



ELIZABETH CITY AREA CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

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Elizabeth City-Pasquotank TDA Focuses On Attracting Overnight Visitors

(Elizabeth City, N.C., Sept. 2, 2009) – This year, as the Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County Tourism Development Authority (TDA) focuses on attracting overnight visitors from outside the area, it will no longer be able to underwrite the Elizabeth City fireworks celebration at the level it has in the past, said TDA Chairman Arthur McPherson.

“Our tourism budget has been significantly reduced this year because of the economy,” said McPherson. “The fireworks celebration is a wonderful community event. But as the tourism industry rebounds, we must be poised to move forward with a very strategic approach. Attracting overnight visitors is the TDA’s primary mission, so our focus will be on promotions to do just that.”

From 2006 to 2009, the TDA contributed approximately two-thirds of the cost of the annual fireworks display, with city and county funds and private donations representing the balance of the fee. Last year, the overall cost of the display totaled \$35,000, according to McPherson.

A TDA survey of neighboring city and county government offices and tourism groups revealed that among eight neighboring jurisdictions, just one partially supports its fireworks celebration with tourism funds. The city of Kinston’s tourism office provides one-third of the total cost of its fireworks display. The rest of the jurisdictions draw funding for community fireworks displays from

city and county funds, community fundraising events and business and individual contributions.

“We love the Fourth of July celebration, and the visitors bureau will continue to support and promote it as other neighboring tourism organizations do,” said Charlotte Underwood, director of the Elizabeth City Area Convention & Visitors Development Bureau (ECACVB).

The ECACVB supports a number of Elizabeth City events presented by Elizabeth City State University, N.C. Potato Festival, the U.S. Coast Guard, the Juneteenth Celebration and the Carolina Cup Regatta, for example. Additionally, the ECACVB conducts an out-of-area marketing and public relations campaign that showcases such sites as Museum of the Albemarle and Arts of the Albemarle, among others; manages a cooperative advertising program for local sites and businesses; greets and assists visitors and tour groups; and supports Elizabeth City’s famous “Rose Buddies” welcoming crew.

“In the future, our level of support for the fireworks celebration will be more in line with the other city events we support and relative to the amount of occupancy revenue generated by the event,” said McPherson.

The Elizabeth City-Pasquotank County TDA was created in 2005 to oversee the newly created Elizabeth City Convention & Visitors Bureau. Previously, the tourism office had been organized under the Elizabeth City Area Chamber of Commerce.

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