

TOWN OF BISCOE
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS MEETING
October 9, 2017

The Town of Biscoe Board of Commissioners met in a regular session on October 9, 2017 at 7:00 pm in the Municipal Building. Present were: Mayor Jimmy Blake, Mayor Pro-Tem Jerry Smith, Commissioners Gene Anderson, Eddie Reynolds, Jimmy Cagle, and John Beard. Town Manager Brandon Holland and Town Clerk Laura Morton were present.

Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Blake called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. The Pledge to the American Flag was recited and a moment of silence was observed.

Consent Agenda

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem Smith, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, and so the motion carried unanimously to approve the Approval of Minutes 9-11-17 and the October 2017 Monthly Financial Report.

Market Montgomery Update Mark Scott

Mark Scott, director of Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce provided a Market Montgomery Update to Commissioners. He thanked the Board for giving him a few moments to update you on happenings with Market MontGOMery Chamber & Tourism in general and specifically with regards to Biscoe.

Director Scott said people typically consider it the #2 industry in the state of North Carolina behind Agriculture as visitor spending in NC was nearly \$23 billion in 2016. In 2015 visitor spending increased tremendously here compared to 2014. Montgomery County had the 6th highest percentage increase of the 100 North Carolina counties and roughly \$27 million was spent by visitors here in 2015.

Following that huge increase seemed unlikely this past year, but we did it. Recent figures showed visitor spending in Montgomery County was up 5.8% in 2016 compared to 2015 and that was almost 30% more than the state increase which was 4.4%. And, only 2 counties not in the mountains or coast had a higher percentage increase than Montgomery County- Durham Co. and Moore County. Randolph was at 5.8% with us; Stanley increased 4.2%; Davidson 2.9%, Richmond 1.9% and Anson county 0.9%.

Visitors spent just under \$30 million in Montgomery County last year compared to over \$27 million in 2015. The tax receipts from visitor spending saved each resident of Montgomery County roughly \$150.

The outlook for 2017 is good, BUT... we lost a week of hundreds of visitors and their tens of thousands of dollars spent when the ACC Men's Golf Championships this spring were pulled from Old North State; but, we believe we can still see an increase in 2017 and they are slated to return in 2018.

We are using data from Uwharrie Regional Tourism Partnership studies to target certain groups. We are actively promoting on social media and pitching stories to area television stations that

they are picking up on allowing us to generate free positive publicity about this area to the people most likely to visit our area because they are close by.

One success story I'll share was the Uwharrie Edition Jeep that was produced by Rick Hendrick Off-Road Center in Concord. We were able to parlay that into publicity across multiple TV stations and get Jeep enthusiasts engaged. Once I communicated our desire to further reach the Jeep community, the Triad Jeep Club contacted me about a "Go Topless Jeep Day" where owners of topless or convertible Jeeps would caravan in Winston Salem, but it was canceled. With only 4 weeks to plan something, I was able to work with Mayor Blake, Town of Troy, STARworks and Montgomery County Sheriff's Dept. to get a route for these Jeep owners. We had them meet at STARworks to tour it; then have a law enforcement led driver through Star and to PR Moore's in Biscoe. They had a cue sheet telling them some of the interesting facts about sites they would be driving by. At PR Moore's, they came out with bags full of things they bought and participated in a contest the folks put on there before we headed to Troy.

The bottom line is that all of them had been to the Uwharrie Forest off-road trails, but only 12% had ever been in any other part of Montgomery County before that day. Now, those dozens of other people saw things they can do and enjoy in Montgomery County.

We are working to have that event this spring include Triad, Triangle and Fayetteville area Jeep Clubs. Often times reaching out to extend the stay and the spending of people that already come to your area is easier than generating new visitors. That is something we want to do with the beach traffic as well.

Looking ahead, I have suggested the Tourism Authority use funding for a way-finding and signage program so that as people exit off the interstates and those at STARworks and the produce stands need to know about the mountains and lakes and those coming for the outdoor recreation at the lakes and forest need to know about this part of the county. We can extend the stay of these tourists... and overnight visitors spend MUCH more than day trippers. They need to know about our antiques shops, golf courses, PR Moore's, Town Creek Indian Mound, etc., etc. Hundreds of thousands of people drive close by here each month and thousands exit for gas, lodging, food, etc. and have NO IDEA there is much more for them to see, do and explore in Montgomery County. We're going to change that.

From the Chamber side, I can't thank Mayor Blake enough. Not having relationships with many of the business owners, people like he, David Britt and Ricardo Romero with First Bank and Economic Development Director Amanda Whitaker have facilitated many meetings for me with business owners in the County.

We have been creating "win/win" partnerships with our businesses. For example, the Montgomery Herald is printing stories about our Chamber Members... Our Chamber members are getting good results from those stories and will hopefully budget for advertising with them in the future. Market Montgomery is the group that got the River Wild Food truck from Lake Tillery partnered with STARworks for the Hot Glass, Cold Beer. Now both businesses are pulling from all over the county as the partnership has proven fruitful.

We have generated a following of nearly 4,000 people on our Facebook page and can now make more people aware of events that are going on and businesses that are here. For example, Elevate Ballet Co. opened here in the Wal-Mart shopping center. I can hear Jr. from

Montgomery Co. making fun of that... but the instructors hoped to get 50 students. With help from the Herald publishing stories we sent them and social media, they had over 135 students enrolled and a waiting list.

Uwharrie Mercantile coffee shop had inventory for a month...they thought... after 10 ½ days they were re-ordering what they could and asking bakers to double their orders of baked goods.

Our mantra is Montgomery County... where businesses don't just survive, but they thrive. If our businesses are doing well, then that encourages more businesses to locate here. Think about that as you plan your Christmas shopping this year. NC Tourism realized with the "Explore the state you're in campaign that we need our money to." Don't take for granted what's in your own backyard!

Approval of Water/Sewer Service for Outside Resident

Archie F. Moore, Jr. Butler-Coggins Road

Archie F. Moore, Jr. from Butler-Coggins Road requested Water/Sewer Service for his property that is outside the city limits of Biscoe. Public Works Director Sam Stewart said there is a 2 inch line that still has capacity up to 3 homes.

A motion was made by Commissioner Anderson, seconded by Commissioner Reynolds, and so the motion carried unanimously to approve water/sewer service for outside resident Archie F. Moore, Jr. on Butler-Coggins Road.

Rural Planning Economic Development Assistance Program

Manager Holland said the Town of Biscoe has an opportunity to participate in the Rural Planning Economic Development Assistance Program. This will be a planning meeting for the Board to set goals for the Town. The cost will be \$700.00. The Board will need to approve participation.

A motion was made by Mayor Pro-tem Smith, seconded by Commissioner Anderson, and so the motion carried unanimously to approve the agreement for the Rural Planning Economic Development Assistance Program with a cost of \$700.00.

Tree City Committee Report

Manager Holland gave an update on the first Tree City Committee Report. He informed the Board there would be documents (Tree Ordinance, etc.) that will be brought before the Board at the October meeting.

Manager Report

Water Tank Update

Manager Holland said the Water Tank Maintenance can begin once the phone company removes their equipment. The Maintenance Company and the phone company have agreed on how to put the equipment back and work will begin soon.

New Businesses in Town

Manager Holland said the Town announced the following new businesses that are opening in Biscoe: Elevate Ballet, Verizon, Cellphone Repair, Hosiery Mill, and a gun shop.

Halloween in the Park – October 31, 2017 5 pm until 7 pm

Halloween in the Park will be held on October 31, 2017 from 5 pm until 7 pm. We currently have 9 people that will be handing out candy. The next committee meeting will be held on October 10 at 10 am.

Employee Appreciation Christmas Luncheon November 29 - 11:30 am until 1 pm

The Annual Employee Appreciation Christmas Luncheon will be November 29 from 11:30 am until 1 pm. We will close Town Hall during this time so all of our employees will be able to enjoy the lunch.

Early Voting Site

Biscoe will not be an early voting site this year.

Mayor's Minutes - Commissioner Reports - Staff Reports

The Mayor's minutes are as follows:

- Attended Market Montgomery Meeting in Troy
- Chaired a conference for RPO
- Met with new Autumn Care Director Mur DeJonge
- Attended 2nd Market Montgomery Meeting in Troy
- Went to MCC with Brandon Holland and Gene Anderson to meet with the NC Governor
- Spoke with Pam Daggett from Arauco

Public Forum

No one spoke during the public forum.

Adjournment

There being no further business to bring before the Board, Commissioner Reynolds made the motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Beard made the second. All voted in favor. Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.