Consent Agenda

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What is a Consent Agenda?

A consent agenda is a practice by which the mundane and non-controversial board action items are organized apart from the rest of the agenda and approved as a group. This includes all of the business items that require formal board approval and yet, because they are not controversial, there is no need for board discussion before taking a vote. Items may be on a consent agenda only if all board members agree; if even one member considers a specific item to need discussion, it must be removed and placed on the regular agenda for the board meeting.

Why are Consent Agendas Used?

Consent agendas are used to save board meeting time and to help ensure that board meetings focus on substantive topics that are worth discussion. Through the "bundling" process, the entire set of items of business that are not worth board meeting time can be voted on in one action versus taking the time to vote on each individual item.

When Should Consent Agendas Be Used?

Consent agendas should be used when there are a number of non-controversial business items on which the board needs to vote. Complete information must be provided in advance of the meeting to all board members, so that each knows what is being proposed and has the opportunity to consider whether the item truly is non-controversial. The key here is "non-controversial," and the definition of non-controversial may vary from organization to organization. Consent agenda items often are matters that a bylaw or some other rule or regulation requires to be formally approved by the board, yet there is no value added by engaging the board in discussion about the item (e.g., a routine lease renewal for a facility already included in the approved agency budget). Consent agendas are *not* to be used to hide actions that will be controversial -- to do so breaches the trust of the board and undermines the value of this practice.

Where Should Consent Agendas be Placed within the Overall Meeting Agenda?

The consent agenda typically appears very near the beginning of the regular meeting. This allows any item removed from the consent agenda to be placed onto the overall agenda for discussion and action later in the meeting. As with all formal board action, a quorum must be present to in order for action on the consent agenda items to be legitimate and binding.

Who Should Use Consent Agendas?

Consent agendas are used by both non-profit and for-profit organizations whose boards are trying to use members' time efficiently and that have much routine business to approve. It is especially common to see the boards of governmental entities such as libraries and educational institutions use consent agendas because of the volume of routine business that they are required by law and regulation to approve.

How Can Consent Agendas be Used Effectively?

The key to success is to provide all consent agenda information to board members well in advance of the meeting. It is *essential* that board members have ample time prior to a meeting to become familiar with each item on the consent agenda. That way, if a member or members have a concern about any item(s) that they believe need further discussion, then they will ask for the item(s) to be removed from the consent agenda and addressed separately.

At the time in the regular agenda when there is to be action on the consent agenda, the chair will first inquire whether there are any items that need to be removed from the consent agenda. If *any* member wishes an item to be removed, it must be removed and placed on the regular agenda. Immediately following the opportunity to remove any items for separate discussion, the consent agenda is moved and approved as a set. (For example: "I move the consent agenda." Another member: "I second the motion.")

It may be useful to those who plan the overall meeting agenda and the consent agenda (usually the board chair and/or executive director) to have guidelines, developed in consultation with the board, to clarify which types of items might be appropriate for the consent agenda.

When Should a Consent Agenda Not Be Used?

The consent agenda practice should not be used unless all members of the board understand and agree to its use. This approach places more responsibility upon members to prepare prior to the meeting. Obviously, if members do not read the information on the consent agenda prior to the meeting, they cannot responsibly agree to the inclusion of any particular item on the consent agenda. The worst outcome would be to take action on a matter of significant programmatic or legal importance without truly having the board's **informed** consent.

Blacksburg | Christiansburg

— MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA —

Tourism Mission:
Stimulate economic opportunity and enhance the quality of life by the celebration and sharing of our culture, heritage and natural beauty through authentic experiences. We will promote our destination in a manner that fosters partnerships and sustainable growth.

GOAL 1. Increase Tourism Marketing

Objective 1. Tourism Marketing Plan

  A. Research based marketing plan- Feb 2015
  B. Branding, theme, logo, identify- Feb 2015

Objective 2. Develop effective data collection and success measurement program

Progress to date

- Procurement processes for brand development and marketing items.
- Connections with Universities, organizations, interest groups to obtain cost effective support for initiatives.
- Discussed and have received proposal from VT to conduct baseline visitor profile
- Data Sharing arrangement with VTC for Event Calendar (Master)
- Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram. Overall marketing plan will include integrated social media plan.
- Research (through the branding process, interns, secondary through associations)
- Grants to support marketing initiatives: VTC MLP, VTC LOVEworks
- VTC Electronic Marketing- Updated listings
- Increased utilization of "third-party" websites and marketing channels: Explore New River Valley, MySWVA, Heartwood Visitor's Center, NRV Visitor's Center, Strategically located State Welcome Centers and Rest Areas, local businesses.
- Building media relationships with print and broadcast by press releases, news stories and article support.

Coming Soon!
- Our Brand
- Website with interactive map
- Image library

GOAL 2. Improve Tourism Infrastructure

Objective 1. Improve, coordinate and communicate information about current infrastructure

- A. State-certified Visitors Center and kiosks (other locations such as VT visitors center, libraries, chamber, retail)
- B. Develop marketing materials
- C. Implement Ambassador program

Progress to date

- Tear-off Map test version
- Temporary VIC at Gvmt Center. Establishing best policies and procedures.
- Marketing research- VT, RU, classes and interns
- Welcome Centers and Rest Area brochure fulfillment
- Brochure fulfillment from leads, calls, walk-ins, emails (on-going)

Coming Soon-!
Comprehensive Visitors Guide

On the Horizon-
Information distribution at VT and RU points of entry i.e. visitors center, websites, student orientations.
Ambassador program supported by destination training
Develop and implement visitor's signage and way-finding plan (Overall Destination i.e. area gateways)

GOAL 3. Develop and Cultivate Tourism Partnerships

Objective 1. Support regional planning by acting as a catalyst for stronger local, state, and regional partnerships.

  A. Identify and prioritize partnership opportunities to develop and grow

Objective 2. Encourage Private and Non-Profit Sector Partnerships for Cooperative Marketing

Objective 3. Develop a marketable identity with partners for shared goals and interests

Progress to Date

- Initiated first New River Valley Destination Marketing Organization meeting now held quarterly
- Initiated first Hotel Director of Sales Meeting now held quarterly and expanding
- Worked with local businesses on promotion through 'Round the Mountain and Crooked Road Affiliation
- Led non-profit groups in producing first Crooked Road Festival in Montgomery County, March 2014.
- Lead office in "East Zone" of Mountains of Music Homecoming Crooked Road Festival, June 2015
- Partner in LoveWorks Murals in Blacksburg and Christiansburg, 2013
- Partner in Civil War Marker Grant, 2015
- Partner in NRV Trail Guide Grant,   2014
- Partner in Blacksburg Visitors Guide Grant, 2014
- Partner in Tri-County Agtourism Grants, 2014
- Partner in Montgomery County Crooked Road Festival Grant, 2014
- Partner in Crooked Road's Mountains of Music Homecoming Festival Grant, 2014
- Partner in Fish Virginia First
- Partner in the Wilderness Road
- Partner in MySWVA initiatives including the Crooked Road, 'Round the Mountain and Appalachian Spring
- Partnered with the Christiansburg Aquatic Center and Christiansburg Recreation Center to hold Sports Marketing information session for local businesses to learn about the sports groups, schedules, profile etc., 2014
- Generate leads to hotels for "city-wide" meetings and events
- Support traditional economic development while building tourism sector (Tradeshows, VT connections)

On the Horizon

- Marketing Plan for the New River Valley (working with NRV DMOs) to enhance current visitation.
- Working with existing initiatives including NRV Green and Virginia Green to educate and encourage sustainable operational practices that many travelers have come to expect.

GOAL 4. Develop Tourism Education Programming and Advocacy

Objective 1. Increase customer service training

    A. Create certified training program

Objective 2. Increase resident and front line staff awareness of tourism assets

Progress to Date

- Researched variety of ways to provide training to local businesses including front line and management staff. Discussion still needed to determine most effective and sustainable manner considering budget is a big contributing factor.
- Tear-off map will be as much an education and marketing tool as a way to assist the visitor from point A to B
- Ongoing speaking engagements and guest appearances throughout the year including audiences of civic groups, community organizations, professional organizations, and student groups

On the Horizon

- National Tourism Week Celebration, May 2015 to increase recognition for the local hospitality and travel businesses and employees as well as to educate residents on the value of tourism

GOAL 5. Enable Growth through Strong Program and Policy

Objective 1. Evaluate, improve and continue to create policy and procedures for the tourism program

Progress to Date

- Research in tax rates within the competitive set and opportunities for increased revenue
- Membership in VHTA to remain abreast of policy affecting the local hospitality and tourism businesses and the best way to support.
- Frequent stories through print and broadcast communicating the value of tourism in our area
- Researched and share, when appropriate, incentives and zoning to facilitate tourism

On the Horizon

- Participation in VHTA Tourism and Film Day at General Assembly January 2015
- Local Public Relations Campaign to educate on the value of tourism. Will support the unveiling of the brand and timing will coincide with National Tourism Week, May 2015
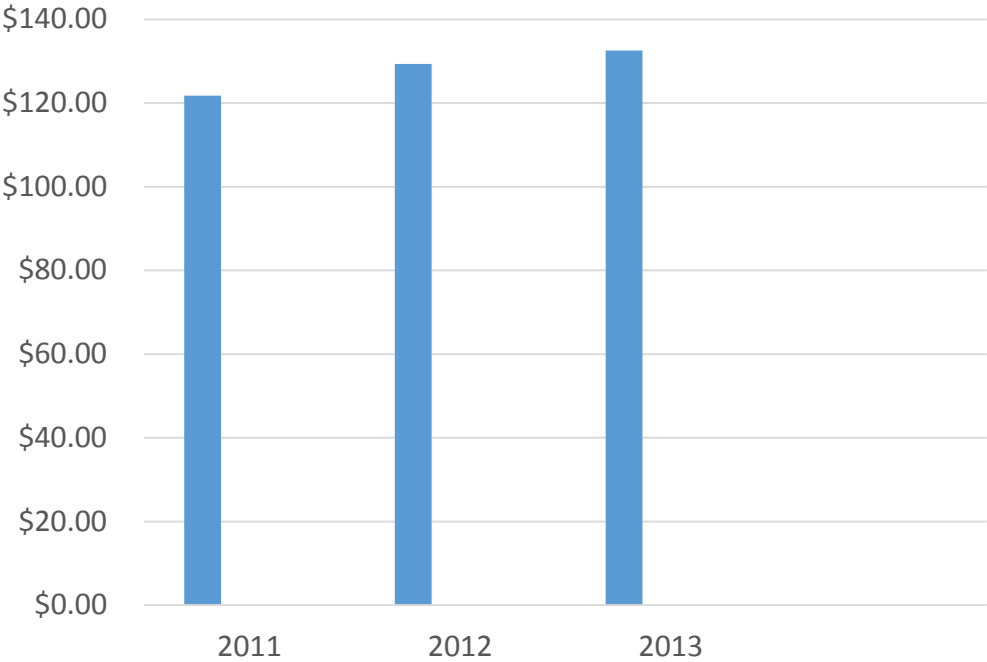
Update on Regional Tourism Program
January 20, 2015

Blacksburg | Christiansburg

— MONTGOMERY COUNTY, VA —

Tourism *Spending in Montgomery County

Tax Rates

2011	Meals	Transient	Admission
County	4%	3%	NA
B'burg	6%	7%	NA
C'burg	7%	7%	NA
*2012			NA
County	4%	3%	NA
B'burg	6%	7%	NA
C'burg	7.5%	9%	NA

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service
*Information collected SP, S, early Fall

FY11- $121.8 mil
FY12- $129.4 mil
FY13- $132.6 mil- most recent
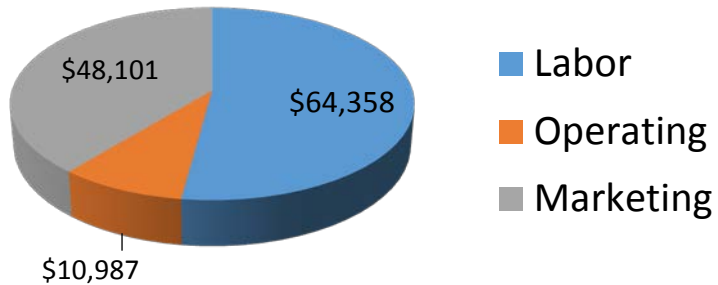*Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation*

*By Visitors

Total Assets

$486,047.48

Two quarters pending , approx. $60,000 to be added.
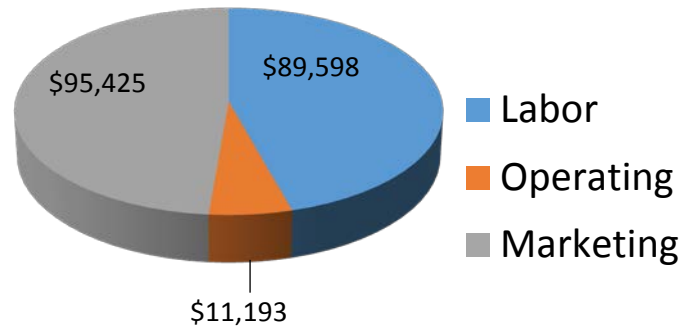*Excludes grant awards.*
Excludes FY Expenditures below.
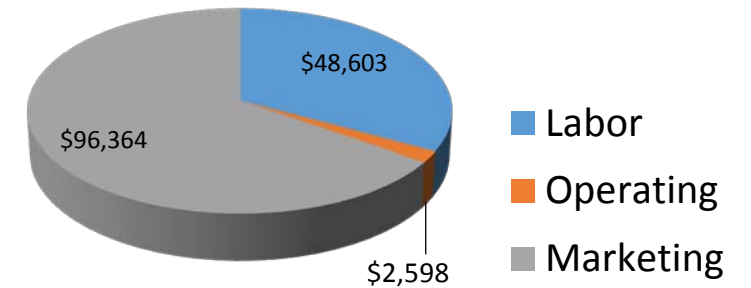
Regional Tourism Budget

As of January 20, 2015

FY13 Expenditures
$123,445.43

$48,101
$64,358
$10,987

- Labor
- Operating
- Marketing

FY14 Expenditures
$196,216.86

$95,425
$89,598
$11,193

- Labor
- Operating
- Marketing

FY15 Expenditures
$147,564.56

$48,603
$96,364
$2,598

- Labor
- Operating
- Marketing

"Tax Relief"

Revenue derived from tourism spending in our area generated **$230.40 per Household** in Montgomery County in 2013!
  Compliments of our Visitors

Math behind the Amount
$8,003,713.98 combined state and Montgomery County taxes generated from **visitor** spending in our County in 2013
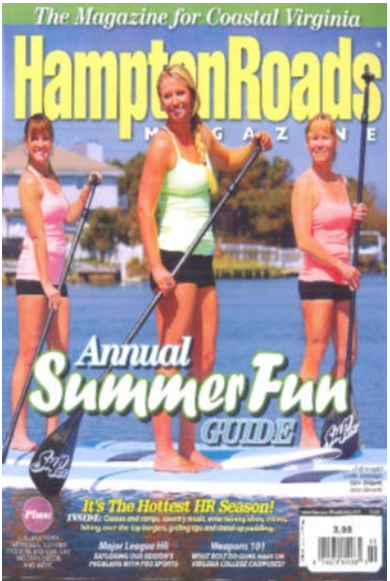*Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation – US Travel Association*

34,739 households in Montgomery County
Source: US Census Bureau

Sponsorship

Public Relations

Promotion

Accolades

HOSPITALITY AND TRAVEL NEWS FROM ACROSS VIRGINIA

A quick glance at the week's top tourism news from your friends at VHTA.

Newport News to ask People Express to repay grant funds. Go to - http://www.dailypress.com/business/tidewater/dp-newport-news-to-ask-people-express-to-repay-grant-funds-20140930,0,1983418.story

Tourism numbers are up in Montgomery County. Go to - http://www.wdbj7.com/news/local/tourism-numbers-are-up-in-montgomery-county/28217376

Hermitage Hill Farm and Stables received Virginia Tourism Corporation grant for tourism marketing. Go to - http://augustafreepress.com/hermitage-hill-farm-stables-receives-virginia-tourism-corporation-grant-tourism-marketing/

VMFA, Maymont receive grants; VMFA gets match for crowdfunding campaign. Go to - http://www.timesdispatch.com/business/local/vmfa-maymont-receive-grants-vmfa-gets-match-for-crowdfunding-campaign/article_5bb621a6-4f11-5b61-9759-b2399bfc8d6b.html