



**Quarterly Report on the Use of HOT Funds
4th Quarter – October-December 2023**

Best Coastal Small Town

The top 10 winners in the category Best Coastal Small Town
Are as follows:

- Bucksport – Maine
- Georgetown-South Carolina
- Southport-North Carolina
- **Rockport-Texas**
- Ocean Springs-Mississippi
- Bay Saint Louis-Mississippi
- Nags Head -North Carolina
- Del Mar-California

As a recipient of this award, we are able to use this logo in all media
including outdoor boards.



Highlights of October, November & December 2023

- **Aransas Pathways Committee** – This committee meets monthly. The Chamber took the lead in working with the committee to form a Marketing Task force to assist Pathways in development of a 2023-2024 Marketing Plan and budget. During the November meeting a second committee was formed to begin the organizing of a Strategic Planning Session to be held January 3th to develop a 5 to 10-year plan for Aransas Pathways.
- **Attractions Committee-** This committee meets monthly and is made up of attraction managers and local event organizers who meet to share the nexts month upcoming events in Rockport-Fulton. A digital calendar is e-blasted to over 70,000 subscribers. Annual events are sent out monthly to all regional media and posted on regional and statewide tourism websites, and publications. Local events are promoted on Social Media. Events are posted in the Chamber Visitor Center lobby and picked up daily by visiing travelers.
- **Geocache-** The Chamber of Commerce has contracted with Texas Geo Tour. This provides the Chamber with a one-year Activity Report that shows how many Geocachers have visited our sites on the Texas GeoTour. Our sites on the tour are promoted on the Geocache Facebook, Instagram and Twitter accounts guaranteeing us up to 500,000 impressions within three Texas regions included in the tour. It also allows Rockport-Fulton an annual story about our communities at a time of our choosing. There are 2.3 million Geocache players in the U.S.
- **Marketing and Promotion** - Annual and local events forwarded to local and regional media monthly. Ad updates and placement in the Rockport Pilot Visitors Guide, (SeaFair). Placement of local events in the Texas Events Fall publication.
- **Social Media/Rockport-Fulton.Org-Local Events Promoting:** The Chamber promoted on its website and the VisitRockport-Fulton Facebook page the following events that had potential to draw visitors to the community: Fall Food Truck Fly-In, Fall Festival, Texas “T” Party, Austin Street Art Walk, Second Saturday, Markers Market, Downtown Farmer’s Market, and the Rockport-Fulton Market days, Lamar Market Days, Singer Song Writer Festival, Arbor Day in the District, SeaFair, Aransas County History Center; “Our Heritage to the Range”, Little Regatta & Harvey BBQ, Tropical Christmas, Tour of Historic Homes, Christmas in Fulton, Merry Campmas, and the Rockport-Fulton Market days, Christmas in the District, Lighted Boat Parade, Winter Texan Appreciation Day.



Highlights of October, November & December - Continued

- The Chamber has formed a board and is working towards completion of their **Texas Music Friendly Community** certification. Rockport-Fulton is currently awaiting on the Governor's office to schedule an official announcement.
- **Goodie Bags-** The Chamber prepared 200 bags filled with information about Rockport-Fulton for The Texas "T" Party held in Rockport the week of October 17-23, 2023, 100 Ford T-Model vehicles, drivers spouses.
- In an effort to promote business in local restaurants, each month a location is "mobbed" during lunch, known as a **Meal Mob**. This program is promoted on Facebook both locally and regionally. Featured this quarter were Panjo's Pizza, Tropical Smoothie, and Los Comales.
- The Chamber partnered with the Aransas County Historical Society and Historical Commission, the History Center for Aransas County and the Cultural Arts District to submit an application to the Texas Historical Commission to host the **Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit**, and Rockport was one of seven communities approved to host the exhibit in 2025. This group is working with the Texas Historical Commission, local and regional partners to begin the process of formulating a plan to host this prestigious exhibit while having the unique opportunity to showcase the history and culture of Rockport-Fulton and surrounding communities.
- The **Texas Coastal Bend Regional Tourism Council** hosted a 2023 Business Expo on October 24th in Cuero in an effort to promote tourism in the South Texas Coastal Bend Region. Partners throughout the region were able to set-up a table with information about their communities or attractions. Representatives from the Texas Hotel & Lodging Association, Texas Historical Commission, Building Brands Marketing and Texas Parks & Wildlife were featured guest speakers at the event.
- **SeaFair**, held October 5-7th, proved to be a very successful event despite the loss of carnival sales on Thursday due to weather. There were over 100 food, arts & crafts and market vendor were on-site. There was record attendance and participation at the crab and cardboard boat races, as well as the car show and parade. Ticket sales were at \$9,464 but did not include 12 and under free attendance. Carnival tickets sold were 5,255. Adding volunteers, sponsors, and VIP ticket sales, the estimated attendance was 15,000 versus 12,000 last year. The increase is attributed to The Bellamy Brothers that drew a large Friday night crowd and to the successful of the new carnival.



SEAFAIR 2023



Zoe Sundberg –
T-Shirt Art Contest
Winner



FIND YOURSELF IN
ROCKPORT
FULTON

Highlights of October, November & December - Continued

- **Short Term Rental Council-** This committee meets monthly and is made up of management companies, vacation rental and Airbnb's. They originally formed to work with the city of Rockport to adopt ordinances that are agreeable to the STR owners as well as surrounding residents. In addition, the committee has submitted a Good Neighbor Brochure for review and approval. During the last quarter of 2023, the city has come closer to reaching a final set of ordinances. Once approved, the STR Council will approach both Aransas County and the Town of Fulton about adopting the same ordinances and policies.
- **RV Council-** The RV Council meets monthly. This quarter the group began planning for the January Winter Texan Appreciation Day. Each month the council hosts a guest speaker. In November the group heard from CampSpot Software, a organization offering software specific to RV Park Owners. In December, local park owner Katie McLeod shard a report received while attending the National Outdoor Hospitality Conference. Katie shared trends and the predicted future of outdoor hospitality as reported by the KOA Association.
- **Tourism Development Council** – The council last met November 9th at which they received a Tourism Report from the Chamber. The council nominated and elected new officers, Chair and Vice-Chairman. The council finalized the 2023-2024 Marketing Plan budget after having heard back from local government entities on approved amount of HOT funds. A Photo Contest was held seeking fresh new photographs to be used in
 - web based and print publications as well as large billboard advertising to market
 - Rockport-Fulton.

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PHOTO CONTEST

The Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce is seeking fresh new photographs to be used in web based and print publications as well as large billboard advertising. Submit your best shot!

**THEME: Seeking
Photos of the
Beach, Fishing,
Birding, Families,
and Seafood.
If people included
in photo &
distinguishable
need talent release
form.**



Submit your photographs to
Tourism@1rockport.org
BY JANUARY 5TH

PHOTOGRAPHER SPECS:
Original RGB photo from digital camera
Original full-sized photo-no cropping.
Highest quality resolution and at least 300 DPI
Largest photo size will be at least MB

Digital Creative



Families have been known to get along here.



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© 2022 Ty Husak



The best time to fish is as soon as you can get here.



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© 2022 Maria Nesbit



Straight from the bay right to your plate.

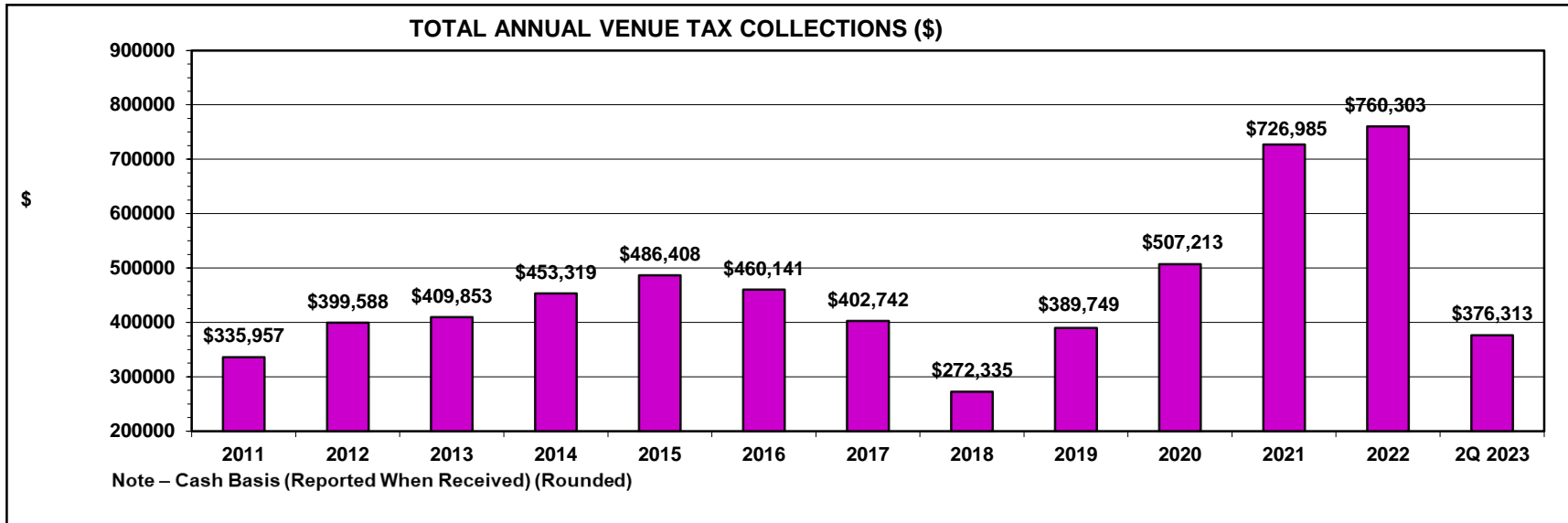


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ARANSAS COUNTY ANNUAL VENUE TAX COLLECTIONS (\$)

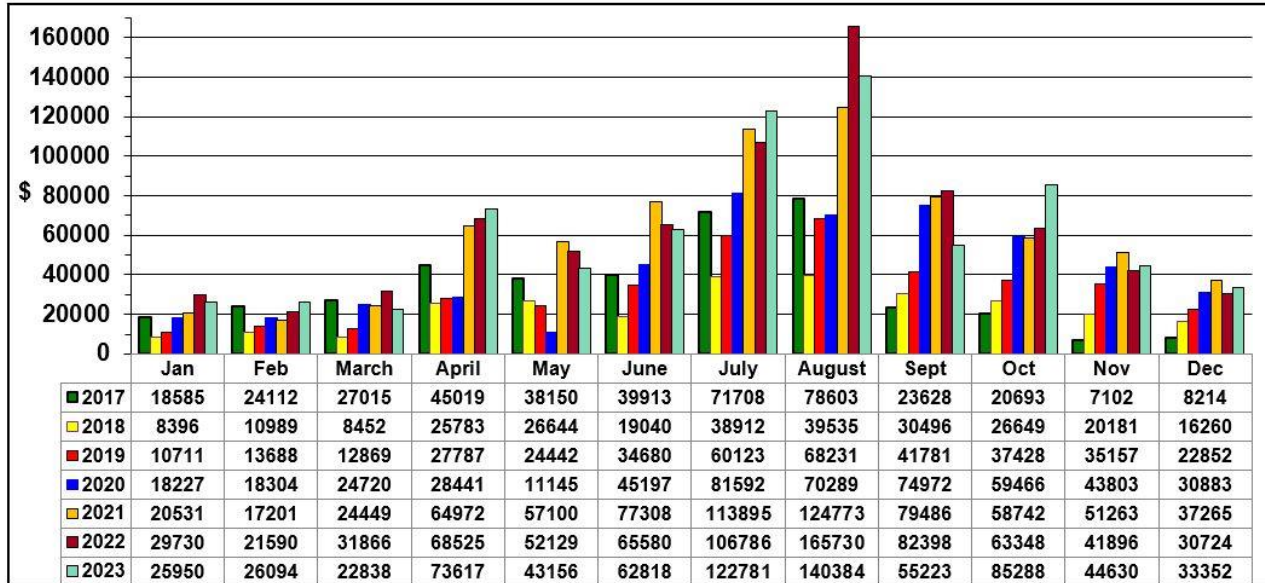
- The first half of 2023 show Venue Tax Collections at \$376,313.
- At \$760,303 for all of 2022, the Venue Tax was up about 4.5% over the banner year of 2021, which showed a 43% increase over 2020.
- Calendar year 2018 was the low point for Venue Tax Collections and since then (through 2022), the collections are up three times the 2018 level.
- Overall, the Venue Tax Collections have achieved a total accumulation of nearly \$6 Million



SOURCE: Aransas County Treasurer Data

ARANSAS COUNTY VENUE TAX COLLECTIONS (\$) BY MONTH FROM 2017 FORWARD

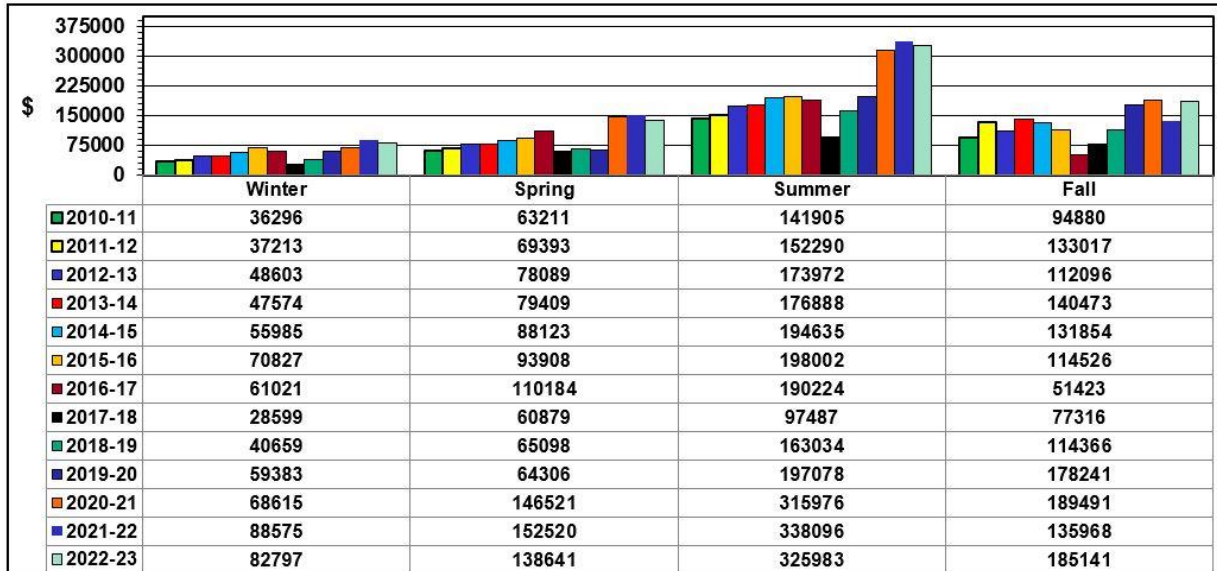
- For the first half of 2023, the months of Feb, April, and July reflected banner collections – the highest ever. August remains the highest month of collections at \$140,384.
- 4th quarter 2023 data was 20% higher than 2022 collections.



SOURCE: Aransas County Treasurer (Rounded Data)

ARANSAS COUNTY VENUE TAX REVENUE BY SEASON (SOURCE: ARANSAS COUNTY)

- When the Venue Tax data is aggregated by tourism seasons, there is linear seasonal growth over time – very significantly in Summer, significantly in Spring, and gradual in Winter. The Fall data is inconsistent over time but is higher than Spring.
- Summer, Spring, and Winter seasons have grown 144% since their respective baselines when tracking began in 2011. Data in 2023 is just under the pinnacle reached in 2022.



Winter = December – January – February
Spring = March – April - May

Summer = June – July – August
Fall = September – October – November

Attendance Data Sheet	Oct 2023	Nov 2023	Dec 2023
Visitor Data Distribution			
Outside of 70 Miles*	82.58%	82.35%	87.11%
Local**	17.41%	17.65%	12.89%
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
70+ Miles / Metro Areas			
Austin	12.05%	0.00%	4.64%
Dallas / Ft. Worth	4.02%	2.35%	3.09%
Houston	7.14%	1.76%	3.09%
San Antonio	11.16%	6.47%	5.15%
Total major metro areas	34.37%	10.58%	15.97%
Tourism from outside of Texas	25.89%	54.12%	64.95%
Rural tourism beyond 70 miles	1.79%	15.88%	4.64%
Total tourism from beyond 70 miles	62.05%	80.58%	85.56%
** Local Visitors < 70 miles			
Rockport and Fulton	13.84%	17.65%	12.89%
Corpus Christi	0.89%	1.18%	0.52%
Victoria	0.89%	0.00%	1.03%
Rural Areas	1.79%	0.59%	0.00%
Total	17.41%	19.42%	14.44%

Visitor Sign-In Log at the Rockport- Fulton Visitor Center



MODEL USING # OF HOTEL ROOMS AS BASE – 4Q 2023

Base = Rockport - Fulton # of Hotel Rooms 4Q 2023

Base = Rockport - Fulton # of Hotel Rooms	4Q 2023
1. Number of Hotel Rooms in Rockport - Fulton (Source: Texas Comptroller)	2124
2. Number of Nights in 4Q 2023 (Oct-Dec)	92
3. Available Room Nights to Sell in Rockport - Fulton (1 * 2)	195,408
4. Rockport - Fulton Hotel Occupancy (Estimated by Source Strategies)	45.80%
5. Rockport - Fulton Rooms Nights Sold (3 * 4)	89,497
6. Number of Visitors in Each Room (Size of Party Assumption)	1.9
7. Number of Rockport - Fulton Hotel-based Visitors (5 * 6)	170,044
8. Average Number of Nights Spent in Rockport - Fulton (Assumption)	2.8
9. Number of "Heads in Beds" Rockport - Fulton (7 * 8)	476,123
Calculations by Prost Marketing, Inc	



Thank you!

Shelly Stuart, IOM, President/CEO

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