

**Town of Swansboro**  
**Swansboro Tourism Development Authority**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**October 9, 2025**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm. Board members in attendance were Randy Swanson, Jack Harnatkiewicz, Michael Diehl, Linda Thornley, and Preston Patterson. Steven Overby was absent.

**Approval of Minutes**

On a motion by Mrs. Thornley, seconded by Mr. Patterson, the July 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes were approved unanimously.

**Business**

***Marketing & Advertising Status Update Discussion***

Ann Marie Bass of Front Row Communications, LLC presented a direct mail marketing proposal to reach property owners with information about occupancy tax collection. She outlined the costs for a postcard campaign that would direct recipients to a website with more detailed information via QR code. The pricing options included:

- 3,000 mailers (5x5 card, full color): \$2,996.60
- 4,000 mailers: \$3,878.00
- Additional design costs if using a direct mail piece designer: \$499.00

Board members discussed concerns about the effectiveness of using direct mail to collect occupancy taxes from short-term rentals. Finance Director Sonia Johnson shared that the core issue was the inability to determine which properties the occupancy tax payments originated from, particularly because platforms such as Airbnb collected and remitted taxes in bulk without identifying individual properties.

Mr. Diehl suggested that, rather than attempting to create a comprehensive list, the board might consider encouraging the formation of a short-term rental advocacy group. Such a group could help gather general information without sharing specific names or numbers, which could assist in determining whether the Town was receiving the appropriate amount of occupancy tax revenue. He further suggested that focusing on encouraging responsible and ethical short-term rental practices might be more effective than pursuing tax enforcement.

***Finance Report- (1st Qtr.-FY 25-26)***

Finance Director Johnson reviewed the first-quarter financial report for fiscal year 2025–2026. She reported a beginning fund balance of \$242,072.10. Revenues for the first quarter (July through September) totaled \$47,435.82, and expenditures amounted to \$23,495.08, resulting in an available fund balance of \$266,012.84.

***Portable Restroom Discussion***

Finance Director Johnson reported that she had been tasked with obtaining quotes for a portable restroom but required more specific guidance from the board regarding its requirements. She raised several questions about the board's preferences, including whether

the restroom should be a two-stall facility, ADA accessible, and intended for permanent or temporary placement. She further noted that for large events, the town already rents multiple portable restrooms and that the TDA had previously contributed \$2,000 toward such rentals. She also advised that if there are future plans for the visitor center, TDA funds might need to be allocated for that capital expenditure instead.

Mr. Diehl clarified that when he initially proposed the idea, it was intended as a way to use TDA funds to benefit the town. He suggested that input should come from town departments—such as Parks and Recreation, Public Works, and the Town Manager, indicating how a portable restroom facility could serve their needs. He noted that the restroom could have multiple purposes beyond addressing the immediate need created by the closed visitor center, including use during festivals and by other departments.

The board agreed that more input from town departments regarding specific needs and potential uses for a portable restroom was needed before moving forward. The consensus was to raise the topic at the next Board of Commissioners meeting to assess interest and potential uses among the various town departments.

### ***2026 Regular Meeting Schedule***

Finance Director Johnson reviewed Pursuant to NCGS 143-318.12 a public body may establish a schedule of regular meetings, showing the time and place. A copy of the schedule would be filed with the Town Clerk. A regular meeting schedule for the 2nd Thursday of each quarter was provided for consideration.

- Thursday, January 8, 2026, 2:30pm
- Thursday, April 9, 2026, 2:30pm
- Thursday, July 9, 2026, 2:30pm
- Thursday, October 8, 2026, 2:30pm

On a motion by Mr. Diehl, seconded by Mrs. Thornley, the proposed meeting schedule was approved unanimously.

### ***Board Projects/Discussion Items***

The board inquired about attendance requirements, noting some uncertainty regarding how many consecutive meetings a board member was allowed to miss. The staff agreed to follow up with an answer.

### **Adjournment**

On a motion by Ms. Thornley, seconded by Mr. Diehl, the meeting adjourned at 3:37 pm.