

**BOROUGH OF GETTYSBURG
59 EAST HIGH STREET, GETTYSBURG, PA 17325
DUE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC, MEETING
CONDUCTED VIA TELECOMMUNICATIONS
DEVICES THROUGH ZOOM PLATFORM
COUNCIL WORK SESSION MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 25, 2021**

President Jacob Schindel called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and asked the Borough Secretary Sara Stull to conduct a roll call of Council members in attendance. The following **Councilors were present:** Mr. Wesley Heyser, Mrs. Judith Butterfield, Ms. Patricia Lawson, Mr. John Lawver, Mr. Christopher Berger and Mr. Matthew Moon. **Staff present included:** Mayor Theodore Streeter; Borough Manager Charles Gable; Assistant Borough Manager/ Secretary Sara Stull; Borough Solicitor Harold Eastman, Barley Snyder; Parking Manager Rebecca Fissel; Planning Director Carly Marshall; Director of Historic & Environmental Preservation Debra English; Public Works Director Robert Harbaugh; and Chad Clabaugh, Borough Engineer, C. S. Davidson, Inc.

Others present included: Deb Adamik, President, Main Street Gettysburg; Mark Guise, Utilities Manager, Gettysburg Municipal Authority (GMA); Andrew Dalton, Executive Director, The Adams County Historical Society; Anne Douds, JD, PhD, Gettysburg College Professor; Ron Frenette, 811 Johns Avenue; Kierstan Belle Demps, West Street; Jim Hale representing the *Gettysburg Times*; and Mark Wherley, *Community Media-ACCTV* filming through Zoom platform.

Announcements

President Schindel welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that the Council meetings are always available through Zoom Platform, and that citizens can get the information to participate in the meetings on the agenda posted on the Borough Website at www.gettysburgpa.gov.

President Schindel mentioned that the vaccines are now available and hopes that people are taking advantage of receiving them if they can and hopefully soon, we will be in a much better place in the near future.

President Schindel announced an executive session of the Borough Council was conducted prior to this evening's work session, commencing at 4:00 p.m. consistent with sections 708(a)(1) and 708(a)(5) of the Sunshine Act for the following purposes: (1) to discuss matters involving the employment, the termination of employment and the terms and conditions of employment of Borough employees; and (2) to review and discuss matters of Borough business which, if conducted in public, would violate a lawful privilege or lead to the disclosure of information or matters of confidentiality protected by law.

Public Comment – Restricted to Old Business and New Agenda Items (not tabled items)

There were no public comments.

Special Presentations

A. Adams County Historical Society Presentation

Andrew Dalton, Executive Director presented Council with a presentation outlining the Historical Society's Capital Campaign for a new building to be built on the old county prison lot at 625 Biglerville Road. The planned two-story building will consist of a museum, archives and education center with construction to begin this spring with an opening date in late 2022. The total project cost is \$5,000,000 (presentation attached).

Councilwoman Lawson noted that the weekly educational programs are wonderful that they present each week.

President Schindel suggested that they consider extending the sidewalk from the Borough limit on Carlisle Street for people walking to the new museum.

B. GMA 2021 Projects and Beyond

Mark Guise, Utilities Manager presented Council with the GMA Capital Improvements Plan to include the Heritage Land Elevated Water Tank; Herr's Ridge Elevated Water Tank; Cemetery Hill Tanks Rehabilitation and Demolition; High Street Water Main Replacement; Andrew's Property Well; Phase II Interceptor Replacement; GMA Office Building Addition; and additional miscellaneous improvements scheduled throughout 2022 (presentation attached).

Councilman Heyser asked if the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) recently altered the amount of water from Marsh Creek. Utilities Manager Guise responded no; that the water allocation permit and is good for twenty-five years that will expire in August 2021. They plan to review and discuss any concerns that DEP may have in preparation of renewing the permit with DEP.

Councilwoman Lawson asked about water and sewer rate increases to the residents. Utilities Manager Guise responded that GMA alternates the water and sewer rate increases each year, so this year the increase is on the water side at 5%. This would be an increase from \$30 to \$40 for a family of four per year.

Councilman Moon asked what the purpose of the interceptor is. Utilities Manager Guise explained that the interceptor lines will take all the sewer throughout town to the sewer treatment plant on East Middle Street.

C. Report from Ad Hoc Committee on Tourism and Lodging

Councilwoman Lawson, Committee Chair explained that this AD HOC Committee was formed in 2019 to review the Lodging Tax which is often referred to as the Pillow Tax. She thanked her fellow committee members Councilman Lawver, Wendy Heiges, Ron Frenette, and Judie McGee who met regularly to review the pillow tax guidelines and distributions. They reviewed the distribution of the taxes from Adams County and Destination Gettysburg noting that the primary goal was to see how the Borough could receive more of these funds. Councilwoman Lawson then contacted College Professor Anne Douds, JD, PhD as an outside independent consultant and researcher. Professor Douds along with interns Logan Grubb and Jared Michaels researched the Pillow Tax and a report was presented to the AD HOC Committee. The report was then sent to Borough Council, Adams County Commissioners, and Destination Gettysburg, and will be posted on the Borough Website.

Councilwoman Lawson explained that the lodging tax is managed by Adams County which receives 4½% of the total collected for administering the tax, which is approximately \$100,000 each year. Destination Gettysburg receives 75% of the Pillow Tax, which is approximately 1.8 million dollars to promote Adams County. The final 25% is split between the County receiving 12½ %, and the municipalities that provide lodging and police services split the remaining 12½ %. Councilwoman Lawson pointed out that the committee originally wanted to see if there was a way that the Borough could receive more Pillow Tax. After completion of the research, they feel the goal has since changed to ask that Destination Gettysburg develop a best practices policy; to provide more grant opportunities for organizations such as Main Street Gettysburg, HABPI, Gettysburg Garden Club, Lincoln Fellowship which provide many services to the community. She noted that when the Gettysburg Festival began, they did not get any support from Destination Gettysburg. She said that there needs to be more transparency in their financial operation since tax dollars are involved.

Anne Douds, JD, PhD, Gettysburg College Professor presented Council with a Best Practices among Certain Classes of Pennsylvania Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs) “white paper”, that outlined their research (see attached). She said that she and the interns researched 12 (DMOs) that were comparable to Adams County. The study provided information on best practices and said that this paper is a first step to understanding how DMO operate and how the pillow tax dollars are being used in the communities.

New Business

PBS 2021-2 ADA Parking Request

Parking Manager Fissel reported that a request was received for handicapped parking in the second block of West High Street. Manager Gable pointed out that this would require an ordinance amendment. He noted that the space would not be designated to the requestor, but available for any handicapped person to use.

Councilman Heyser said that a disabled resident on Liberty Street had contacted him previously about a handicapped space. He will contact the person to see if they are still interested so that it could be included in the ordinance amendment.

Council agreed to proceed with the preparation of designating certain reserved spaces for persons with disabilities at these locations.

Fourth Street Residential Parking Permit (RPP)

Parking Manager Fissel reported that a request along with a petition was received to establish Residential Parking Permit (RPP) on South Fourth Street due to the difficulty of parking Monday through Friday.

Councilman Lawver asked if we have the required number of signatures on the petition to proceed with the request. Parking Manager Fissel will review the petition before proceeding.

Eichelberger-Stahle Trust Fund Endowment

Councilwoman Lawson reported that she and Manager Gable met with Ralph Serpe, Executive Director of Adams County Community Foundation to discuss the possibility of transferring the Eichelberger-Stahle Charitable Trust Fund to the foundation to manage. She would recommend that Council consider moving forward with this transfer. Manager Gable said that it makes sense to do this transfer as the foundation would be able to facilitate fundraising. It would still honor the original intent to provide Borough residents with food aid during the holiday season.

Councilman Lawver suggested that the Company K Memorial Fund be transferred to the foundation. Manager Gable said that this is a small fund designed to care for the monument located in downtown Gettysburg and would see no reason this could not be transferred.

Council agreed to proceed with transferring both endowments to the Adams County Community Foundation to manage.

COVID-19 Related Fees

PBS 2021-3 2021 Outdoor Dining Permit (COVID)

Planning Director Marshall reported that the 2020 Outdoor Dining Permits expired on December 31, 2020 noting that these permits are issued for public property not on private property. She asked Council for their input to modify the 2021 Fee Resolution to provide relief for the dining establishments during the continuation of COVID-19 emergency. The permit fee for outdoor dining is \$100.00 and asked Council how they want to proceed. She

noted that the designated areas will be marked so that it will be easy for PMCA to locate and see the boundaries of the tables.

Councilman Moon said that it is important to do what we can to keep the restaurants and businesses in operation.

Councilman Berger said that an option would be to eliminate the \$100 permit fee.

Councilman Heyser said that he is concerned with eliminating the fees since the 2021 budget increased taxes to the Borough residents.

After some discussion Council agreed to a temporary suspension of the base Outdoor Dining permit fee of \$100 to Borough dining establishments and businesses to provide relief during the continuation of the COVID-19 emergency.

PBS 2021-4 Block Party in a Box

Planning Director Marshall gave a brief overview of a “Block Party in a Box” program which is becoming more in demand in some communities have small block parties or special events. It would include a small neighborhood block party for the neighbors in that block and would help people to deal with the lack of social interactions during the pandemic. She said that she is waiting on a response from WellSpan to get their input on this idea since we are still in a pandemic. She said that Chief Glenn suggested getting 80 percent approval from the residents in the block to make sure that they are okay with the street closure.

Councilman Moon and Berger both said that this is a great idea and that they are planning something for their neighborhoods.

Council members agreed that this was a good idea and instructed staff to proceed with the implementation of the “Block Party in a Box program”.

Liquor License Transfer to Borough

Solicitor Eastman reported that the Borough was contacted in December about an intermunicipal transfer of a restaurant liquor license from a business in New Oxford to the James Getty Hotel, 27 Chambersburg Street. The Borough would need to conduct a public hearing to receive comments from citizens and then a resolution would need to be prepared and adopted. Solicitor Eastman noted that the final decision comes from the Liquor Control Board.

Council authorized to set a special meeting of Borough Council to be held on Monday, February 22, 2021, at 6:30 PM prior to the Council Work Session for the purpose of conducting a public hearing regarding the transfer of a liquor license.

Old Business

A. South Street Updates

Engineer Chad Clabaugh gave a brief overview of the planned reconstruction of South Street to begin this year. He explained that the aim is to widen the street without decreasing the current number of parking spaces, although some will be moved to different locations. The expected cost is \$500,000 with a portion of the expense offset by \$127,000 from DCED funds. He pointed out that the work will coincide with the Gettysburg Municipal Authority and Columbia Gas work plans.

Councilwoman Butterfield asked if the majority of the properties are rental or owner occupied. Manager Gable responded that they are mostly owner occupied.

Councilman Heyser said that some property owners asked about getting their front steps/stoops replaced when the contractors are working on the street. Chad responded that some may already be required with the scope of the work and would be covered by the project funding.

B. Police Body Camera Policy

Manager Gable reporting in the absence of Chief Glenney said that Council will need to encumber Borough funds in the amount of \$17,164.00 for the purchase of body cameras for use by the Gettysburg Borough Police Department. This is the difference from the \$20,000.00 donation received to cover the total cost of \$37,164.00 for the body cameras.

Council Comments

Councilman Moon explained a program that Commissioner Marty Qually proposed named "Operation Restaurant Rescue". A person can purchase gift cards and donate them to the South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP), and then they would distribute to front line health care workers or people with food insecurities. Anyone with questions can contact restaurantrescue@gmail.com, and donations can be sent to SCCAP, 153 North Stratton Street, Gettysburg.

Public Comment (open to items not on the agenda)

Ron Frenette, 811 Johns Avenue commented on the Adams County Historical Society presentation and said that he is in support of the building project.

Kierstan Belle Demps, West Street, addressed council with the following comments: she would like to speak with Councilwoman Lawson to gather more information about the Eichelberger-Stahle Trust Fund Endowment; asked that a glossary be attached to the agenda explaining acronyms used such as RPP, AD HOC etc. so that people will have a better understanding of what they mean; she would be interested in volunteering with the

Appointments, Boards and Commissions (ABC); and she urged Council to discuss with County officials that a countywide advisory committee exists for the PA Human Relations Commission.

Manager Gable responded that this should be addressed with the Adams County Commissioners since this is a county-wide function.

Councilman Moon explained that the ABC requirements and any openings are posted on the Borough Website at www.gettysburgpa.gov along with the descriptions of the boards.

The meeting adjourned at 9:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Sara L. Stull
Borough Secretary

Capital Campaign for the Adams County Historical Society





Capital Campaign for the Adams County Historical Society

As a high school student, I was privileged to volunteer at ACHS. I spent hours deep in the stacks of historic material, organizing hundreds of boxes of papers, photos, and artifacts. One day, while flipping through a pile of business receipts, I came across something truly incredible - an original program from Lincoln's Gettysburg Address.

With over one million historic items in our care - many of national significance - discoveries like this are not uncommon. But ACHS isn't just a collection of old documents and artifacts - our mission is far more important than that. We hold onto the memory and legacy of one of America's most remarkable communities. It's a story that continues on today - something we are all part of. Now more than ever, it's time to build a new home for our history. I hope you'll join us!



Andrew Dalton, Executive Director

Our Vision

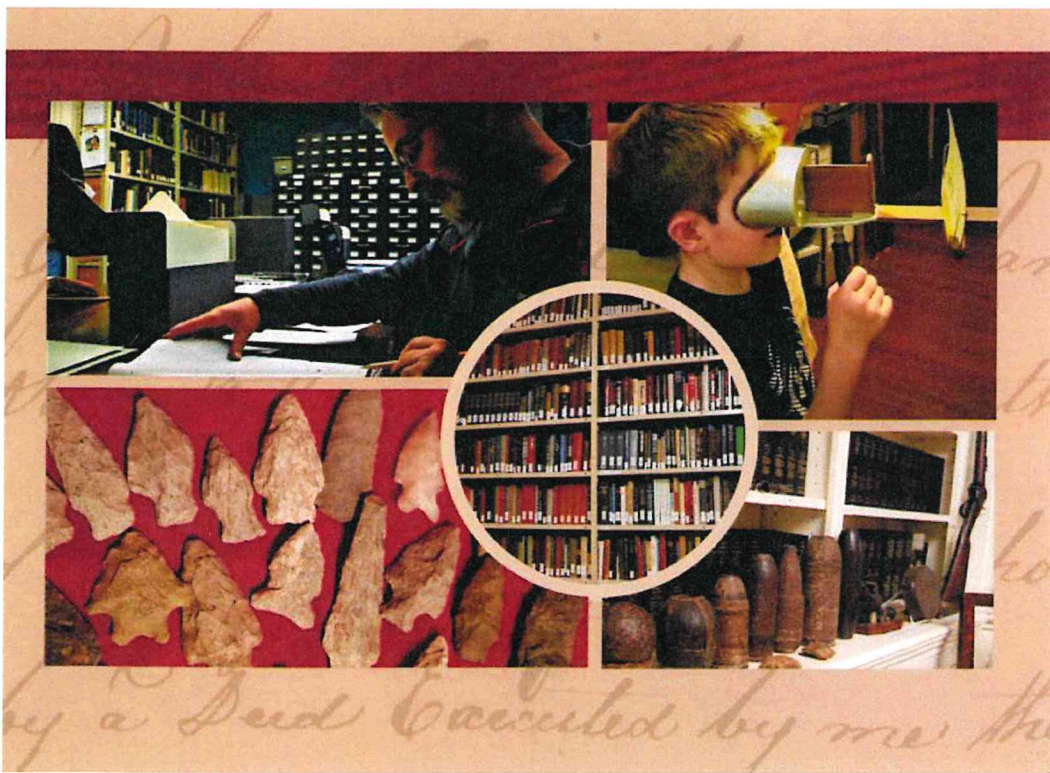
Established in 1940 but with origins dating to 1888, ACHS is Adams County's official Historical Society and County Archives. Our vision is to establish a new Museum, Archives, and Education Center that will, for the first time, tell the complete story of Gettysburg and Adams County. Using rich human interest stories, visitors will experience some of America's most extraordinary moments through the eyes and ears of ordinary citizens.



Today's Reality

Since 2011, ACHS has rented a temporary headquarters facility - the Wolf House - on the United Lutheran Seminary campus in Gettysburg. Due to severe space limitations, ACHS cannot fulfill its important mission of preservation and education. Large portions of the collection formerly displayed at Schmucker Hall, our previous headquarters, are stored offsite and remain inaccessible to the public. Additionally, all of the Society's storage locations lack vital fire safety mechanisms, security, and climate controls needed for the protection of irreplaceable historic items. Space constraints at our current facility also prevent us from creating exhibits, hosting large groups, and presenting on-site educational programs for visitors and the community.





A New Home

The Adams County Historical Society will build a facility that both secures the collection and provides an exciting educational venue for the community and visitors to Gettysburg. This new building will contain the following core features:

An Exhibit Gallery that is artifact-driven, interactive, and rooted in powerful stories.

Here are some of the unique topics we'll showcase:

- *Dinosaur Footprints and Meteorites*
- *Native American Raids and Kidnappings on the Pennsylvania Frontier*
- *Thaddeus Stevens - Law, Education and Abolition in Early Gettysburg*
- *Life in a War Zone - Adams County Civilians in 1863*
- *The Eisenhowers in Gettysburg - Two World Wars and a Presidency*
- *Orchards and Industry - Adams County as a Fruit-Growing Powerhouse*
- *Suffrage, Integration, and Immigration - the Fight for Justice in Adams County*



An Education Center featuring history programs for all ages and interest levels. Here are a few of the Society's planned offerings:

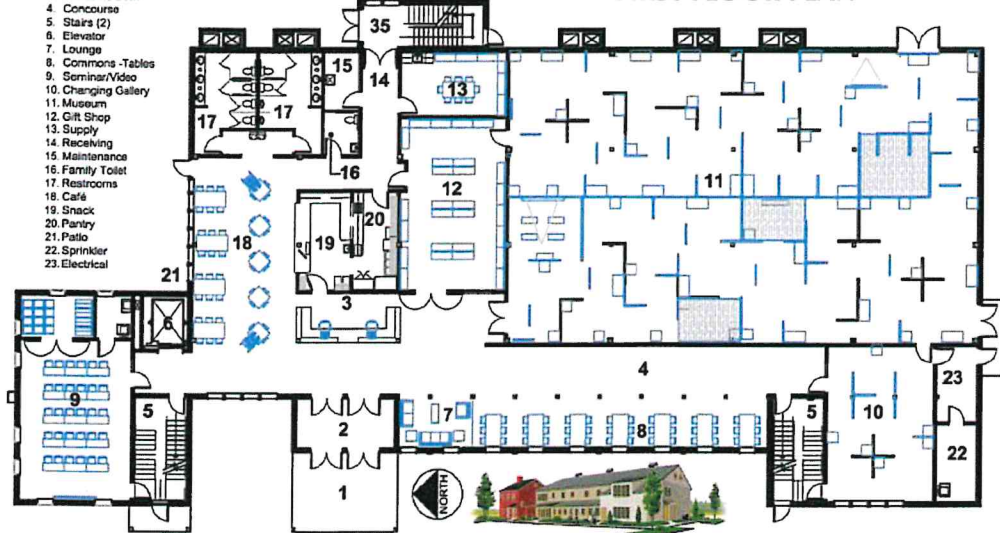
- *Lectures, book signings, and community programs*
- *School visits (K-12 and undergraduate)*
- *Genealogy and historic property research workshops*
- *Walking tours of neighboring historic sites and the town of Gettysburg*
- *Event venue overlooking the battlefield*

A Reading Room and Archives that ensures the long-term safety and preservation of the Society's priceless holdings.

- *Climate-controlled storage space for the collection*
- *Easy access to historic materials for visiting researchers*
- *A library and reading room for researchers, visiting scholars, and Gettysburg enthusiasts*

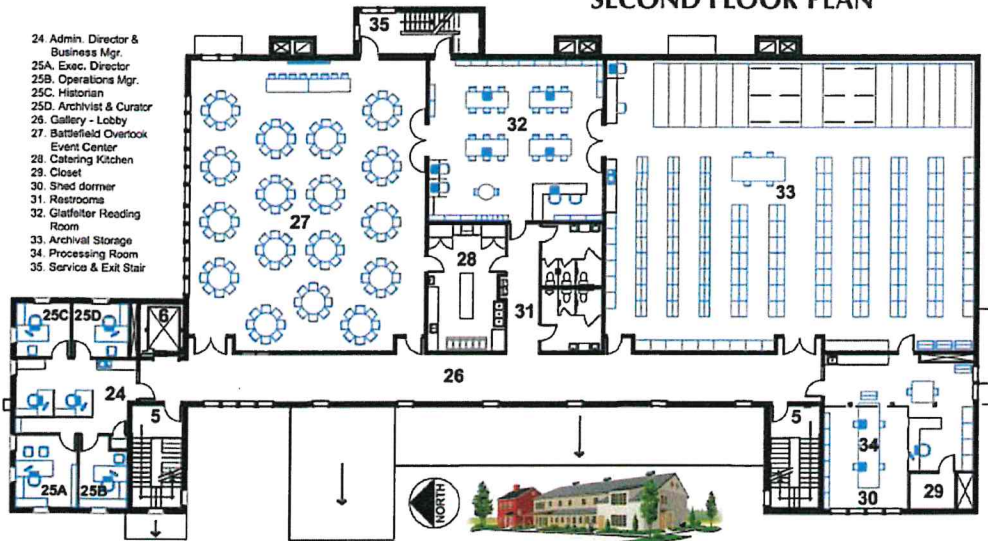
1. Entry Porch
2. Vestibule
3. Welcome Desk
4. Concourse
5. Stairs (2)
6. Elevator
7. Lounge
8. Commons - Tables
9. Seminar/Video
10. Changing Gallery
11. Museum
12. Gift Shop
13. Supply
14. Receiving
15. Maintenance
16. Family Toilet
17. Restrooms
18. Café
19. Snack
20. Pantry
21. Patio
22. Sprinkler
23. Electrical

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



SECOND FLOOR PLAN

- 24. Admin. Director & Business Mgr.
- 25A. Exec. Director
- 25B. Operations Mgr.
- 25C. Historian
- 25D. Archivist & Curator
- 26. Gallery - Lobby
- 27. Battlefield Overlook
- 28. Catering Kitchen
- 29. Closet
- 30. Shed dormer
- 31. Restrooms
- 32. Glatfelter Reading Room
- 33. Archival Storage
- 34. Processing Room
- 35. Service & Exit Stair



Project Details



The new home of the Adams County Historical Society will be built at 625 Biglerville Road in Cumberland Township. This 2.85-acre lot, owned by ACHS, borders Transitions Healthcare and the Gettysburg National Military Park. The planned two-story Museum, Archives & Education Center will be roughly 25,000 square feet with a 4,000 square-foot accessory artifact storage facility.

The building will be within easy walking distance of downtown Gettysburg, two miles from the Gettysburg National Military Park Visitor Center, and just three miles from U.S. Route 15, making it accessible to both local residents and visitors. The targeted opening date for the facility is November 2022.

Budget and Funding Sources

The total project cost is \$5,000,000. In 2020, a capital campaign was launched to secure the necessary funding primarily from individual donors and charitable foundations. In addition, ACHS anticipates receiving funds from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP).

Getting Involved

A new home for the Adams County Historical Society will not only ensure the preservation and protection of priceless historic treasures for generations to come, it will also allow ACHS to showcase Gettysburg and Adams County's remarkable role in American history for new and diverse audiences. We look forward to working with you on this important project!

Naming Opportunities

Based on a 5-year maximum pledge period. Numbers correspond to identified spaces on the floor plans.

\$500,000

Museum Gallery (11) - Reserved
Battlefield Overlook Event Center (27)

\$250,000

Adams County Archives (33)
Changing Gallery (10)

\$100,000

Charles H. Glatfelter Reading Room (32)
Museum Concourse (4) - Reserved
Event Center Gallery (26) - north end
Archives Gallery (26) - south end

\$50,000

Seminar Room (9)
Entryway/Vestibule (2) - Reserved
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Introductory Film
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Prehistory
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Native American Presence
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Frontier Life
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Revolutionary America
Exhibit Gallery (11) - A New County
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Adams County in the Civil War
Exhibit Gallery (11) - The Citizens of 1863
Exhibit Gallery (11) - Memorialization and Commercialization
Exhibit Gallery (11) - A New Century
Archival Processing Room (34)

\$25,000

Gift Shop (12)
Café Lounge (18)
Reading Room Foyer (31)
Administrative Lobby (24)
Patio (21)
Adams County History Library (32)
Battle of Gettysburg Research Library (32)
Historic Collections Area (33) - Reserved
Adams County Records Area (33)
Artifact Storage Facility (secondary building)
North Staircase (5)
South Staircase (5)
East Staircase (35)
Café (19) - Reserved
Elevator (6)
Event Center Auxiliary Room (28)
East Hall (14)

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Historic Collections -
Choose to have your name(s) listed as sponsor(s) of a historic collection in the holdings of the Adams County Historical Society. Names will be displayed on a recognition wall in the archives facility. If you wish to sponsor a collection that is not listed below, please contact ACHS.

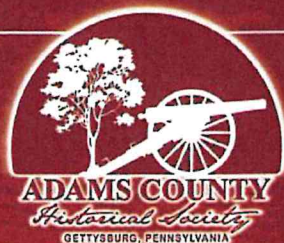
John L. Burns Collection
Catherine Stanton Carter Collection
Elwood W. Christ Collection
Dr. William Culp Darrah Collection
Dr. Robert Fortenbaugh Collection
Dr. Charles H. Glatfelter Collection

\$10,000 - \$24,999 (continued)

Walter Hess Collection
Dr. John L. Hill Collection
Horner Family Collection
John Keith Johnson Family Collection
Phil Jones WGET/WGTY Collection
Kendlehart Family Collection
Walter & Janice Lane Photographic Collection
Elsie Singmaster Lewars Collection
Theodore McAllister Collection
Oscar David McMillan Collection
McPherson Family Collection
Dr. J.W.C. O'Neal Collection
Ross Ramer Photographic Collection
Ambassador John S. Rice Collection
Henry Scharf Hotel Gettysburg Collection
William C. Storrick Collection
William H. Tipton Gettysburg Photographic Collection
Frances McClean Topper Collection
J.B. Waddle Photographic Collection
Arthur Weaver Collection
Ira Williams Photographic Collection
David Wills Collection and Law Library
Charles Morris Young Art Collection

To make a pledge, please complete our official pledge form. If not enclosed with this pamphlet, the form can be completed online or downloaded at www.achs-pa.org/campaign. Thank you for your commitment to Adams County history!

A Home for Your History
Museum - Archives - Education Center



Capital Campaign Steering Committee

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Charles "Cliff" Bream
Barbara J. Finfrock
Christopher M. Gwinn
Susan Colestock Hill
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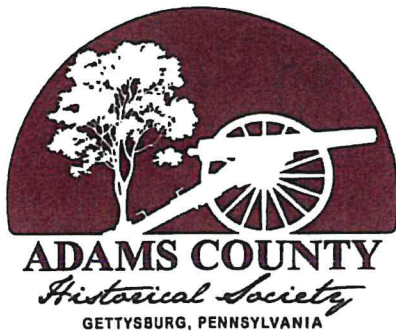
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Maria Lynn

Althea C. Riley
Timothy H. Smith

www.achs-pa.org/campaign
P.O. Box 4325, Gettysburg, PA 17325
(717)334-4723 / info@achs-pa.org



Capital Campaign Gift / Pledge Form

The Adams County Historical Society's new facility will be lasting home for your history. Please complete this pledge form today to join our campaign!

Naming Opportunity Preference: _____

Donor Information (Please print or type)

Name _____

Billing Address _____

City, St, Zip Code _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Pledge Information

I / We pledge a total of \$ _____ to be paid in equal installments of \$ _____ over _____ years (must be five or less). *All pledges must be fulfilled by December 31, 2025.

I / We plan to make this contribution through: Cash ☐ Check ☐ Credit Card ☐
Other _____

Credit Card Type / Expiration Date _____

Credit Card Number _____

Authorized Signature _____

Gift will be matched by (Company/Family/Foundation) _____

☐ Form Enclosed ☐ Form will be forwarded

Acknowledgement Information

Please use the following name(s) in all acknowledgements:

☐ I (We) wish to have our gift remain anonymous.

Signature(s) _____

Date _____

Please make checks, corporate matches, or other gifts payable to:

The Adams County Historical Society • P.O. Box 4325 • Gettysburg, PA 17325

The Adams County Historical Society is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation, EIN number 23-7258494. The official registration and financial information of the Adams County Historical Society may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

The background of the entire page is a light blue gradient. In the lower half, there is a darker blue rectangular area. Scattered across this blue area are numerous water droplets of various sizes, some with highlights and shadows, giving them a 3D appearance. The text is centered within the darker blue area.

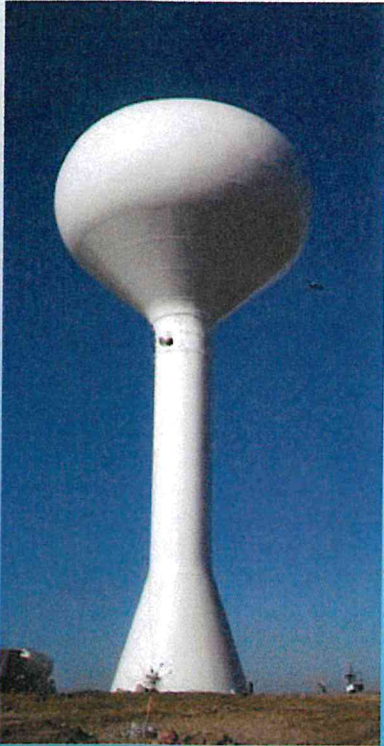
GETTYSBURG MUNICIPAL AUTHORITY

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PLAN

HERITAGE LAND ELEVATED WATER TANK



- ❖ CONSTRUCT NEW 1.5 MILLION GALLON COMPOSITE ELEVATED TANK
- ❖ LOCATED AT EXISTING TANK SITE ON NATURAL SPRINGS ROAD
- ❖ DEMOLISH EXISTING TANK
- ❖ ESTIMATED COMPLETION JUNE 2022
- ❖ \$4,500,000



HERR'S RIDGE ELEVATED WATER TANK

- ❖ 0.5 MILLION GALLON ELEVATED STEEL TANK
- ❖ HERR'S RIDGE AREA
- ❖ ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION PERIOD
JUNE 2022 - DECEMBER 2023
- ❖ \$2,500,000

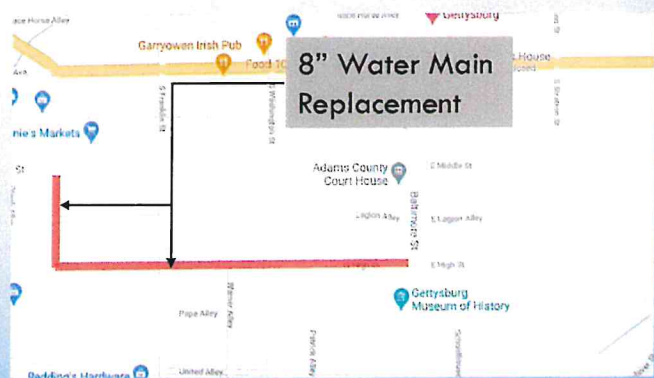
CEMETERY HILL TANKS REHABILITATION AND DEMOLITION

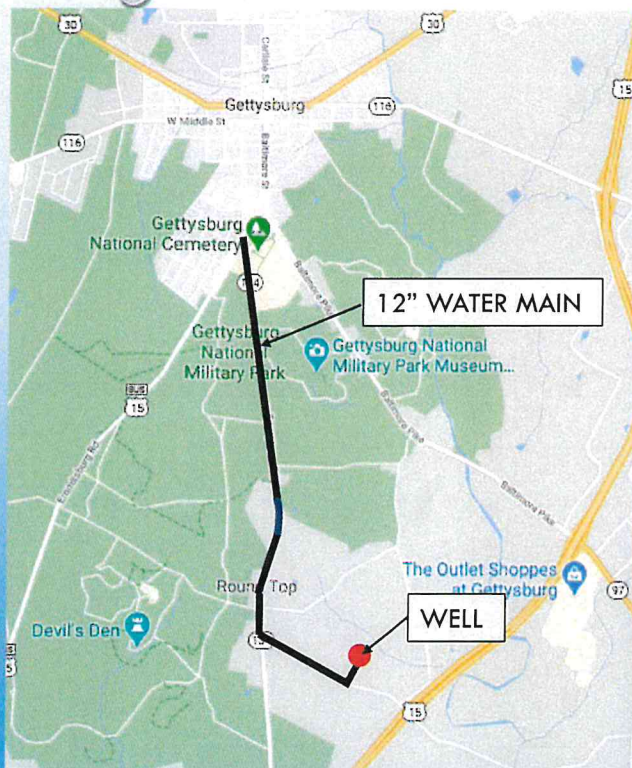
- ❖ REHABILITATE AND RECOAT EXISTING
TANK #2 (1 MG)
- ❖ UPGRADE/REPLACE YARD PIPING
- ❖ DEMOLISH EXISTING TANK #1 (1 MG)
- ❖ ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION PERIOD
APRIL 2022 – OCTOBER 2022
- ❖ \$775,000



HIGH STREET WATER MAIN REPLACEMENT

- ❖ APPROX. 2,000 LINEAR FEET
- ❖ ANTICIPATED CONSTRUCTION PERIOD - SUMMER 2021
- ❖ COORDINATED WITH GAS MAIN REPLACEMENT
- ❖ \$580,000



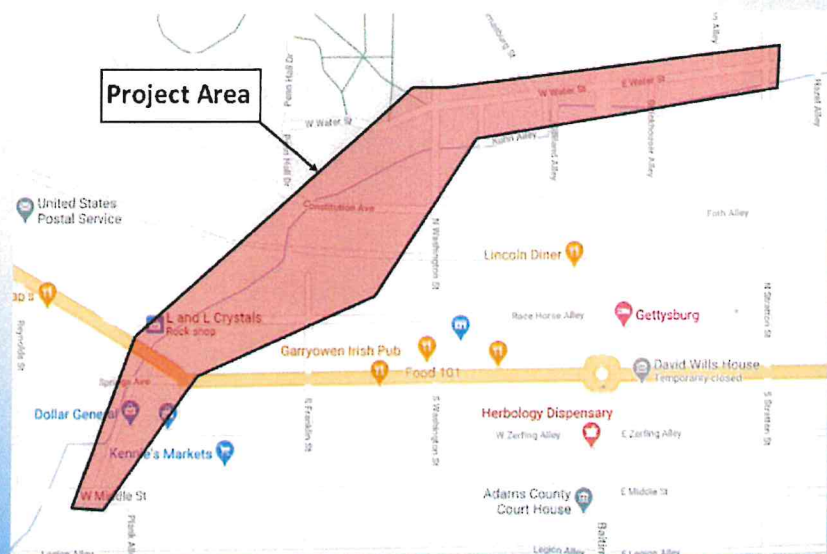


ANDREW'S PROPERTY WELL

- ❖ DEVELOP 300 GPM WELL
- ❖ WELL HOUSE W/TREATMENT
- ❖ OVER 10,000 LINEAR FEET
OF 12" WATER MAIN
- ❖ PLANNING STAGE
- ❖ \$4,200,000

PHASE II INTERCEPTOR REPLACEMENT

- ❖ OVER 3,300 LINEAR FEET OF 18", 24" AND 32" SEWER PIPE
- ❖ MULTIPLE ROAD, STREAM AND RAIL CROSSINGS
- ❖ BOTH PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY AND PRIVATE EASEMENTS
- ❖ PRELIMINARY DESIGN STAGE
- ❖ \$2,020,000




GMA OFFICE BUILDING ADDITION

- ❖ RELOCATE OFFICES OUT OF FLOODPLAIN
- ❖ EXPANDED MEETING ROOM
- ❖ ADDITIONAL OFFICE AND STORAGE SPACE
- ❖ PERMITTING STAGE
- ❖ \$1,600,000





ADDITIONAL MISCELLANEOUS IMPROVEMENTS

- ❖ WATER TREATMENT PLANT SCADA AND PLC UPGRADE \$680,000 - 2021
 - ❖ WATER TREATMENT PLANT FILTER TO WASTE UPGRADE \$175,000 2021-2022
 - ❖ IMPLEMENTATION OF SCADA NETWORK AT PRODUCTION WELLS \$ 160,000 2021-2022
- 

Best Practices among Certain Classes of Pennsylvania Destination Marketing Organizations (DMOs)

A White Paper Produced by
Gettysburg College Public Policy Program
Anne S. Douds, JD, PhD
Logan C. Grubb
Jared A. Michaels

January 22, 2021

Background

The researchers originally became aware of the existence of DMOs (previously known as tourism promotion agencies or TPAs) when reading materials in the *Gettysburg Times*. The two student-authors plan to work in local government following graduation, and they were curious about perspectives shared in the *Gettysburg Times* about the local DMO. Thereafter, a representative from the Gettysburg Borough Council approached the faculty-author about conducting research on DMOs' policies, procedures, and practices, and, relatedly, the "pillow tax," a hotel room occupancy tax that is administered by counties and disbursed to DMOs, among others. Specifically, the Borough Council representative was curious about best practices with respect to allocation of the pillow tax; how DMOs use pillow tax revenue; and how DMOs account for such use. The Borough representative also was curious about general business practices among DMOs. The faculty-author applied for and obtained approval from the Gettysburg College Institutional Review Board for research among Pennsylvania DMOs and their representatives on these issues. This white paper briefly summarizes the history of the relationship between Pennsylvania DMOs and the pillow tax then describes the researchers' methodology. Next, the white paper describes what Study DMOs appear to believe are best practices, or most commonly accepted practices, in six categories: Boards of Directors; Revenue; Grant Making; Spending; Assessment; and Future Planning. All data are reported in aggregate to minimize the risk of revealing individually identifiable data. These findings may inform DMO, community, and county decision-making.

History

Beginning in the 1950s and through several legislative iterations thereafter, the Pennsylvania General Assembly has created a statutory scheme to help "tourism promotion agencies" (TPAs)¹ – now referred to as "destination marketing organizations" (DMOs) – "serve the traveling public at the local level by promoting unique tourism assets in their respective areas."² There are more than 50 DMOs active in Pennsylvania, with the majority operating at the county level. A few others act on behalf of larger, multi-county regions.

¹ https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/CH/Public/ucons_pivot_pge.cfm?session=1961&session_ind=0&act_nbr=0050.&pl_nbr=0111

² <https://www.visitpa.com/pa-tourism-office>

Most DMOs predominantly are funded by a hotel occupancy tax, also known as a “pillow tax,” collected by the hotel operator, then transferred and administered by the county.³ DMOs receive the bulk of pillow tax revenue, somewhere in the neighborhood of 75% - 98% of all pillow tax dollars, depending on the county.⁴ Division of pillow tax revenue has been the subject of much debate for more than 20 years, and so has the ways in which DMOs use those dollars. Some contend that DMOs, by law, must receive all of the pillow tax money after the county deducts a modest administrative fee. Others maintain that counties have discretion over what to do with pillow tax money. At least one county divides its pillow tax dollars between its DMO and certain municipalities within its jurisdiction based on criteria established by ordinance. The debate is robust and quite specific to each locality. However, there have been a few mileposts along the way that warrant review.

After a series of legislative actions in the latter part of the twentieth century, including 2001 enabling legislation that allowed counties to collect the pillow tax, State Representative Robert Godshall wrote what has now come to be known in the industry as the Godshall Letter, to share his opinion on the meaning of the law concerning third- through eighth-class counties⁵ collection of the pillow tax. Representative Godshall wrote this letter to respond to what he described as “mistaken interpretation of the act’s language” and to “clear up the legislative intent.” In that letter, he explained that, despite what some perceive as potentially ambiguous language, the law is “clear” that “the [pillow tax] money must be distributed to the TPA [DMO] not the local chamber of commerce or to some other public or private agency” after the county deducts its administrative fee. Subsequent legislation and local ordinances have modified pillow tax law somewhat, allowing certain counties to distribute a percentage of the pillow tax to municipalities that have full-time police forces and increasing the permissible pillow tax rate, for example.⁶ Subsequent 2016 pillow tax legislation expanded protections for DMOs because of the gray area in the 2001 legislation. The 2016 law addressed pillow tax revenue usage and addressed decertification processes for DMOs. Today, DMOs are subject to a variety of state and local level rules on how much they receive from the pillow tax, but there is no statewide organization that enforces pillow tax laws. The standards continue to be a point of contention among local-level entities. The Godshall letter remains emblematic of one perspective on the matter that survives to this day.

DMOs likewise are subject to a variety of rules and regulations about how they use those pillow tax dollars. There is greater legislative consistency on the use of pillow tax dollars than on distribution. Generally speaking, DMOs must use pillow tax funds for externally-focused (targeting audiences outside of the county) promotional activities that are designed to get “bodies into beds” as one interviewee explained. Those activities include, but are not limited to, web-based and television promotions; conference presentations; social media campaigns; publications

³ 72 P.S. § 7210; 61 Pa. Code § 38.1, 38.2, 38.3

⁴ These percentages were confirmed with interviewees in this study.

⁵ <https://www.pacounties.org/PAsCounties/Pages/Counties-by-Class.aspx>.

⁶ <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/LI/uconsCheck.cfm?txtType=HTM&yr=2016&sessInd=0&smthLwInd=0&act=0018>; <http://www.adamscounty.us/Dept/Treasurer/Documents/HotelRoomRentalTax/OrdinanceNo.2of2018.pdf>

in newspapers, magazines, and web-based publications; and static displays such as billboards and kiosks.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic ran roughshod over the tourism industry, stakeholders had begun to scrutinize how DMOs were using their pillow tax dollars. Given that pillow tax dollars are inherently public funds, it makes sense that interested persons would want to know how those dollars can be used most effectively and what DMOs understand to be the best practices with respect to management and use of pillow tax revenue. This white paper provides insights into what DMOs themselves perceive to be common and/or best practices in the categories identified above.

Methods

The authors began this research by identifying 12 DMOs that are comparable to the DMO in their county of interest, either in population size or in gross revenue. Specifically, because the authors' home county has a population that fits in the range of 90,000 and 144,999, it is a class five-county.⁷ Therefore, the authors collected data on DMOs in other class five counties in Pennsylvania. They also looked at counties that are comparable in tourism activities, what they call "tourism-alike counties" based on the 2018 Economic Impact of Travel and Tourism report in Pennsylvania.⁸ They identified six Class Five Counties and six Tourism-Alike Counties as the subjects for this analysis. Because two counties share a DMO, the authors examined 11 DMOs.

The authors conducted a two-step inquiry into the areas of interest. First, they collected the DMOs' Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990s as available through GuideStar (one did not have 990s available through GuideStar and declined to provide those documents to us following our email request). They reviewed and analyzed 990s for three years, 2016, 2017, and 2018, and then they averaged their reported numbers for six categories: Boards of Directors; Revenue; Grant Making; Spending; Assessment; and Future Planning.

Next, they requested interviews with representatives from all of the DMOs. Eight responded. Two declined to be interviewed but commented upon one or more issues via email. Six agreed to be interviewed. The authors held Zoom interviews with each respondent and engaged in follow-up telephone calls. At least two members of the research team participated in each interview. The authors asked interviewees to look back to pre-COVID-19 times as they responded to questions. The extraordinary adverse impacts of the pandemic upon DMOs would render discussion of current revenues and best practices meaningless, as they reflect profoundly depressed circumstances and emergency responses to unpredictable exigencies. Therefore, the interviews reflect data and opinions related to 2016-2019.

Collectively, the entire group of DMOs in this analysis are referred to as Study DMOs. However, a natural break among the Study DMOs appeared based on revenue; therefore, further subdivision is appropriate. One group, hereinafter referred to as "Small DMOs" receive total revenue annually ranging from \$253,451 to \$610,090. The other group of "Large DMOs" receive

⁷ <https://www.pacounties.org/PAsCounties/Pages/Counties-by-Class.aspx>

⁸ <https://www.visitpa.com/sites/default/files/pdfs/2018-Economic-Impact-of-Travel-and-Tourism-in-Pennsylvania-min.pdf>

annual revenue ranging from \$1,056,832 to \$3,723,627. DMOs 3, 4, 5, and 10 fall into the Small DMO category. DMOs 1, 2, 6, 7, 8, and 9 are Large DMOs. To minimize the risk of de-identification of these findings, and consistent with Gettysburg College Institutional Review Board approvals, all data are reported in the aggregate, and only plural pronouns are used to refer to interviewees. The authors hope that these data will help DMOs benchmark best practices against aggregated data for their comparable DMOs and allow them to engage in information-based planning for the future.

Findings and Discussion

The following summarizes findings in a variety of pre-identified categories of interest.

Mission

All interviewees perceive themselves to be ambassadors for their counties, as advocates for innovative marketing, and as trustees or fiduciaries of all of the revenue they receive. All concur that their mission is to work with their colleagues across the tourism industry spectrum to develop and implement efficient and effective marketing of their communities. All concur that they should be “totally transparent” in all that they do as part of their mission to be accountable partners to other tourism stakeholders. As one said, DMOs should “always look at who your target audience is and make sure you are constantly aware of their needs. Assessment, polling, [and a] fully integrated marketing message is the most important and most compliant use of tax dollars. We owe it to [our community] to be stewards.”

Boards of Directors

Because DMOs are nonprofit organizations recognized under Section 501(c) of the Internal Revenue Code, they are required to have governing boards of directors.

Board Membership. On average, Study DMOs have 16.8 voting members (as identified in their IRS Form 990s), with DMO 8 an outlier with an average of 39.6 voting members. Members of the boards generally hold three- to five-year terms. At least four include a county commissioner on their boards, but one has bylaws that prevent a county commissioner from serving on its board. At least one includes the executive director (ED) as a non-voting member on their boards. However, several interviewees said that they (as ED) would not serve on their boards and thought that the ED being on a board “creates a conflict of interest.” When asked if it would be acceptable if the ED were on a board but restricted to non-voting status, one interviewee said “that’s a hard no.” Another explained that, because EDs are “direct reporters” to boards and because board members “are my bosses,” it is not appropriate for EDs to serve on boards. Apparently, there is a strong difference of opinion among the Study DMOs about whether EDs should serve on the board of directors, with the majority saying that it is best practice for the ED *not* to serve on the board due to potential conflicts of interest.

DMOs require or prefer, depending on their bylaws, diversity among board members in several respects: (1) geographic diversity, particularly in larger counties; (2) gender and racial

diversity; and (3) professional diversity. They get quite specific with respect to this last point. For example, one board's bylaws require representation from a local amusement park, a historical attraction, a heritage expert, a local bank, two hoteliers with regional and/or national experience, and a construction company. Another board's bylaws require representation from the local manufacturers' association. Others require inclusion of the community foundation's CEO, an arts and culture representative, and a local restaurateur. Yet another DMO requires inclusion of a representative from the local college, a resort, an assisted living representative, the local historical society, the local chamber of commerce, a winery, and an environmental advocacy group. Several interviewees said that a "global perspective" is critical on their boards. One interviewee had conducted their own strategic branding project and looked at 7-8 DMOs across the Commonwealth to assess best practices. That person said that the optimal board membership is diverse as describe above, with no less than 7 and no more than 16 members. That particular interviewee voted for an 11 member board based on the needs of their county. As another interview said, "more than about 20 and you are herding cats."

Board Responsibilities. Study DMOs' boards of directors execute traditional duties of fiscal and managerial oversight common to standard nonprofit management. Interviewees shared some specifics about board oversight of spending that reveal a fairly consistent understanding of best practices for DMO boards. For example, all Study DMO boards should engage in capital development and oversee the conduct of the executive director.

Reports. All interviewees prepare annual budgets that they submit to their boards for approval. All of them also present audited financial statements to their boards annually. It appears that most Study DMOs also provide their audited financial statements and budgets to their county commissioners, but some do not share them with the general public. At least two DMOs make their budgets publicly available, however. As one interviewee said, "we are not required to share our budget, but we believe very strongly in transparency, particularly since we are using public dollars and in compliance with Act 18." Another interviewee said "these are tax dollars. This is people's money. We owe it to them to tell them how we are spending it."

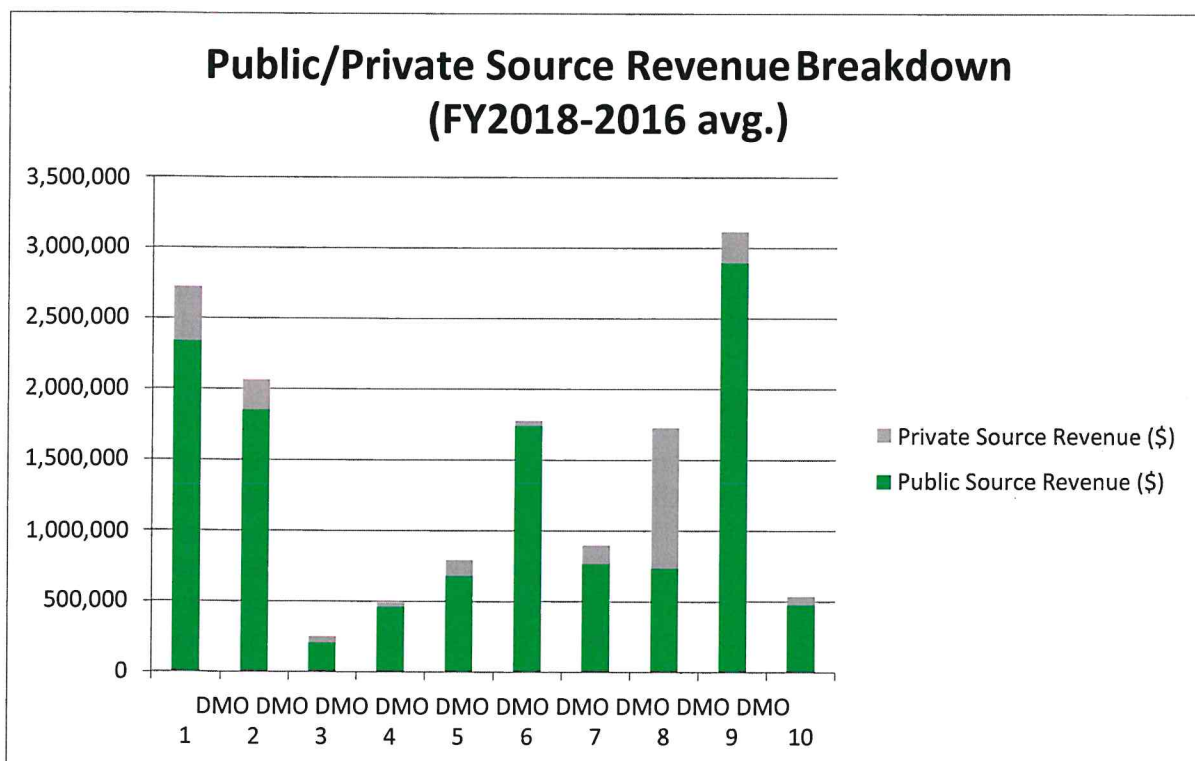
One DMO with robust rules about transparency explained the process as follows: "Every year we have an audit by an external CPA. And then every year [it goes] to [the] county commissioners. [We] close fiscal year 7/1. Within 30 days we have auditors come in – for 2 days or longer. [Then we] send it to the county and the board. The county is represented on the board as part of the bylaws. So [it is] privy to the financials that are distributed at board meetings, which meets 9 times per year." Another explained that, at each board meeting, "the internal budget is also available and handed out" with no restrictions on whether board members can share it with others in the community.

Outside of the annual budgets and financial statements, the periodicity and nature of other reports to the boards vary a bit among Study DMOs. Some provide multiple reports on a monthly basis, others only provide the two annual reports mentioned above. For example, one DMO prepares profit and loss statements each month that are approved by the executive committee then by the entire board each month. Another DMO submits an annual marketing plan for board approval.

Spending Authority. All interviewees reported that there are restrictions on their spending authority. Small DMOs have lower thresholds for when board approval is required for spending. For example, one small DMO requires two signatures on checks up to \$5000. Anything over \$5000 requires full board approval. The ED for a large DMO reports that “anything over about \$15K can be spent without approval.” But that is because of an extraordinary amount of transparency and trust. If something is not line itemed or will blow that line, it goes to the board. Anything over 15 grand needs approval regardless.” Two DMOs give their managerial staff and/or department heads individuals credit cards and discretion to make purchases.

Revenue

All interviewees concur that the overwhelming majority of Study DMOs’ revenue comes from the pillow tax. All respondent DMOs collect dues from members, and a few sell merchandise, offer co-op advertising, or collect rent for properties owned or subleased. But the pillow tax accounts for approximately 90% to 95% of the Study DMOs’ total revenue.



All but one DMO reported that they receive “most” of the pillow tax dollars collected by their counties. One external consultant who works with DMOs explained that “they [counties] have to deliver those dollars” to DMOs per the [statutes described above] after deducting their administrative fee that is set by law.” Notably, at least one county in Pennsylvania allocates

some of their pillow tax revenue to municipalities with police forces and to itself in excess of the administrative fee provided by law. All interviewees were aware of the law that allows for this allocation, and several commented upon it as “an anomaly” or “home cooking” in comparison to how most counties conduct business with their DMOs. One respondent said that it reflected “over-reach” by the county because the county “takes way more than what is statutorily allowed.” However, this respondent acknowledged that “there is law out there that allows it.” Respondents said that they had heard of several counties doing similar allocations that are “not consistent” with the law, but all but one respondent said that they did not think their county made these types of alternative allocations. All interviewees said that it is a “best practice” for counties to direct all pillow tax revenue to the DMOs, minus the small, statutorily established administrative fee. This statement may reflect neutral opinions, or it may be colored by their natural affinity for the DMOs for which they work.

Grant Making

All respondents provide funds to other nonprofits in some fashion, but there is a great deal of variety in how much they provide and the means by which they distribute funds to external organizations. Some DMOs do so through a formal grant application process. Others report that they “keep their finger on the pulse” and “keep their eyes out” for opportunities that will bring people into town “for at least two days.” Thus, they do not fund “day-to-day” or “operational” things, such as site management or staffing. Instead, all interviewees said that they are required by law only to fund “outward-focused” opportunities, with a few exceptions. However, all concurred in spirit with the ED from a large DMO who said “No investment in anything other than soft investments, other than social media marketing. Nothing of a tangible nature would be allowed.” Or as one DMO explains in their application materials, grants are only awarded to “marketing & advertising programs” and that “advertising campaigns must be targeted to non-county residents. The grant partnership will not fund advertisements in local publications, including other destinations’ Visitor’s Guides, as well as any forms of sponsorships. The grant partnership will not fund any investments with other CVBs⁹/DMOs marketing campaigns or programming.” It goes on to say that “grants cannot be used for standard operational expenses (payroll, insurance, travel, and utilities)” and that “priority will be given to organizations that have a proven record of generating overnight stays.”

Grant Processes and Amounts. Among the DMOs that award grants, there appears to be a relatively simple application process involving a web-based application form and review by a committee. One large DMO administers its grants through a three-person grants committee. They award \$30,000 per year to an average of 7 501(c) (3) organizations for “tourism-related attractions that produce a marketing plan [and] that has potential to generate overnight stays.” They added the overnight stays requirement in 2010 to emphasize the focus on generating tax revenue.

Another large DMO appears to have the most formal grant program. That DMO reached an agreement with their county government that “20% of room tax revenue has to go to a grant

⁹ Convention and Visitors Bureaus

program with a grant review committee of 5 people, with commissioners having two seats, a nonprofit organization holding one seat, a hotel representative having one seat, and the ED of the DMO holding one seat.” They meet one time per year to make awards and amounts obviously vary based on revenue from the preceding year. That ED explained that the “biggest [award] was \$50K, down to a few thousand.”

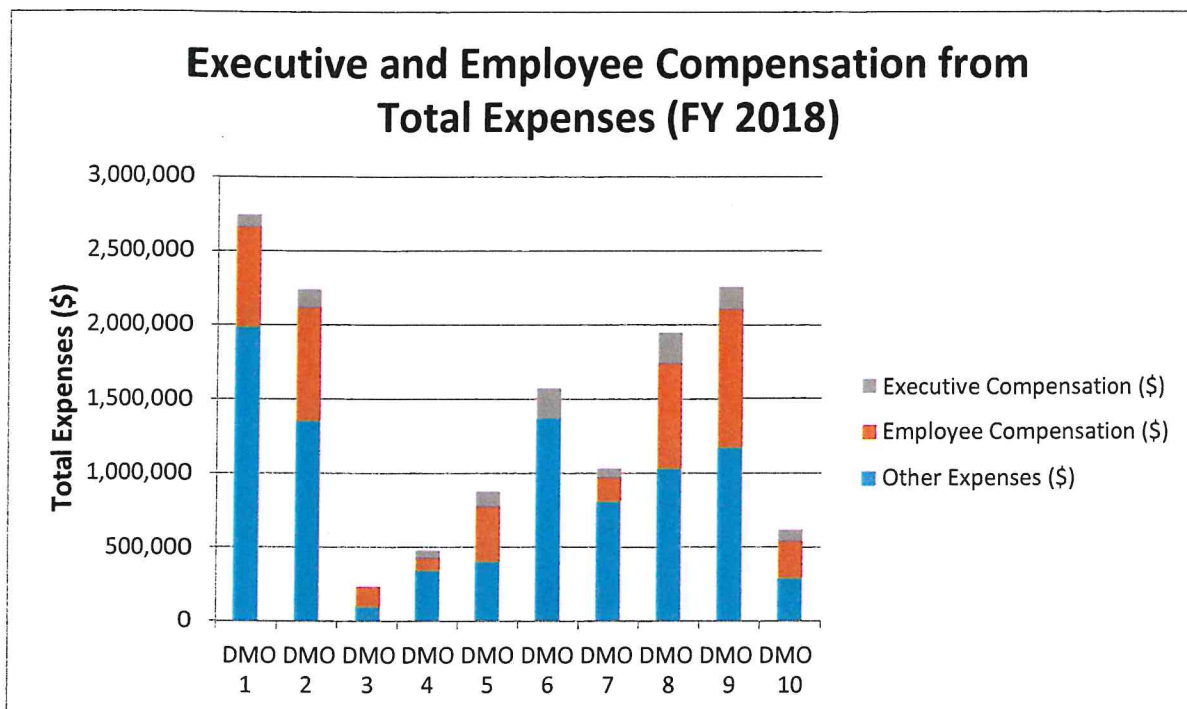
Another DMO designates “\$10,000 to be distributed to events as matching funds for programs for marketing—tourism-related grants.” Consistent with what other DMOs reported, applicants for this matching grant must demonstrate that the funds “will generate overnight stays.”

Non-Grant Awards. DMO 2 says that it does not award grants, but it distributes, on average, approximately \$80,000 per year to local entities, such as the garden club. Another DMO says that they have “a destination marketing expense line” in their budget. They “have the latitude to use those dollars with like-minded organizations in the county based on track records for return on investment. Maybe \$10K annually - used for signature events.” Again, they explained that their “underlying premise is overnight stays.”

Employees and Volunteers

Study DMOs have, on average, 11.52 employees. Small DMOs employ an average of 8.35 people, and Large DMOs employ on average 13.63 people. The number of volunteers ranges from 0 to 200, so reporting on the mean number of volunteers would not be helpful. In fact, there does not appear to be any consistency across Study DMOs on the use of volunteers, and interview data suggest that some DMOs include members of their boards of directors in this reporting category on their Form 990s, while others do not. Therefore, no meaningful conclusions about volunteers in Study DMOs can be drawn from this analysis.

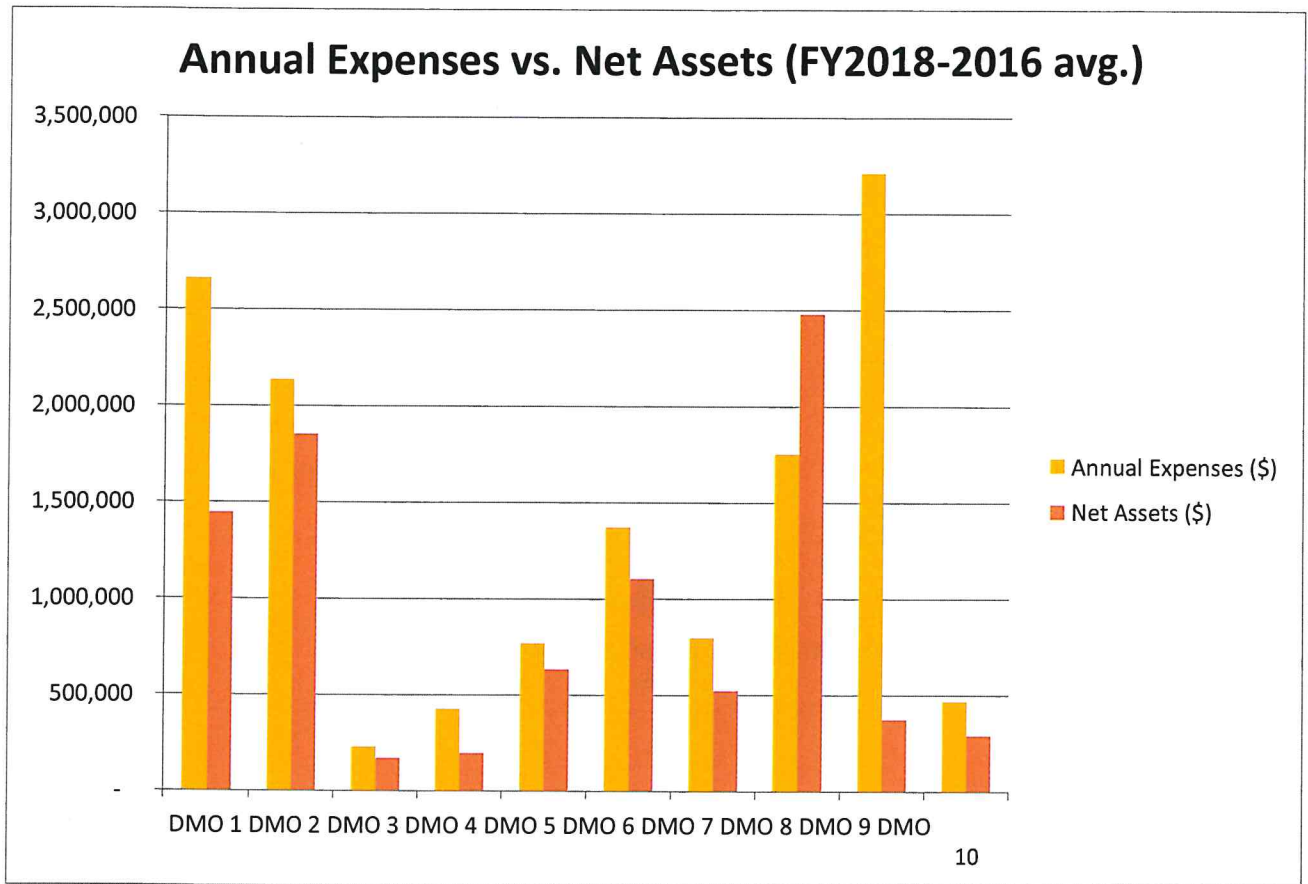
Salaries and Benefits. On average, Small DMOs report \$206,902 on employee salary and benefits or 42% of total revenue. Large DMOs report \$646,469 for employee salary and benefits or 28% of total revenue. The top earner, usually the Executive Director, earns on average \$76,590 (13% of total revenue) in Small DMOs and \$137,573 (7% of total revenue) in Large DMOs. Please note that one DMO reported no salary or benefits for an Executive Director in any of the three years, and one DMO reported no employee salary or benefits in the study period. Those DMOs were excluded from the calculations. These findings may reflect efficiencies of scale longitudinal improvements in operations as older, larger, more established DMOs and their employees learn how to work more efficiently.



All interviewees said that they pay for some expenses for employees, such as conference travel and professional development. Only one DMO that responded provides cars or transportation for their employees, and three respondents expressed that, as one person explicitly said, providing cars for employees “would definitely NOT be a best practice!” Most of the interviewees’ DMOs provide health, eye, and dental insurance, and many provide a 3% of salary match to retirement plans. Others provide access to SIMPLE IRAs. All said that they pay for professional development, which is a line item in many of their budgets. At least one provides additional educational benefits for employees through its local community college. Some provide year-end bonuses “when things go well, but not in 2020!” Most conduct annual reviews and make pay increases as appropriate.

Spending

Nature of Expenditures. Spending by DMO staff is subject to the constraints described above under Boards of Directors. Interview data reveal a few additional spending policies. All interviewees sounded the same tune about spending, as described several times above. They do not pay for any operational role in any events “We have enormous interaction with them [event planners] and sometimes even have a staff person on the planning committee. But we stay out of logistics. A few interviewees said they might have a static display or a tent at an event to advertise upcoming events, but they “would stay out of operations.”



Special Event Spending. All interviewees said that they hold annual events, such as holiday parties, and that such events are “always” held at member organizations’ facilities as a matter of best practices. One interviewee said that they “would consider” holding an event at a non-member business if they were trying to entice them into joining the DMO. One interviewee said that they “had heard” about another DMO holding an annual event at a non-member business that was outside the DMO’s geographic region and said “that would not fly” with their board. “Not a good idea. We would never do that,” said another. A third explained, “we always hold our holiday parties and events at a member business. Better for budget, too. [We] put out an email to all businesses that can handle our size event and ask for interest.” Emphasizing again that DMOs operate with the use of public funds and are meant to be stewards of the community, all interviewees said that choosing to patronize the businesses they represent for special events is a matter of best practice.

Petty Cash. DMOs’ petty cash policies are not consistent across organizations. Some do not allow for any cash to be kept on the premises. Others set the limit at \$50 or \$200.

Auditing and Accounting

All interviewees said that all DMO should employ external auditors to conduct annual audits that are shared with the boards of directors. All interviewees also said that DMOs should use external accounting firms.

Concerns about Counties

According to interviewees, DMOs are “in the public eye” and “do a good job of being transparent.” However, “the same cannot be said about the county,” according to words that one interviewee said and several others echoed. These respondents said, in turn, that the counties’ shares of pillow tax dollars “go into general coffers” and that “counties do not account very well.” Another observed that there is “no reporting where money goes in or goes out” and suggested that we, as researchers, “follow the money.” Another encouraged counties to conduct pillow tax audits “like DMOs do.” “Counties should be audited just like we are – these are tax dollars, and they have a duty” to be transparent. There appears to be a fair amount of tension between counties and DMOs, and from the DMOs’ perspective, that tension arises from counties’ lack of transparency and reporting. “Transparency seems to stop at the commissioners’ door,” says one DMO ED.

Assessment and Planning

All interviewees concurred that internal and external assessments are key to success, but they approach assessment in a variety of ways. At least two rely upon DCED¹⁰ Tourism Economics. They “partner heavily with the state tourism department, which is housed in DCED.” They also look at Smith Travel Research statistics. One DMO, who is frustrated by peers who do not use data in their management, said it “blows my mind” that some DMOs “don’t consult Smith¹¹ data.” Interviewees also referred the researchers to the annual economic impact report at www.VisitPA.com under the Industry Resources tab.

One interviewee shared a story about their journey to data-driven management. “Prior to 2016, we did not invest in any hotel stats. It became very clear very fast that we needed data. . . . Aggregate data comes from a global provider should always be thinking globally.” They also “keep a pulse on [data from] Smith weekly and definitely monthly.” This same ED also subscribes to services that track data on DMOs comparable to theirs and check those figures regularly

When asked for their advice on what some best practices for DMOs and data would be, interviewees offered that EDs should “look at [the] number of hotels built each year.” Another said “things are changing extremely fast in this industry. Lots of discussion about how we’re spending money. Lots who think that technology and the ability to get info on their smartphones are making [us] obsolete. We need to work hard and fast to maintain relevance.”

¹⁰ Department of Community and Economic Development

¹¹ <https://str.com/>

Another shared that, in their mind, DMOs “should be spending 4-5% on research – who is your visitor? What are your major theaters? Hotel occupancy rates each month? Number of visitors to each attraction?” They said that someone should be able to “go to the research site on [the DMO] website – see visitor profile data, economic impact data. How many people are employed in the industry in your area?

Finally, interviewees offered closing thoughts on some best practices that are easy to adopt and yield helpful information. They encourage all DMOs to prepare after-action reports following all events they promote; improve tracking of the number of people who come from more than 50 miles away to your community; “put pressure” on event coordinators to track data and share it with DMOs; track every person who contacts the DMO; “real-time surveys” among visitors; looking at the number of people who come to stay, not just tax revenue (one room can hold up to four people); and because of the pandemic, perhaps expanding DMOs’ focus to promote “backyard tourism.”

Conclusion

From the outset of this project, the researchers sought to identify best practices across Pennsylvania DMOs. Inspired by local discourse over the DMO close to them, the researchers wanted to gain a better perspective on DMOs operating under similar size and revenue conditions. After identifying 12 DMOs – Study DMOs – that fit within these constraints, the researchers employed a two-step method of inquiry; first collecting relevant business operations data from the Study DMOs’ Form 990s and then interviewing the Executive Directors from as many of the Study DMOs as possible. Data from the Form 990s and interviews were then synthesized so that the researchers could identify best practices that were consistent across the Study DMOs. Some best practices that arose included maintaining a diverse board of directors, representative of the constituent businesses under a DMO’s jurisdiction; operating with transparent financial operations, especially because tax dollars are involved; and acting as fiduciaries and stewards in all respects, prioritizing ‘home’ businesses whenever possible. This paper is a first step towards understanding how DMOs operate and how pillow tax dollars are being used in communities.

TOURISM

IN ADAMS COUNTY, PA.

Tourism is serious business, especially in Adams County, Pa., where more than 3.7 million people visit annually. Not only are these visitors supporting local businesses through the money they spend, travelers are generating more than \$134 million in tax revenue and providing jobs to more than 7,000 people throughout the region. Tourism is Adams County's top industry.

The Gettysburg region is one of America's most popular vacation destinations, as well as an attractive meeting and event venue and prominent stop for group travelers.

The destination, known globally for its rich Civil War history, also provides visitors with an array of culinary, recreation, shopping and family fun.

The money spent by visitors to Adams County reaches far beyond Downtown Gettysburg. Communities throughout the region benefit from those that visit our farms, wineries, parks, restaurants and stores.

Tourism isn't just the responsibility of Destination Gettysburg - it takes an entire community - businesses, governments, economic organizations and citizens themselves - to achieve success and reap the benefits of tourism.

Tourism is an industry that should be embraced by everyone.



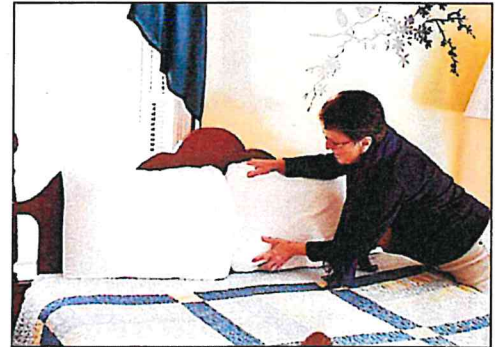
How TOURISM WORKS ...

Tourism is an industry that has many direct, and indirect, benefits to the community. While many think of tourism as an industry of hotels, restaurants and attractions, visitors and their spending support a variety of jobs and other trades - many of which are sometimes not associated with tourism.

Tourism is Adams County's largest industry, bringing in more than \$660 million annually and supporting over 7,000 jobs in the area, according to research provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development.

The money spent by visitors filters its way through businesses, to their employees and out into the community - benefiting a wide range of trades, local residents and businesses.

Simply put - because of tourism, Adams County is a much better place to live and work.



How TOURISM MARKETING WORKS ...

Marketing tourism is crucial to attracting visitors and generating revenue for the local community.

Contrary to some beliefs, Gettysburg - even with its renowned name - doesn't sell itself. Adams County competes with destinations from across the United States as families, couples, meeting planners and tour operators decide on their next trip.

Destination Gettysburg is a marketing organization. The organization buys ads on radio, in print, online and engages in social media. Staff attends trade shows and make sales calls to tour operators and meeting planners as well as pitches stories to journalists and bloggers. Destination Gettysburg does what it takes to create an awareness of the destination and inspire new visitors to come and current visitors to return.

Gettysburg Summer Fun!

Create a historic family adventure with bike, scooter, and Segway tours through national park battlefields, unearthing secrets the stars in one of our rustic barnyards, or safety carroubels at the end of an epic water slide. All right around the corner in Gettysburg, PA.

Make your own history. [myGettysburg](#)

Plan your Gettysburg, PA adventure with our new app! [Download on the App Store](#) [GET IT ON Google play](#)

Download a FREE Travel Planner at [DestinationGettysburg.com](#) or call 800.337.5015



TOURISM

IN THE BOROUGH OF GETTYSBURG

REAL PROPERTY TAX

Many of the borough's property owners are a part of the tourism community. These taxpayers exist because of tourism and thus a large contributor to the borough's revenue source.

In the 2016 budget, it is estimated that a total of \$1,892,791 will be generated through real property taxes. Conservatively, if only 20 percent of that revenue was paid by tourism-related businesses, it would generate \$375,000 for the borough.

AMUSEMENT TAXES

The taxes, paid by those paying admission to museums, tours and other attractions was expected to generate \$118,000 for the borough. This tax is largely paid by visitors.

LODGING TAX

This tax, assessed only on overnight visitors to Adams County, generates more than \$150,000 for the borough, according to 2016 budget estimates.

OTHER TAXES TO CONSIDER

There are a variety of other taxes, fees and permits that are paid by tourism-related businesses or their employees, including earned income taxes, local services taxes, business privilege taxes, vendors licenses, outdoor dining permits, amusement licenses, special event permits, alcohol beverage permits.

PARKING REVENUE

The borough estimates that in 2016, more than \$935,000 will be generated through parking meters, parking permits and fines. Conservatively, a large portion of this revenue (about \$300,000) is generated by visitors and employees in the tourism industry

ADDITIONAL CONTRIBUTIONS BY DESTINATION GETTYSBURG:

- Main Street Gettysburg - \$20,000
- Fourth of July Fireworks Display - \$15,000
- Freedom Transit - \$5,000
- GARMA Christmas Tree Fund - \$5,000
- Baltimore Street Revitalization - \$3,500

TOURISM

IN THE BOROUGH OF GETTYSBURG

There is no municipality in Adams County, Pa., that benefits more from tourism than the Borough of Gettysburg. The borough features most of the accommodations, restaurants, stores and attractions than any other part of the region, and because of this - gains the most from our visitors.

At the same time, as the Borough of Gettysburg struggles to gain solid fiscal ground, tourism is often to blame as a burden on local taxpayers. Residents and elected officials alike often see tourism as a cost to the borough, rather than the true economic engine that it is.

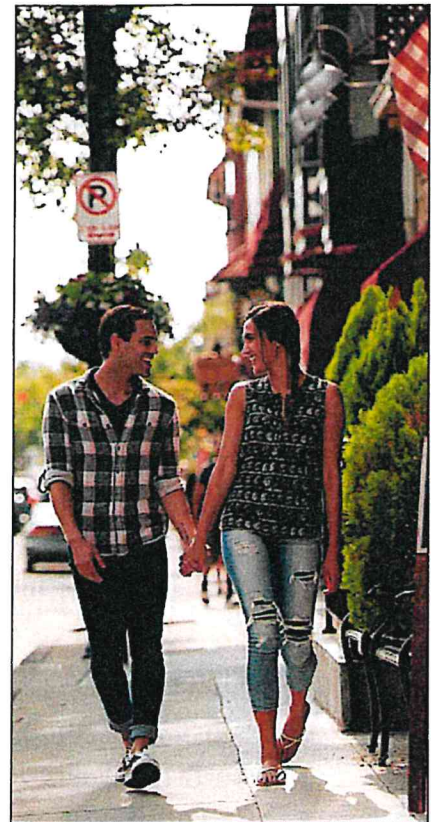
Not only does tourism provide the borough residents with thousands of job opportunities - full- and part-time, but generates hundreds of thousands of dollars in tax revenue.

Conservatively, tourism generates more than \$1 million for the Borough of Gettysburg through a variety of taxes, fees and permits.

Indirectly, the borough benefits greatly from tourism-related businesses through property taxes and permits as well as taxes paid by employees.

Several of the largest property taxpayers in the borough are tourism related - Gettysburg Hotel, Quality Inn/Best Western, 1863 Inn of Gettysburg, Inn at Cemetery Hill and the Dobbin House.

Without tourism, the Borough of Gettysburg would indeed be a different place, void of many of the businesses, workers and tax revenue the community now enjoys.



>> CONTINUED

How TOURISM MARKETING IS FUNDED ...

Tourism in Adams County, Pa., like many other communities across the United States, is funded largely by a lodging tax - a 5-percent levy imposed upon visitors to the region, not the local residents. This lodging tax, adopted through state law, is paid by those who stay overnight in our community.

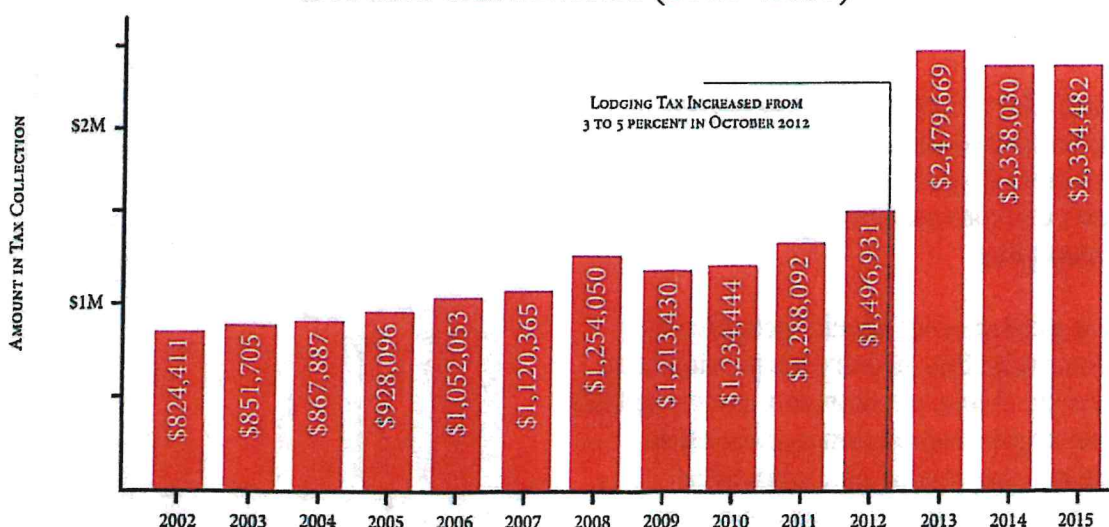
In Adams County, the county government receives the first 4.5 percent as an administrative fee, and the remaining money is split between Destination Gettysburg (75%), Adams County (12.5%) and local municipalities that have a full-time police department and lodging (12.5%).



But why does Destination Gettysburg need that money?

Tourism works in a cycle. Money is spent by organizations like Destination Gettysburg to attract visitors, who in turn spend money in our community. A portion of that money comes back to the destination marketing organization to sustain visitation through its marketing. If that money was routed elsewhere, there would be no funding to attract visitors, and visitation to the region would decline, resulting in less tax revenue and fewer jobs supported by tourism. Destination Gettysburg, and its marketing, is also supported by dues paid annually by members.

LODGING TAX REVENUE (2002 -2015)



WHY TOURISM MATTERS TO YOU ...

Tourism is often a difficult industry to understand. It's not about one company selling a product - it's a community working together to bring in a variety of visitors to enjoy a variety of experiences.

In addition, the benefits aren't always easy to see, and are often so vast that it's sometimes hard to recognize all the pieces.

There's few in Adams County that aren't touched by tourism - directly or indirectly. At the very least, your taxes are lower because of tourism - about \$840 per year, according to statewide estimates.

It's likely you know someone whose job is supported by tourism. And if you don't, it's likely you know someone whose job or business has been positively impacted by tourism in some way.

Tourism is a competitive industry. Communities like ours should not only want visitors, but compete for them. Adams County should be a hospitable and welcoming place for our 3.7 million visitors.

Money, a lot of money, is at stake. Every year, millions of dollars are coming into our community from visitors and without that money, this community would be a much different place.

We, as a community, should recognize and embrace what this industry has provided our region for almost two centuries, and to establish a plan for growing tourism as a successful industry - supporting jobs, supporting businesses and supporting local government.



CONTACT:

Norris Flowers, President & CEO
norris@destinationgettysburg.com
(717) 338-1050
www.destinationgettysburg.com