



Mayor Barbee, Mayor Pro-Tem LeCompte, Councilmen, Benson, Hoffer, & Healy,

The Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce is requesting your continued funding for the landscape of events and community programming that we provide to support businesses and the growth and vitality of tourism in Carolina Beach. In 2025 we will be hosting the **39th Annual Carolina Beach Music Festival, the 5th Annual Pets in the Park, 19th Annual Cape Fear Kite Festival (including 'Light Up the Night' on Carolina Beach), Second Saturdays, Spring & Fall Restaurant Weeks, Pop & Shop and the 2nd Annual WAVE Awards.**

Residents and fans look forward to our signature events each year, many of which would not be possible without your support. We continue to develop creative and engaging programming that is inclusive and well-executed. We have a diverse and growing audience of 33,000+ engaged consumers on social media. Our website, which offers tourism information, promotes community events and hosts dynamic landing pages for our events, has increased by 35% to 30,000 pageviews each year.

In the third quarter of 2024 the Chamber added a full-time position to the staff, a marketing director with advanced marketing, fundraising, community relations and event experience. This has allowed us to market and execute our events on a higher level, develop deeper engagement with community groups and to create new programs that embrace technology to attract new visitors and partners to benefit our local businesses.

LARGE EVENTS

Carolina Beach MusicFest - Hosted on the first weekend in June, this event attracts a passionate beach music fanbase of over 2,000 attendees, many are local, but the festival draws Carolina Beach music fans from all parts of North Carolina, Virginia, South Carolina, Florida, Texas and even Canada. They visit the Carolina Beach boardwalk and local businesses before and after a day of music on the beach. In 2025, the festival will add a second day of music of a different genre to encourage extended hotel stays and weekend commerce in CB and *new* visitors. We are estimating an additional 2,500+ guests. Funds for this event offset costs for talent, sound production, police, event insurance and operation costs for clean-up during the event and afterwards.

Cape Fear Kite Festival – A three-day event that takes place the first weekend in November supporting tourism in the shoulder season. This is one of Pleasure Island's largest attended events. Fort Fisher State Park reports upwards of 20,000 people over the course of two days. This will be our 4th year of hosting Friday evening at the Carolina Beach Boardwalk which provides a much-needed boost to commerce for CB downtown businesses. The event attracts visitors from all over the country to enjoy our beautiful communities. The requested funding will allow for additional security including officers, paramedics, transportation, as well as securing sport and big kite fliers. It is our hope this year to create an even more exciting and less wind-dependent show on Friday night.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

Pets in the Park - The event takes place in early October and showcases pet-related businesses. Each year over 400 attendees visit Carolina Beach Lake from all over New Hanover, Brunswick and Pender Counties to celebrate pets. We have the opportunity to promote Pleasure Island as a pet-friendly destination and attract pet owners to spend time in town and get to know our area businesses. The Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce will once again give back \$1 from every ticket sold to local animal non-profit organizations. Funds for Pets in the Park will allow the committee to hire CB police officers (security), live music, and ABC permits.

Restaurant Week (Spring / Fall) - Promoted as an event that showcases the hottest dishes and coolest spots island-wide. This week is designed to kick-start visitor's food exploration pre-season(spring) and off-season(fall). The 2024 fall restaurant week featured 22 venues in Carolina Beach (29 total). The landing page is in the top 3 in traffic of the year on our website.

Second Saturday - The Chamber is using its powerful audience to launch both Restaurant Week(s) and to encourage visitors to visit Carolina Beach monthly by promoting art shows, restaurant features, pop-up events and more each month. The Chamber is developing a plan to host 1-2 structured events downtown to anchor the program.

Pop & Shop – A 'Shop Local' event held in November encourages shoppers to visit and discover new retail offerings in Carolina Beach. Hosted with the support of the retail community, the one-day event features a digital shopping bingo card contest with a "Carolina Beach Top Shopper Prize Package" valued at over \$500. Launched in 2024, the event gained immediate popularity and produced "best sales day ever" results for several retailers.

The Wave Awards - A festive award ceremony is a celebration of businesses, partnerships and people creating a wave of positive impact on our community. Valor, Volunteer of the Year, Rookie Business, Non-Profit, Leadership and Duke Energy Community Service awards are a "hug to the community". This year we have added the *Pat Efird* Centennial Service Award and anticipate growing the guest list.



SUMMARY

The support of our local towns and our many volunteers are critical for the Chamber to continue to hold these cherished events in Carolina Beach and on Pleasure Island and to grow them. The success of these events helps us to fund many of our initiatives including business and economic development programming, ribbon cuttings, Women's Empowerment Network programming, and more. The Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce is grateful for your continued partnership. We are requesting \$35,000 to allow for our continued success in offering many different activities and events to the residents and visitors of Carolina Beach.

Sincerely and respectfully,

The *Pleasure Island Chamber of Commerce*