



**Visit Bath County
Board Meeting Minutes
October 20, 2025**

Call to order: 12:06 p.m.

In Attendance: Tammy Hahn, John Cowden, Pat Haynes, Peter Fowler, Will Hodges, Russell Perry, Pam Stidham, Leanne Harrow, Jarek Mika, Taylor Baker, Mark Spadoni, John Loeffler
Staff: Mark Shore

Absent: Blair Smyth, Emily Ellis, Kat Taylor, Mike Bender, Jason Miller, Allen Eberly

Meeting Minutes: Minutes of September 15, 2025, meeting presented.

Motion to Approve: Pam Stidham motioned for approval; seconded by John Cowden. Motion passed.

Treasurer's Report

- Peter Fowler presented the financial statement from July – September 2025.
- Revenue reflects 50% of annual funding received upfront, with the second installment to become available in January 2026.
- Fiscal year runs July 1 - June 30 (aligned with county).

Motion to Approve Financials: Will Hodges moved to approve the financial statement as presented; seconded by Leanne Harrow. Motion passed.

Executive Committee Report

- Robinson, Farmer, Cox Associates, PLLC completed the annual audit (23-24) with no discrepancies noted. All accounting practices follow accepted accounting principles.
- The Board of Supervisors has moved up the budget submission deadlines by three weeks. The 2026-27 budget will be due in early December (previously early January).
- Visit Bath requests funds from Bath County each January for the upcoming July 1 fiscal year. The calculation is based on the prior calendar year's actual collections.
- Economic impact data by county/city has been released from Virginia Tourism Corporation. The data reveals the following:
 - Bath County ranked #4 in percentage increase in tourism spending statewide.
 - Bath County ranked #2 in household tax savings from tourism at \$2,876 per household.
 - Bath County's lodging revenue per resident is 22 times higher than Virginia's average.
- The most effective method to convey this positive information to the public was discussed.

Presidents' Report

- Marketing Manager, Max Catalano, has been working with Resplendent on PR and with MindK on updating the website.
- Max will be responsible for organic social posts and is working on a new community calendar with a deadline priority for Thanksgiving holiday week.
- Review of the PR & Social Media report indicated exceptional growth:
 - Top performing content was outdoor, nature, and wellness themes.
 - Looking to balance monthly posts from 34 to 20-25 to optimize engagement.
- Media Coverage included an article in Virginia Living Magazine where writers visited and worked with Resplendent for a positive feature article.
- Blue Ridge Country also featured a full-page article. Facts are being addressed with the publisher and there is speculation that AI generated more than 50% of the content.
- Discussion of ChatGPT impact on tourism as a search tool. Waterwheel reports that multiple restaurant guests reported finding the restaurant through AI search rather than traditional Google search.

Community Partners

Chamber of Commerce

- The Harvest Festival has been rescheduled to November 8 at The BEAR downtown due to weather.

EDA

- No representation. Leadership transition in progress (third chair in nine months).

County of Bath

- Representative not in attendance, no report available.

Old Business

- Airport construction has been significantly delayed due to unreliable contractors. Construction errors threatening the deadline for March/April completion deadline. Board emphasized Visit Bath County has no capacity to fund cost overruns.

New Business

- Discussion of volunteer emergency services challenges that face hospitality businesses. Recent medical emergency response took nearly an hour. Volunteer rescue squad and fire department critically understaffed. Training requirements (300+ hours) prohibit working professionals from volunteering.
- Regional Cross County promotion was discussed with Greenbrier County i.e., Southern Allegheny Golf Initiative.

Upcoming Events:

- The Bath County Health Fair is open to the public on October 23.
- Don Ryder will be formally inducted into the Virginia Golf Hall of Fame on October 21.

Motion to Adjourn: John Loeffler motioned to adjourn; consensus agreed, meeting adjourned at 1:23 p.m.