will present budget information at the next TDA meeting. Staff would like to start discussions prior to the next meeting to ensure board members have the opportunity to provide input.

RECOMMENDATION

No action is needed at this time.

Attachment(s):