

304-465-5617

310 W. OYLER AVE . DAK HILL, WV 25901

NEWRIVERGORGECVB.COM

March 19, 2025

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 WVSAO, 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 Heather Antolini, Board Chair, at heather@wvcabins.com or (304) 578-4522.

Sincerely,

Heather Antolini, Board Chair

Becky Sullivan, NRG CVB Executive Director

Attachments: Income statement (Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024), Balance sheet (Dec 31, 2024), Annual report

(2024), and Financial Review (2022).



NEW RIVER GORGE

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

newrivergorgecvb.com



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 2024, the Visitor Center welcomed **8,592 visitors** from 46 states and 9 countries, a **12%** increase over 2023.

Most visited months in the New River Gorge area: April, May, July and October



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

- Events & Bridge Day
- 2. State & National Parks
- 3. The New River Gorge Bridge



Top states for visitation:

- **1.** WV
- **4.** NC
- 2. OH
- 5. VA
- 3. PA
- 6. FL



50,000 Visitors Guides were printed and distributed over the year. **6,408** Visitors Guides were requested and mailed from the CVB, a **2.5%** increase over 2023.

TOURISM IN FAYETTE COUNTY

39,072

POPULATION IN FAYETTE COUNTY

16,109

HOUSEHOLDS IN

\$835

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

1.8 MILLION VISITORS

6% INCREASE OVER 2023

ANNUAL ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM IN FAYETTE COUNTY:

\$170.6 MILLION

TRAVEL-GENERATED SPENDING

1,655 JOBS

SUPPORTED BY TOURISM

VISITOR NUMBERS

- ► Canyon Rim Visitor Center: 577.575
- ► Thurmond: 19,233
- ► Grandview Visitor Center: 214.423
- ➤ Sandstone Visitor Center: 91,366

The remaining number of visitors comes from recreational, hiking, river climbing and overnight visitors.

BUDGET

2024 annual hotel occupancy tax collected:

\$537,742.40

MARKETING SPEND

In 2024, our marketing spend was **74%** 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 the spring/summer and fall seasons with a focus on reaching those interested in outdoor activities and national park enthusiasts for an outdoor getaway. The spring and summer digital ads received 3,772,279 impressions and the fall digital ads garnered 1,741,113 impressions, with a total of 5,513,392 impressions for the entire campaign. In addition, the CVB also launched a new campaign, North of the New, promoting the north side of the New River Gorge. The campaign targeted visitors in-market and garnered 1,374,023 impressions.

SPRING/SUMMER CAMPAIGN

\$11,313

3,772,279

78,324 2.08%

budget





FALL CAMPAIGN

\$4,168 1,741,113

40,579 2.33%

budget

impressions

clicks





NORTH OF THE NEW CAMPAIGN

\$5,914

1,374,023 20,694 1.51%

budget

impressions

clicks

CTR Average





WEBSITE

The New River Gorge CVB's website has seen steady growth in traffic. Guide requests have increased by 26.84%, while pages per session are up by 4.69%. Partner clicks experienced a remarkable 158.24% rise, climbing from 62,180 in 2023 to 160,574 in 2024. Several key pages achieved notable gains, including the "7 Facts About America's Newest National Park" blog post (up 8,473%), the lodging page (up 10%) and the Travel Guide sign-up page (up 143%).

GUIDE REQUESTS

4,243

NEWSLETTER SIGN-UPS

UNIQUE USERS

EVENT COUNT

PARTNER CLICKS:

CAMPAIGNS RUN:

PAGEVIEWS

SESSIONS

PAGES/SESSION

TOP PAGES

- ▶ /7-facts-about-americas-newestnational-park-...
- /stay/cabins-and-vacation-rentals/
- /plan/travel-guide/

EMAIL NEWSLETTERS



5,677



OPEN RATE



-12 2.200

Current travel & transportation industry standard for open rate: 33.25%

Current travel & transportation industry standard for click-thru rate: 2.56%

SOCIAL MEDIA

The New River Gorge CVB's social media following continues to grow, with steady increases on Facebook and Instagram. Video views on the New River Gorge Facebook page are up **1,131.4%.** The engagement rate on X is up **1%**, while Instagram has seen a **50.3%** boost.



53,609

FOLLOWERS

(Up 4%)

26,026 average daily reach per page

reactions, comments & shares

13,309



3,985

FOLLOWERS

(Down 0.7%)

177
reposts

509 likes & @replies

179
new followers

29,124 impressions

O INSTAGRAM

21,454

FOLLOWERS

(Up 11%)

2,145
new followers

95,118 likes

741

90,515
#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.

2024 BOARD MEMBERS

ANNE CAVALIER

City of Smithers

AUDIE MONTGOMERY

Cowboy Town

BRIAN GOOD

Fayette County Park

CHRISTY BAILEY

National Coal Heritage Authority

CHRISTY ULRICH

Ace Adventure Resort

CINDI RUCKPAUL

Hemlock Haven Cabins

DAVE BIERI

National Park Service

HEATHER ANTOLINI

Country Road Cabins

HEATHER HYLTON

Chamber of Commerce representative

HEATHER JOHNSON

River Expeditions

IENNIFER ROBINSON

Gran Robbie's

JOSH SAPIO

City of Oak Hill

KEITH RICHARDSON

Hawks Nest State Park

MAURA KISTLER

Water Stone Outdoors

PJ STEVENSON

Adventure Res

SAM ADAMS

Adventures on the Gorge

SIOBHAN WILSON

Town of Ansted

WENDY BAYES

Cathedral Cafe

2024 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



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

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CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS 122 East Main Street Beckley, West Virginia 25801 P: (304) 255-1978 F: (304) 255-1971

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.

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.

Beckley, West Virginia

Hess Stewart - Campbell Affe.

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 Less accumulated depreciation	30,778 (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

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

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 Adjustments to reconcile net income to net cash provided by operating activities:	\$	39,023
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

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:

	Years
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. PROPERY AND EQUIPMENT

Property and equipment consists of the following at December 31:

	 2022	
Equipment	\$ 30,778	
Accumulated Depreciation	 (27,863)	
	\$ 2,915	
	- 112	

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, 2024

ASSETS

Current Assets FCNB Checking	\$ 289,554.29		
Total Current Assets			289,554.29
Property and Equipment Accumulated Depreciation	(28,457.72)		
Total Property and Equipment			(28,457.72)
Other Assets Truist Brokerage Acct Equipment	101,965.65 30,777.93		
Total Other Assets			132,743.58
Total Assets		\$	393,840.15
Current Liabilities FICA Payable Federal W/H Payable	\$ LIABILITIES 1,094.75 496.96	S AN	ND CAPITAL
Total Current Liabilities			1,591.71
Long-Term Liabilities			
Total Long-Term Liabilities			0.00
Total Liabilities			1,591.71
Capital Fund Balance Net Income	391,379.77 868.67		
Total Capital			392,248.44
Total Liabilities & Capital		\$	393,840.15

New River Gorge CVB Income Statement For the Twelve Months Ending December 31, 2024

	Current Month		Year to Date	
Revenues	1.2			06.00
Hotel Occupancy	\$ 0.00	0.00	\$ 537,742.40	86.80
Miscellaneous	54.07	100.00	781.37	0.13
Fay Co Partnership	0.00	0.00	72,091.39	11.64
Promo Income	0.00	0.00	3,000.00	0.48
Ad Co ops	0.00	0.00	5,920.50	0.96
Total Revenues	54.07	100.00	619,535.66	100.00
Cost of Sales				
Total Cost of Sales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Gross Profit	54.07	100.00	619,535.66	100.00
Expenses				
Advertising	7,747.26	14,328.20	286,561.37	46.25
Dues:Membership	0.00	0.00	3,607.10	0.58
Insurance - Brickstreet	0.00	0.00	242.00	0.04
Insurance	580.00	1,072.68	2,320.00	0.37
Lic, Fees, Permits	45.00	83.23	70.00	0.01
Promo/Travel Shows	0.00	0.00	7,092.55	1.14
New Equip/Upgrades	0.00	0.00	2,130.48	0.34
Postage	1,019.39	1,885.32	16,180.15	2.61
Office Supply Maintenance	(14.06)	(26.00)	5,953.04	0.96
Payroll Taxes:Employer	773.49	1,430.53	7,780.90	1.26
Office Imrovements	0.00	0.00	4,818.63	0.78
Office Space	500.00	924.73	6,000.00	0.97
Professional Fees:Acctng	895.00	1,655.26	4,195.00	0.68
Salaries	10,012.45	18,517.57	93,253.95	15.05
SWVCVB:H/M Tax	0.00	0.00	161,322.74	26.04
Special Events	88.37	163.44	375.52	0.06
Travel Expenses	200.00	369.89	6,231.44	1.01
Meeting Expense	2,225.79	4,116.50	5,952.12	0.96
Education Expenses	0.00	0.00	4,580.00	0.74
Total Expenses	24,072.69	14,521.34	618,666.99	99.86
Net Income	\$ (24,018.62)	(44,421.3	\$ 868.67	0.14