

Tyrrell County Chamber of Commerce
Board Meeting Minutes
May 26, 2026

The meeting was called to order by the President, Justin Westcott.

Members in attendance at the Chamber Office: Justin Westcott, Jennifer Westcott, Gretchen Schermerhorn, Sandi Smith, John McCann, Cammy Arnold, David Davenport Via zoom: Nancy McKaig, Katarina Ramos, Debbie Olson and Hunter Rose

Approval of Financial Reports:

The Financial Reports were presented. Sandi made a motion to accept the financial report as presented. Second: John Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes from the previous meeting were presented. Sandi made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Second: Cammy Vote: All in favor. Motion carried.

Old Business:

Strategic Planning Task Force: There was a discussion about how the Task Force would be doing things that are already done by the Chamber so it made sense to take it on. Sandi, Katarina, John and Gretchen volunteered to be on the Task Force and meet as a group and then report back at the June meeting.

Wayfinding Signs Update: Debbie said that the Wayfinding Sign Committee met and marked the areas with paint for the signs to be put in and that they are waiting for NCDOT to install those signs. The NCDOT approved the move of the "Welcome to Columbia" sign from near Farm Bureau to the median right before the Scuppernon River bridge. Debbie said there was concern from the Town members (Aldermen, Mayor and Town Manager) about the safety of the individuals during the sign moving. There had also been discussion among this group about who should move the sign, the Town or the Chamber. Justin and David said that they could assist with moving the sign and get assistance from the Sheriff's Department to monitor traffic. Debbie also said that the Town will commit \$20,000 to the Sign Project and wanted to know how much the Chamber could commit. The Chamber board members said the purpose of the TDA is to bring tourism to the area and that they have the most money to contribute. The TDA Budget meeting is on May 27th and several Chamber members also serve on the TDA and those individuals will provide an update at the next Chamber meeting about how much the TDA is willing to contribute.

New Business:

Chamber Scholarship Winners: Jennifer introduced the Chamber Scholarship Recipients in attendance. Evan McQuigg will attend East Carolina University and major in Elementary Education and Gnea Punzalan will attend Western Carolina University and major in Nursing with a minor in Neuroscience. Justin presented the recipients with their laptops.

Pocosin Arts School of Fine Craft: Gretchen shared flyers with group about the Summer Art Camps, the Summer Receptions and the Summer On Campus Workshops. There is a 50% local's discount on classes.

Committees Updates

Membership/Community Outreach Committee: Katarina spoke about the May 5th Lunch and Learn; there were 16 attendees, the presentation was great as well as the food! The next event will be at Pocosin Arts on August 13th in the evening. She also mentioned dispersing more calendars to other places, such as the daycare, pharmacy and also putting it on the IBX website.

Fundraising/Events: Justin said the May 23rd Market was well attended and that the food truck and radio advertising helped. Hunter said Cousins Maine Lobster food truck will be at the August or October Market. Gretchen said that she would like to have the resident artists at the fall markets.

Scholarship/Education: Jennifer said that so far five laptop applications have been turned in and she expects to receive more. The next Scholarship Committee meeting is scheduled for June 9th.

Rivertown Christmas: the next meeting will be in June so please get the word out for committee volunteers! If someone can find out what year this is of the Rivertown Christmas event, that would be helpful.

Community Happenings

- Library Summer Reading Program begins June 9th; there are PreK, Child, Teen and Adult Programs available, including bingo, DND and dinosaur themed events. The calendar is on the library website.
- Summer Art Camps will be led by an ECU Art Education intern; Gretchen asked for community contacts to get the word out and increase the demographics of the participants.
- Makers Market at The Inner Banks Mercantile will be on June 13th 10AM – 2PM. They are always held on the second Saturday of each month.

Other

The Chamber merchandise sales are low and ideas are needed for how to increase the sales. Nancy offered to sell merchandise at the IBX Mercantile. Justin will also get in touch with Kirsten at the pharmacy to ask about selling it there. Nancy said that the exposure needs to be greater to get people to want it and suggested that members wearing it would help and possibly post that online. She said a board member could also sell the merchandise at the Makers Markets.

Adjournment

Sandi made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was carried.