



October 21, 2025

Bertie County Tourism Development Authority

Board Meeting 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Occano Golf & Boat Club

105 Scotch Hall Court, Merry Hill, NC 27957

MEETING MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Laura Orsini called the meeting to order at 11:01 a.m. A quorum was established.

2. Attendance

Board Members Present: Laura Orsini, Tim Bazemore, Kelsey Reside, Patricia Ferguson, Vivian Saunders, Brenda Cooper, Pastor Gregory Gilliam, Brianne Godwin, Latricia Hines-Miller, Kate Jordan

Non-Voting Members Present: Jodie Rhea, Robin Payne

Absent: Willie Mac, Allen Castelloe

Guests Present: Ron Phillips

3. Approval of Agenda and Minutes

- a. The agenda and the minutes of the September 16, 2025, board meeting were unanimously approved.

4. Updates:

a. Welcome new board members

- i. Pastor Gregory Gilliam, Brianne Godwin, Latricia Hines-Miller, Kate Jordan

b. Ratify the bylaws

- i. Bylaw Committee Chair Patricia Ferguson reviewed the recent changes to the bylaws. The bylaws were approved with the condition that the duplicate sections labeled 'Section 4' be corrected prior to signing.
- ii. The bylaws will be formally signed at the November meeting.

c. Staggered board terms were established in accordance with Article II, Section 3 of the bylaws:

- i. 1-year Term: Tim Bazemore, Brianne Godwin, Latricia Hines-Miller
- ii. 2-year Terms: Laura Orsini, Allen Castelloe, Patricia Ferguson, Pastor Gregory Gilliam
- iii. 3-year Term: Kelsey Reside, Vivian Saunders, Brenda Cooper, Kate Jordan
- iv. Motion to approve staggered board terms for the 11 members unanimously approved

d. Tax Collection Update

- i. Tax Administrator Jodie Rhea reported that the deadline for occupancy tax payments was October 20. Receipt dates are based on postmark date. As of October 21, three payments

had been received. The Tax Administrator is actively working with online travel agencies (OTAs) to ensure timely payment of occupancy taxes.

- ii. For the record, it was noted that short-term rentals (STRs) are income-producing properties and are required to pay personal property taxes.
- e. TDA Packet**
- i. Consultant Robin Payne distributed informational packets to board members providing background on the TDA's purpose and structure.
- f. Domain Names and Website Committee**
- i. The Chair purchased the domain name BertieCountyTDA.com.
 - ii. A Website Committee was formed consisting of Kate Jordan (Chair), Latricia Hines-Miller, and Robin Payne.
 - iii. A motion to reimburse TDA members for domain name purchases and hosting expenses related to Bertie County TDA was approved, with the understanding that the domains will be transferred to the TDA authority.
 - iv. The Board decided to utilize BertieCountyTDA.com as the TDA's domain (redirecting to the County's website) and reserve DestinationBertie.com for the tourism site.

5. Visitor Centers and Tourism Initiatives

- a. The Board discussed the creation of tourism materials such as rack cards and the establishment of visitor information centers at various locations across the county, including:
 - i. Askewville – Community Center
 - ii. Aulander -- Library
 - iii. Colerain – Seed Museum, Bertie Co Seeds
 - iv. Indian Woods – Blue Jay Rec Center
 - v. Lewiston-Woodville – Vitality Center
 - vi. Merry Hill – Bertie Beach & Occano
 - vii. Powellsville – Town Hall
 - viii. Roxobel – Baker's Peanuts
 - ix. Windsor – River Center & Bertie Peanuts
- b. A Visitor Center Committee was established consisting of Latricia Hines-Miller, Tim Bazemore, and Brianne Godwin.
- c. The Chair discussed upcoming meetings with local community groups, including churches, farmers, outdoor businesses, and municipal leaders.
- d. The Board also discussed tourism development ideas such as historic markers, birdwatching and photography sites, and community festivals.

6. Miscellaneous Items

- a. Chair discussed laminating large map of county
- b. The Board discussed requesting the Economic Development Officer to update the county's hotel study to include TDA-related data.
- c. A Social Media Committee was established consisting of Kelsey Reside, Laura Orsini, and Kate Jordan. The committee will utilize the hashtag #DestinationBertie for promotional purposes.

7. Public Comment (3 minutes)

- a. Guest Ron Phillips expressed concerns about the limited dining and lodging options in Bertie County. He noted that the appearance of Highway 17 provides a first impression that should be improved to enhance tourism appeal.

8. Member Departures:

- a. Jodie Rhea left at 12:00 PM

9. Adjournment

- a. Meeting adjourned at 1:07 PM

- b. TDA will meet on the 3rd Tuesday of the month at 11AM
- c. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 11:00 a.m. at the Roanoke River Center
 - i. Business presentation will be done by River Center (host location)