

March 21, 2024

WV State Auditors' Office – lgs@wvsao.gov , Attn: Shellie Humphries

WV Joint Committee on Government & Finance –

https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Reports/Agency_Reports/AgencyReports.cfm

drew.ross@wvlegislature.gov, steve.marsden@wvlegislature.gov and john.tice@wvlegislature.gov

WVACVB – jnuzum@bowlesrice.com

Dear WV State Auditor's Office, WV Joint Committee on Government & Finance, and WV Association of Convention & Visitor Bureaus,

As you are aware with the passing of Senate Bill 488 during the 2021 West Virginia Legislature's Regular Session several new requirements have been implemented on CVBs to qualify for distributions of Hotel Occupancy taxes by the county(s) and or the municipality(s) we serve.

In compliance with W.Va. Code §7-18-13a, CVBs are to now report to the WWSAO, the WV Joint Committee on Government & Finance, and the WVACVB 90 days following the end of the CVB's fiscal year the following:

- Balance sheet – annually,
- Income statement - annually, and
- Either an audit or a financial review – triennially W.Va. Code § 7-18-14.

In addition, CVBs are to be accredited by an accrediting body such as the WVACVB W.Va. Code §7-18-13a(b) which confirms compliance with the following industry standards as follows:

- Annual budget
- Budget allocation within the industry standard of 40%-40%-20% (Marketing, Personnel, Administrative)
- Marketing plan targeting markets outside of 50 miles of their destination,
- Full time executive director, physical office/ visitor center, website, and
- Annual reporting to all the CVBs funding entities.

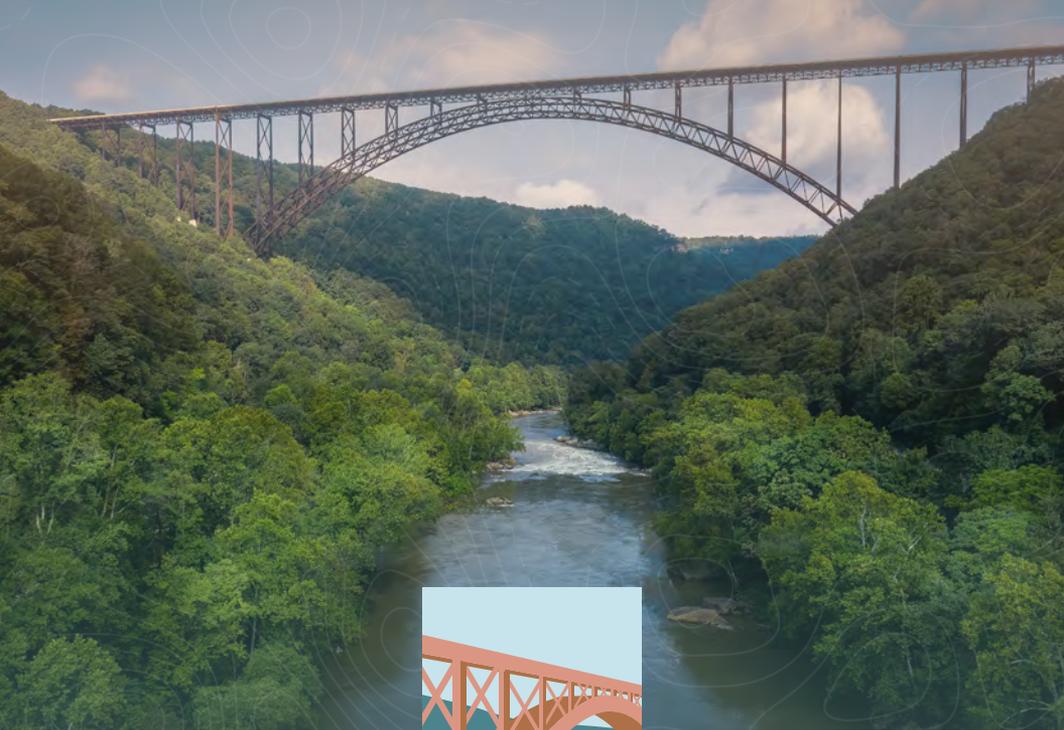
On behalf of the Board of Directors of the New River Gorge CVB, we respectfully submit the required information and confirm that New River Gorge CVB is in full compliance with all WV Code 7-18-13 requirements. If you have any questions, please contact either Becky Sullivan, Executive Director, at becky@newrivergorgecvb.com or (304) 465-5617 or Siobhan Wilson, Board Chair, at ansted.clerk@gmail.com or (304) 658-5901.

Sincerely,

Siobhan Wilson, Board Chair

Becky Sullivan, NRG CVB Executive Director

Attachments: Income statement (Jan 1, 2023 – Dec 31, 2023), Balance sheet (Dec 31, 2023), Annual report (2023), and Financial Review (2022).



NEW RIVER GORGE

WELCOMING VISITORS TO THE
NEW RIVER GORGE IN FAYETTE COUNTY, WV

newrivergorgecvb.com

ANNUAL REPORT | 2023



ABOUT THE NEW RIVER GORGE CVB

310 W Oyler Ave, Oak Hill

The New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) is an independent, non-profit destination marketing organization. CVBs were created under state code and are funded by a percentage of the lodging tax collected in accordance with that code. We are frontline tourism professionals who are experts on the attractions, activities and events that our area has to offer. We are an essential part of the overall effort to promote and encourage travel to West Virginia.

MISSION STATEMENT

As a destination marketing organization, the mission of the New River Gorge CVB is to:

- ▶ Promote Fayette County as a visitor-friendly destination
- ▶ Provide tourism public relations
- ▶ Serve as a resource for tourism business development
- ▶ Assess tourism needs
- ▶ Promote seamless conversion of visitors to repeat business and visitation

PARTNERSHIPS AND ASSOCIATIONS

- ▶ WV Hospitality and Travel Association
- ▶ WV Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus
- ▶ Southeast Tourism Society
- ▶ WV Association of Fairs and Festivals
- ▶ Visit Southern West Virginia
- ▶ West Virginia Department of Tourism

VISITOR CENTER DATA



The New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau represents the tourism segments throughout Fayette County and lodging partners in Fayette County, including the Town of Ansted, City of Oak Hill and City of Montgomery.



In 2023, the Visitor Center welcomed **7,714 visitors** from 47 states and 11 countries, a 12% increase over 2022. Most visited months in the New River Gorge area: April, May, June, August and September



Top 3 experiences/activities overnighnters in the New River Gorge are interested in:

1. Events, Bridge Day & Accommodations
2. State & National Parks
3. The New River Gorge Bridge



Top states for visitation:

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. WV | 5. VA |
| 2. OH | 6. FL |
| 3. PA | 7. IN |
| 4. NC | |



50,000 Visitors Guides were printed and distributed over the year. **6,250** Visitors Guides were requested and mailed from the CVB, a **27%** increase over 2022.

TOURISM IN FAYETTE COUNTY

38,891 

POPULATION IN
FAYETTE COUNTY

15,836 

HOUSEHOLDS IN
FAYETTE COUNTY

1.7 MILLION VISITORS

7% INCREASE OVER 2022
(U.S. NAT'L PARK AVG: 4%
INCREASE)

\$715

PER-HOUSEHOLD TAX INCREASE
NEEDED TO REPLACE VISITOR-
GENERATED TAXES

ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM IN FAYETTE COUNTY:

\$164 MILLION

TRAVEL-GENERATED
SPENDING

1,658 JOBS

SUPPORTED
BY TOURISM

BUDGET

2023 annual hotel occupancy
tax collected:

\$514,760.45

MARKETING SPEND

In 2023, our marketing spend was **73%** of our overall budget. This includes advertising, partnerships, promotions, brochures, postage and special events.

DIGITAL ADS

The CVB launched a campaign that ran from spring to fall, with creative tailored to each season and a focus on reaching outdoor enthusiasts and families seeking an outdoor getaway. The spring digital ads received **1,059,967** impressions, the summer digital ads garnered **4,197,862** impressions, and the fall digital ads obtained **2,346,607** impressions, with a total of **7,604,436** impressions for the entire campaign.

SPRING CAMPAIGN

\$2,143

budget

1,059,967

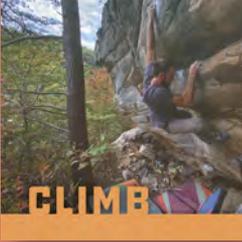
impressions

11,498

clicks

1.08%

CTR Average



SUMMER CAMPAIGN

\$5,706

budget

4,197,862

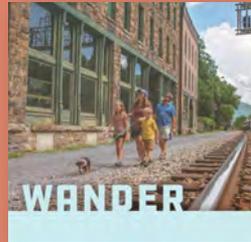
impressions

39,140

clicks

0.93%

CTR Average



FALL CAMPAIGN

\$4,449

budget

2,346,607

impressions

20,000

clicks

0.85%

CTR Average



WEBSITE

Year-Over-Year Comparison (2023 vs. 2022)

GUIDE REQUESTS

3,345

(Up 14.1%)

PAGEVIEWS

584,821

(Up 43.5%)

NEWSLETTER SIGN-UPS

952

(Up 140.4%)

SESSIONS

330,434

(Up 79.7%)

UNIQUE USERS

277,004

(Up 82.4%)

PAGES/SESSION

1.76

(Down 20.2%)

EVENT COUNT

2,182,249

(Up 49.3%)

(An event is any action taken on the site.)

TOP PAGES

- ▶ /play/
91,968 (+1,878.23%)
- ▶ Homepage
59,092 (+184.44%)
- ▶ /visitors-guide/
51,535 (+8,489.17%)
- ▶ /play/trails-and-hiking/
49,894 (+567.21%)
- ▶ /stay/cabins-and-vacation-rentals/
44,471 (+361.84%)

PARTNER CLICKS: 62,180

CAMPAIGNS RUN: 1

EMAIL NEWSLETTERS



MAILCHIMP SUBSCRIBERS

3,778



CLICK-THRU RATE

2.13%



OPEN RATE

30.57%

Current travel & transportation industry standard for open rate: 20.44%

Current travel & transportation industry standard for click-thru rate: 2.25%

SOCIAL MEDIA

The New River Gorge CVB's social media following has continued to grow at a significant pace. The average daily reach of the New River Gorge Facebook page is up **86.1%**. The engagement rate on X is up **5%**, and the hashtag **#GOGORGE** has been used **4,599** times by visitors eager to share their New River Gorge experience.

FACEBOOK

52,588

FOLLOWERS
(Up 8.9%)

38,123
average daily reach per page
(Up 49.7%)

144,216
reactions, comments & shares

91,081
link clicks
(Up 180.3%)

X (TWITTER)

4,015

FOLLOWERS
(Up 3.8%)

270
reposts

1,065
(Up 93%)
likes & @replies

148
new followers
(Up 1.4%)

53,550
impressions

INSTAGRAM

19,328

FOLLOWERS
(Up 19.3%)

3,125
new followers
(Up 20.3%)

138,484
likes
(Up 24.8%)

1,070
comments
(Up 6.8%)

141,663
#GoGorge hashtag engagement



Following its designation as a national park in 2020, the New River Gorge has garnered significant media attention across the nation. Notably featured in prominent publications like National Geographic's "20 Coolest Travel Adventures for 2024" alongside other respected travel outlets, the Gorge has seen its visibility and appeal among travel enthusiasts significantly boosted. A full list of media features is available on the New River Gorge CVB website.

2023 BOARD MEMBERS

ABBIE NEWELL

Fayette County Trails Coalition

ANGEL DUNCAN

Fayette County Park

ANGELA TACKETT

City of Montgomery

ANNE CAVALIER

City of Smithers

CHRISTA HODGES

White Oak Rail Trail Expo

CHRISTY ULRICH

Ace Adventure Resort

DAVID PERRY

City of Oak Hill

ERIC PORIES

Escape-A-Torium

HEATHER ANTOLINI

Country Road Cabins

HEATHER JOHNSON

River Expeditions

JOE BAUGHMAN

Hawks Nest State Park

MARIAH HARRISON

Gaines Estate

MAURA KISTLER

Water Stone Outdoors

PJ STEVENSON

Adventure Res

SIOBHAN WILSON

Town of Ansted

2023 STAFF MEMBERS

BECKY SULLIVAN

Executive Director

TIM NAYLOR

Executive Assistant

MEGAN WEATHERFORD

Visitor Center and Event Coordinator

SHERRY COFFMAN

Weekend Travel Specialist

VISITOR CENTER

SPECIALISTS:

Gene Worthington

Rose Anne Michaels

Lita Eskew

Jeannie Todaro

Dave Bounds

Thelma Walker



**NEW
RIVER
GORGE**

800.927.0263

NewRiverGorgeCVB.com

#GoGorge

NEW RIVER GORGE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Year Ended December 31, 2022

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HESS, STEWART & CAMPBELL, PLLC

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

122 East Main Street

Beckley, West Virginia 25801

P: (304) 255-1978 F: (304) 255-1971

940 Fourth Ave.
Huntington, WV 25701
P: (304) 523-6464
F: (304) 523-4395

915 Jefferson Street N.
Lewisburg, WV 24901
P: (304) 255-1978
F: (304) 255-1971

INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REVIEW REPORT

To the Board of Directors
New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau
Oak Hill, West Virginia

We have reviewed the accompanying financial statements New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau (nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of assets, liabilities and net assets – modified cash basis as of December 31, 2022, statement of revenues, expenses, and other changes in net assets – modified cash basis, cash flows – modified cash basis for the year then ended, and the related notes to the financial statements. A review includes primarily applying analytical procedures to management's financial data and making inquiries of company management. A review is substantially less in scope than an audit, the objective of which is the expression of an opinion regarding the financial statements as a whole. Accordingly, we do not express an opinion.

Management's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America; this includes the design, implementation, and maintenance of internal control relevant to the preparation and fair presentation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement whether due to fraud or error.

Accountants' Responsibility

Our responsibility is to conduct the review engagement in accordance with Statements on Standards for Accounting and Review Services promulgated by the Accounting and Review Services Committee of the AICPA. Those standards require us to perform procedures to obtain limited assurance as a basis for reporting whether we are aware of any material modifications that should be made to the financial statements for them to be in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting. We believe that the results of our procedures provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion.

Accountants' Conclusion

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements in order for them to be in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting.

MEMBERS

AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 of the financial statements, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial statements are prepared in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting or the basis of accounting, which is a basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Our conclusion is not modified with respect to this matter.

Kevin Stewart + Campbell, PLLC.

Beckley, West Virginia
November 27, 2023

NEW RIVER GORGE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
STATEMENT OF ASSETS, LIABILITIES, AND NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
December 31, 2022

	2022
ASSETS	
CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash	\$ 433,470
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	433,470
PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT	30,778
Less accumulated depreciation	(27,863)
	2,915
	\$ 436,385
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Payroll and sales tax payable	\$ 2,407
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	2,407
LONG-TERM DEBT	
Notes payable, less current maturities	83,787
TOTAL LONG-TERM DEBT	83,787
NET ASSETS, unrestricted	350,191
	\$ 436,385

See accompanying notes and independent accountant's review report.

NEW RIVER GORGE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
STATEMENTS OF REVENUE, EXPENSES AND CHANGES IN NET ASSETS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
Year Ended December 31, 2022

	2022
REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT	
Hotel occupancy	\$ 479,580
Fayette County partnership	63,005
Promo income	1,750
	544,335
OPERATING EXPENSES	
Administrative salaries and benefits	79,642
Advertising and promotion	240,772
Depreciation	594
Education expense	1,925
Insurance	2,577
Office supplies and expense	6,329
Professional fees	6,375
Rent	4,800
SWVCVB contract	148,373
Travel expense	3,454
Other operating expenses	8,765
	503,606
OPERATING INCOME	40,729
OTHER INCOME (EXPENSE)	
Interest income	846
Interest expense	(2,552)
	(1,706)
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	39,023
NET ASSETS, BEGINNING	311,168
NET ASSETS, ENDING	\$ 350,191

See accompanying notes and independent accountant's review report.

NEW RIVER GORGE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
STATEMENTS OF CASH FLOWS - MODIFIED CASH BASIS
Year Ended December 31, 2022

	2022
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES	
Net income	\$ 39,023
Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operating activities:	
Depreciation	594
Change in assets and liabilities:	
Increase in accounts receivable	-
Increase in payroll and sales tax payable	466
Net cash provided by operating activities	40,083
 CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES	
Principal payments on notes payable	(15,446)
Net cash used in financing activities	(15,446)
 NET DECREASE IN CASH	24,637
 CASH, BEGINNING OF YEAR	408,833
 CASH, END OF YEAR	\$ 433,470

See accompanying notes and independent accountant's review report.

**NEW RIVER GORGE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

NOTE 1. NATURE OF ACTIVITIES AND SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Date of Management’s Review: The Organization has evaluated subsequent events through November 27, 2023 the date which the financial statements were available to be issued.

Nature of activities: The New River Gorge Convention and Visitors Bureau operates to increase, through advertising and other promotions, travel and tourism in Southern West Virginia. The Organization is supported primarily through appropriations of occupancy tax from the localities within the area.

Basis of accounting: The accompanying financial statements have been prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting, which is a comprehensive basis of accounting other than accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. Under that basis, certain revenues and related assets are recognized when received rather than when earned and certain expenses are recognized when paid rather than when obligations are incurred. Consequently, the Organization has not recognized receivables from tax localities for appropriations of occupancy tax. In addition, the Organization has not recognized payables to vendors in the accompanying financial statements.

Cash: For purposes of presenting cash flows, cash includes cash on hand, demand deposit accounts, temporary investments and deposit certificates having original maturities of ninety days or less.

Property and equipment: Property and equipment are carried at historical cost. Betterments and major renewals are charged to the appropriate property account. Maintenance, repairs and minor renewals are charged to expense in the year incurred. Gains and losses on dispositions of property and equipment are recognized currently, except gains on the trade-in of equipment, which reduces the basis of the new assets acquired.

Depreciation: Depreciation is computed on the straight-line method over the following estimated useful lives:

	<u>Years</u>
Office equipment and furniture	5-10
Leasehold improvements	10-15

Income taxes: The Organization is a not-for-profit organization that is exempt from Federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(6). Management believes there is no unrelated business taxable income associated with the Organization.

Advertising costs: Advertising and marketing costs are expensed as incurred.

Use of estimates: The preparation of financial statements requires management to make estimates and assumptions that affect certain reported amounts and disclosures. Accordingly, actual results could differ from those estimates.

**NEW RIVER GORGE CONVENTION AND VISITORS BUREAU
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

NOTE 2. CONCENTRATION

The Organization shares in hotel occupancy tax receipts from various communities in Southern West Virginia. For the year ended December 31, 2022, 88% of income was derived from occupancy taxes from Fayette County and the towns of Oak Hill and Ansted. Were it not for this funding, the Organization's ability to continue as a going concern would be questionable.

NOTE 3. DESCRIPTION OF LEASING ARRANGEMENT

The Organization has entered into an agreement with a local government to lease office space located in Oak Hill, West Virginia for a period of twenty-five years for \$1 per year. The Organization is responsible for all utilities. Management certifies that the Organization is in compliance with all covenants of this agreement, which expires in June 2030.

NOTE 4. PROPERTY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment consists of the following at December 31:

	<u>2022</u>
Equipment	\$ 30,778
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(27,863)</u>
	<u>\$ 2,915</u>

Depreciation expense totaled \$594 for the year ended December 31, 2022.

NOTE 5. SBA ECONOMIC INJURY DISASTER LOAN

The Organization received an Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) from the U.S. Small Business Administration in the amount of \$150,000, bearing interest at the stated rate of 2.75%. The purpose of the loan is for working capital to alleviate economic injury caused by the coronavirus pandemic. The Organization currently pays monthly installment payments of \$641. The balance of the note payable as of December 31, 2022 was \$83,787. The note is scheduled to mature in June 2050.

New River Gorge CVB
Balance Sheet
December 31, 2023

ASSETS

Current Assets		
FCNB Checking	\$	289,513.01
		<u>289,513.01</u>
Total Current Assets		289,513.01
Property and Equipment		
Accumulated Depreciation		(27,863.34)
		<u>(27,863.34)</u>
Total Property and Equipment		(27,863.34)
Other Assets		
Truist Brokerage Acct		100,000.00
Equipment		30,777.93
		<u>130,777.93</u>
Total Other Assets		130,777.93
Total Assets	\$	<u><u>392,427.60</u></u>

LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL

Current Liabilities		
FICA Payable	\$	1,323.69
Federal W/H Payable		573.24
State W/H Payable		348.00
FUTA Payable		152.49
SUTA Payable		21.68
		<u>2,419.10</u>
Total Current Liabilities		2,419.10
Long-Term Liabilities		
		<u>0.00</u>
Total Long-Term Liabilities		0.00
Total Liabilities		2,419.10
Capital		
Fund Balance		350,190.52
Net Income		39,817.98
		<u>390,008.50</u>
Total Capital		390,008.50
Total Liabilities & Capital	\$	<u><u>392,427.60</u></u>

New River Gorge CVB
Income Statement
For the Twelve Months Ending December 31, 2023

	Current Month		Year to Date	
Revenues				
Hotel Occupancy	\$ 7,409.75	87.66	\$ 514,760.45	87.75
Miscellaneous	51.82	0.61	775.46	0.13
Fay Co Partnership	740.98	8.77	68,468.40	11.67
Promo Income	250.00	2.96	2,650.00	0.45
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Total Revenues	8,452.55	100.00	586,654.31	100.00
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
Cost of Sales				
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
Total Cost of Sales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
Gross Profit	8,452.55	100.00	586,654.31	100.00
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
Expenses				
Advertising	44,427.48	525.61	240,096.84	40.93
Dues:Membership	0.00	0.00	3,204.10	0.55
Insurance - Brickstreet	0.00	0.00	285.00	0.05
Insurance	0.00	0.00	2,320.00	0.40
Interest Expense	0.00	0.00	762.85	0.13
Lic, Fees, Permits	0.00	0.00	50.00	0.01
Promo/Travel Shows	0.00	0.00	7,782.13	1.33
New Equip/Upgrades	0.00	0.00	891.52	0.15
Postage	523.10	6.19	15,347.75	2.62
Office Supply Maintenance	(60.00)	(0.71)	5,252.48	0.90
Payroll Taxes:Employer	678.64	8.03	7,099.55	1.21
Office Space	500.00	5.92	5,900.00	1.01
Professional Fees:Acctng	2,800.00	33.13	6,100.00	1.04
Salaries	8,651.57	102.35	84,653.87	14.43
SWVCVB:H/M Tax	2,222.93	26.30	154,352.47	26.31
Special Events	54.53	0.65	598.30	0.10
Travel Expenses	0.00	0.00	2,264.68	0.39
Meeting Expense	2,349.82	27.80	4,239.58	0.72
Education Expenses	0.00	0.00	5,635.21	0.96
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Total Expenses	62,148.07	735.26	546,836.33	93.21
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Net Income	\$ (53,695.52)	(635.26)	\$ 39,817.98	6.79
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For Management Purposes Only