



HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

**2024 ANNUAL REPORT & 2025 MARKETING PLAN**





## **HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

**202 Winchester Ave  
Moorefield, West Virginia 26836  
Mailing address: PO Box 10, Mathias WV 26812  
304.897.8700 | [visithardy@gmail.com](mailto:visithardy@gmail.com)  
[www.visithardywv.com](http://www.visithardywv.com)**

March 31, 2025

TO: WV State Auditors' Office – [lgs@wvsao.gov](mailto:lgs@wvsao.gov) , Attn: Shellie Humphries  
WV Joint Committee on Government & Finance –  
[https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Reports/Agency\\_Reports/AgencyReports.cfm](https://www.wvlegislature.gov/Reports/Agency_Reports/AgencyReports.cfm)  
WVACVB – [Jnuzum@bowlesrice.com](mailto:Jnuzum@bowlesrice.com)  
Town of Moorefield - [rick.freeman@townofmoorefield.com](mailto:rick.freeman@townofmoorefield.com)  
Town of Wardensville - [betsy@wardensville.com](mailto:betsy@wardensville.com)  
Hardy County Commission - [hdyccommi@court.state.wv.us](mailto:hdyccommi@court.state.wv.us)

FROM: Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau

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 WV Association of Convention and Visitors Bureaus (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.

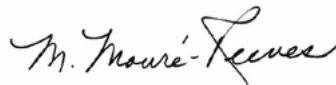
On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, we respectfully submit the required information and confirm that Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau is in full compliance with all WV Code 7-18-13 requirements.

If you have any questions, please contact either Michele Mouré-Reeves, Executive Director at [visithardy@gmail.com](mailto:visithardy@gmail.com) or 304.897.8700 or me at [peterasullivan@yahoo.com](mailto:peterasullivan@yahoo.com) or 304.389.6627.

Sincerely,



Pete Sullivan  
Board President



Michele Mouré-Reeves  
Executive Director

Attachments: Income statement (Jan 1, 2024 – Dec 31, 2024), Balance sheet (Dec 31, 2024), Annual report (2024), and Annual audit (2022). \*HCCVB is to be reaccredited in September of this year and a financial review is to be completed by fall 2025.

HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

202 Winchester Avenue, Moorefield WV 26836 Mailing Address: PO Box 10, Mathias, WV 26812

304-897-8700 [www.visithardywv.com](http://www.visithardywv.com) [visithardy@gmail.com](mailto:visithardy@gmail.com)



2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Pete Sullivan – President  
David Workman – Vice President  
Amanda West – Treasurer  
Mary Burgess  
Colby Caldwell  
Rick Daniele  
Kim Eggert  
Marlene England  
Rick Freeman  
Jennifer Sampler  
Morgan See  
Michele Mouré-Reeves  
Executive Director

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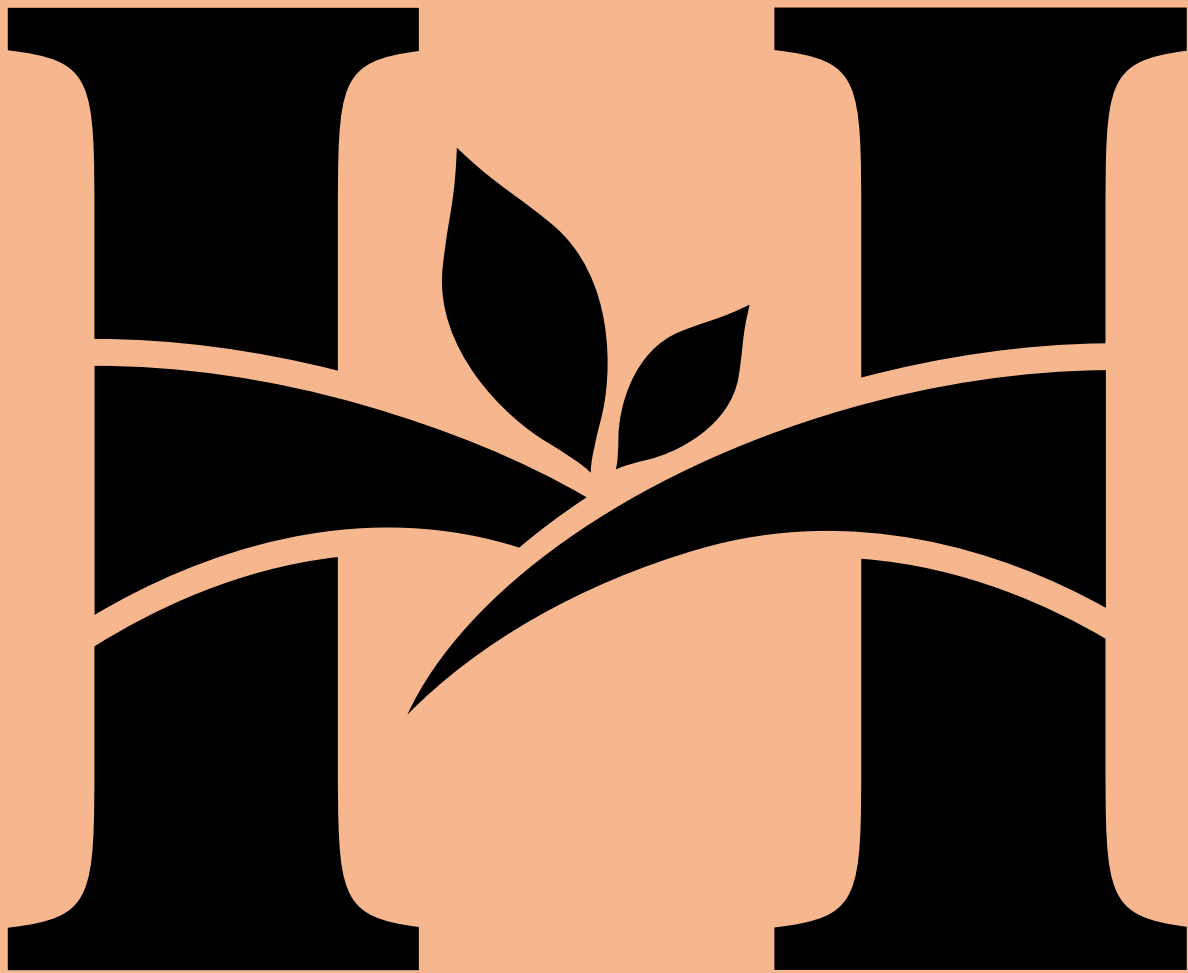
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# STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION - CASH BASIS

(JAN 1, 2024 - DEC 31, 2024) ALEXANDER CONSULTING BUSINESS SERVICES, AC





**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Statement of Financial Position**

As of December 31, 2024

	Total
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Burke & Herbert Bank - General	74,612.47
Total Burke & Herbert Bank - General	\$ 74,612.47
Burke & Herbert Bank-Restricted	82,704.74
CD-Burke Herbert	1,015.79
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 158,333.00
Total Current Assets	\$ 158,333.00
Fixed Assets	
Accumulated Depreciation	(3,281.48)
Furniture/Fixtures	3,281.48
Leasehold Improvements-Higgins House	155,455.00
Total Fixed Assets	\$ 155,455.00
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>\$ 313,788.00</b>
<b>LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
25000 Master Card	2,165.07
Total Credit Cards	\$ 2,165.07
Other Current Liabilities	
2110 Direct Deposit Liabilities	(1,651.53)
24000 Payroll Liabilities	982.33
Total Other Current Liabilities	-\$ 669.20
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 1,495.87
Long-Term Liabilities	
5001 EIDL Loan	17,990.00
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$ 17,990.00
Total Liabilities	\$ 19,485.87
Fund Balance	
30000 Opening Balance Equity	0.00
32000 Retained Earnings	95.85
35000 Restricted Funds	67,859.59
300 Higgins House Restricted Income	
320 Higgins House Construction Income	
327 HCCVB T-Fund Interest on Higgins Funds	13,771.85
Total 320 Higgins House Construction Income	\$ 13,771.85
Total 300 Higgins House Restricted Income	\$ 13,771.85
Total 35000 Restricted Funds	\$ 81,631.44
Unrestricted Fund Balance	213,765.96
Excess Expenses Over Revenue	(1,191.12)
Total Fund Balance	\$ 294,302.13
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES</b>	<b>\$ 313,788.00</b>

No Assurance Provided on these financial statements.

Substantially all disclosures ordinarily included in financial statements prepared on the tax-basis of accounting are not included.

# STATEMENT OF ACTIVITY - CASH BASIS

(JAN 1, 2024 - DEC 31, 2024) ALEXANDER CONSULTING BUSINESS SERVICES, AC





## Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau Statement of Activity

January 2025

	<u>Total</u>
<b>Revenue</b>	
Higgins House Museum Development Income	
7001 WV Humanities Council-Higgins House Funds	10,000.00
<b>Total Higgins House Museum Development Income</b>	<b>\$ 10,000.00</b>
<b>Income-Operating</b>	
4000 Hardy County Hotel/Motel Tax	33,823.05
4010 Town of Wardensville/Hotel Tax	1,717.74
4900 Miscellaneous Income	0.11
<b>Total Income-Operating</b>	<b>\$ 35,540.90</b>
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 45,540.90</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$ 45,540.90</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>	
8050 Museum Expenses	
8051 Fixture, Equipment & Supplies	
8051a FES WVHC	68.29
<b>Total 8051 Fixture, Equipment &amp; Supplies</b>	<b>\$ 68.29</b>
8052 Interpretive Displays & Educational Materials	104.94
8052c FES Other	1,887.24
<b>Total 8052 Interpretive Displays &amp; Educational Materials</b>	<b>\$ 1,992.18</b>
<b>Total 8050 Museum Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 2,060.47</b>
<b>OPERATIONAL EXPENSES</b>	
1000 STAFF AND PAYROLL	
1010 Employee Salary	3,500.00
1020 Employer Payroll Taxes & Workers Comp	320.25
1028 Reimburse Medical Insurance Premium	616.06
<b>Total 1000 STAFF AND PAYROLL</b>	<b>\$ 4,436.31</b>
2020 Office Expense	
2012 Telephone/Internet	41.44
2022 Software	350.27
<b>Total 2020 Office Expense</b>	<b>\$ 391.71</b>
2028 WV State Filing Fees	25.00
2051 Subscriptions	29.00
2060 Educational Expenses	
2071 Lodging	891.33
2072 Meals	117.28
<b>Total 2060 Educational Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,008.61</b>
2080 Professional Services	
2084 Accounting	800.00
<b>Total 2080 Professional Services</b>	<b>\$ 800.00</b>

No Assurance Provided on these financial statements.

Substantially all disclosures ordinarily included in financial statements prepared on the tax-basis of accounting are not included.



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau**  
**Statement of Activity**  
January 2025

	<b>Total</b>
5030 Marketing Services & Contracts	1,113.30
5034 Photography	145.88
<b>Total 5030 Marketing Services &amp; Contracts</b>	<b>\$ 1,259.18</b>
<b>6000 ADVERTISING</b>	
6022 Contracted Advertising	1,198.00
<b>Total 6000 ADVERTISING</b>	<b>\$ 1,198.00</b>
<b>Total OPERATIONAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 9,147.81</b>
Reimbursements	0.00
Uncategorized Expense	5,240.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 16,448.28</b>
<b>Net Operating Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 29,092.62</b>
<b>Other Revenue</b>	
Interest	0.00
Summit Project Interest	227.46
<b>Total Interest</b>	<b>\$ 227.46</b>
<b>Excess Revenue Over Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 29,320.08</b>

No Assurance Provided on these financial statements.

Substantially all disclosures ordinarily included in financial statements prepared on the tax-basis of accounting are not included.

FINANCIAL REVIEW





**Hardy County  
Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**

**Reviewed Financial Statements**

**For the Year Ended  
December 31, 2021**

*Reviewed by*

**Williams & Associates, A.C.  
427 Kerens Avenue, PO Box 2727  
Elkins, WV 26241  
(304) 637-9110**



Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.  
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# Williams & Associates, A.C.

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

## INDEPENDENT ACCOUNTANT'S REVIEW REPORT

To the Board of Directors  
Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.  
Mathias, West Virginia

We have reviewed the accompanying financial statements of Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc. (a nonprofit organization), which comprise the statement of financial position as of December 31, 2021, and the related statements of activities, functional expenses and cash flows 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 entity 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 such 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.

### Accountant's 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 accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. We believe that the results of our procedures provide a reasonable basis for our conclusion.

We are required to be independent of Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc., and to meet our other ethical responsibilities, in accordance with the relevant ethical requirements related to our review.

### Accountant's Conclusion

Based on our review, we are not aware of any material modifications that should be made to the accompanying financial statements for them to be in accordance with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

*Williams & Associates, A.C.*

Elkins, West Virginia  
October 18, 2022



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**  
**December 31, 2021**

**ASSETS**

**Current Assets**

Cash, Unrestricted	\$ 172,420
Cash, Restricted	10,000
Total Current Assets	<u>182,420</u>

**Fixed Assets**

Furniture & Fixtures	3,281
Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(3,281)</u>
Fixed Assets, Net	<u>-</u>

**TOTAL ASSETS** \$ 182,420

**LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS**

**Current Liabilities**

Grant Funds Held as Agent	\$ 10,000
Payroll Taxes	1,102
Total Current Liabilities	<u>11,102</u>

**Long-Term Liabilities**

SBA EIDL Loan	24,500
Total Long-Term Liabilities	<u>24,500</u>

Total Liabilities 35,602

**Net Assets**

Net Assets without Restrictions	146,818
Total Net Assets	<u>146,818</u>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** \$ 182,420

The notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

See Accountant's Review Report



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**  
**STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES**  
**For the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

**REVENUE AND SUPPORT**

County/City Lodging Tax Income	\$ 116,109
Grant Income	61,625
Interest Income	1
Other	<u>148</u>

**TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT** 177,883

**EXPENSES**

Program Services	34,281
Management and General	<u>46,816</u>

**TOTAL EXPENSES** 81,097

**INCREASE(DECREASE) IN NET ASSETS** 96,786

**NET ASSETS, Beginning of Year** 50,032

**NET ASSETS, End of Year** \$ 146,818

The notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

See Independent Accountant's Review Report.



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**  
**STATEMENT OF FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES**  
**For the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

	<u>Program Services</u>	<u>Management and General</u>	<u>Total</u>
Payroll, Taxes, and Benefits	\$ 1,374	\$ 40,764	\$ 42,138
Advertising	30,358		30,358
Insurance		321	321
Office		2,009	2,009
Dues, Subscriptions, and Licenses		1,220	1,220
Travel Shows, Conventions, and Meetings		431	431
Special Projects	2,530		2,530
Telephone		351	351
Legal and Accounting		1,615	1,615
Interest Expense		105	105
Other	<u>19</u>		<u>19</u>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<u><b>\$ 34,281</b></u>	<u><b>\$ 46,816</b></u>	<u><b>\$ 81,097</b></u>

The notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

See Independent Accountant's Review Report.



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**  
**STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
**For the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

**CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES:**

Increase in Net Assets	\$ 96,786
Adjustments to reconcile Net Assets to net cash provided by operations:	
Payroll Liabilities	(2)
Grant Funds Held as Agent	<u>10,000</u>
<b>NET CASH USED IN OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>	<b><u>\$ 106,784</u></b>
<b>INCREASE IN CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS</b>	<b>\$ 106,784</b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, Beginning of Year</b>	<b><u>75,636</u></b>
<b>CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS, End of Year</b>	<b><u><u>\$ 182,420</u></u></b>

The notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

See Independent Accountant's Review Report.



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**As of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

**NOTE 1 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**Nature of Operations** – The Hardy County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Inc., (HCCVB) was incorporated as a nonprofit organization in the State of West Virginia in 2009. The purpose of the Organization is to promote and develop tourism within Hardy County; attract visitors; and to receive, accept, borrow, hold and acquire any gifts, bequests, donations, monies, funds, properties of any type or nature whatsoever personal and real, from any public or private source, to further the mission of the Organization.

**Basis of Accounting** – The financial statements of HCCVB, have been prepared on the modified cash basis of accounting. Under that basis, transactions are recognized only when cash is either received or disbursed. The modified cash basis differs from accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America primarily because of the effects of outstanding payables and receivables at the date of the financial statements are not included except for payroll tax withholding.

**Basis of Presentation** – Financial statement presentation follows the recommendations of the Financial Accounting Standards Board in its Accounting Standards Codification 958-205, *Not-for-Profit Entities: Presentation of Financial Statements*. Under ASC 958-205, HCCVB is required to report information regarding its financial position and activities according to two classes of net assets: net assets without donor restrictions and net assets with donor restrictions. Net assets with donor restrictions is comprised of funds for which the donor has imposed restrictions as to a period and/or purpose.

Under these provisions, net assets and revenues, expenses, gains and losses are classified based on donor-imposed restrictions. Accordingly, net assets of the Organization and changes therein are classified and reported as follows:

*Net Assets without Donor Restrictions* – These are resources over which the Board of Directors has discretionary control.

*Net Assets with Donor Restrictions* –

*Temporarily Restricted* – Net assets subject to donor-imposed restrictions that may or will be met, either by actions of the Organization and/or with the passage of time. When a restriction expires, temporarily restricted net assets are reclassified to net assets without restrictions and reported in the statement of activities as net assets released from restrictions.

*Permanently Restricted* – Resources subject to a donor restriction that they be maintained permanently by the Organization.

**See Independent Accountant's Review Report**



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.  
NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS  
As of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

**NOTE 1 – SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)**

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

Cash and Investments – HCCVB maintains one checking account and one certificate of deposit with a local bank insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. At December 31, 2021, all deposits were fully insured by the FDIC.

Income Taxes – HCCVB is exempt from income taxes under the provisions of Internal Revenue Code §501(c)(6). Accordingly, no provision for income taxes has been reported.

HCCVB's Forms 990 *Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax* returns from the prior three years remain open to examination by the Internal Revenue Service.

Property and Equipment – All acquisitions of property and equipment and all expenditures for repairs, maintenance, renewals, and betterments with costs greater than \$2,500 that materially prolong the useful lives of assets are capitalized. Property and equipment are carried at cost or, if donated, at the approximate fair value at the date of donation. Depreciation is computed using the straight-line method over the estimated useful lives.

Compensated Absences – Accrued vacation is not provided for in these statements issued in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting.

Advertising – Advertising costs are expensed when in accordance with the modified cash basis of accounting and totaled \$30,358 for the year ended December 31, 2021.

**NOTE 2 – RESTRICTED CASH**

As of December 31, 2021, restricted cash totaled \$10,000.

**NOTE 3 – GRANT FUNDS HELD AS AGENT**

HCCVB is acting as fiscal agent for a \$10,000 county grant to The Lost River Trails Coalition. The grant was awarded by the Hardy County Commission with the understanding HCCVB would be the disbursing agent for the grant, as well as monitoring the expenses.

**See Independent Accountant's Review Report**



**Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.**  
**NOTES TO FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**  
**As of and for the Year Ended December 31, 2021**

**NOTE 4 – SBA LOAN**

In June 2020, HCCVB obtained a \$24,500 Economic Injury Disaster Loan from the Small Business Administration. The loan bears interest at 2.75% and is repayable in monthly installments of \$105. The installment payments were set to begin twelve months from the date of the promissory loan, with the principal to be paid thirty years from the date of the loan. During the year ended December 31, 2021, HCCVB made one payment of \$105, all of which was applied to interest.

**NOTE 5 – CONTINGENCIES**

The majority of HCCVB's funding comes from the Hotel/Motel tax collected by county and municipal governments. Any decrease in this funding could adversely affect the operations of HCCVB.

**NOTE 6 – RISK MANAGEMENT**

HCCVB could be involved in various legal actions from time to time in the ordinary course of business. Management is not currently aware of any matters that would have a significant adverse effect on the accompanying financial statements. HCCVB maintains liability insurance to mitigate these risks.

**NOTE 7 – FAIR VALUE OF FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

The following assumptions were used to determine the fair value of each class of financial instruments:

Cash – Fair value approximates carrying value due to the short-term maturities of the instruments.

**NOTE 8 – SUBSEQUENT EVENTS**

Management has evaluated subsequent events through the date of the auditor's report, the date the financial statements were available for release, and has determined no adjustments are needed.

**NOTE 9 – LIQUIDITY AND AVAILABILITY OF FINANCIAL ASSETS**

HCCVB structures its financial assets to be available as its general expenditures, liabilities and other obligations come due. The following reflects HCCVB's financial assets as of December 31, 2021, reduced by amounts not available for general expenditures within one year:

Cash and Certificate of Deposit	\$	182,420
Less: Grant funds held as agent		<u>(10,000)</u>
Financial assets available to meet cash needs for general expenditures, liabilities, and other other obligations within one year	\$	172,420

**See Independent Accountant's Review Report**

**VISIT HARDY 2025 ANNUAL & RESTRICTED BUDGETS**  
(Jan 1, 2025 - Dec 31, 2025)





2025 Operating & Program Budget		
	Estimated Total Carry over - 1/1/2024	\$ 170,000.00
	Restricted Funds (Carry over)	\$ (85,000.00)
	Funds to support Restricted Funds Budget	\$ (15,000.00)
9020	Balance of checking account cash carried over	\$ 70,000.00
	Account	
	Estimated Hotel/Motel Tax Income - 2024	\$ 185,000.00
4000	Hardy County Hotel/Motel Tax	
4010	Town of Wardensville Hotel/Motel Tax	
4015	Town of Moorefield Hotel/Motel Tax	
4900	Miscellaneous Income	
	<i>Income Total</i>	<b>\$ 255,000.00</b>
	Account	
<b>10000</b>	<b>STAFF AND PAYROLL</b>	
1010	Employee Salary	\$ 44,520.00
1020	Employer Payroll Taxes & Workers Comp	\$ 5,000.00
1028	Reimbursement for medical insurance premium	\$ 6,000.00
1030	Non-Marketing Support Staff (Contractual) TBD after 7/1)	\$ 17,500.00
	<i>Subtotal Staff &amp; Payroll</i>	<b>\$ 73,020.00</b>
<b>20000</b>	<b>OPERATIONAL EXPENSES</b>	
<b>2080</b>	<b>Professional Services</b>	
2084	Accounting	\$ 7,500.00
2085	Legal	\$ 200.00
<b>2030</b>	<b>Facilities</b>	
2031	Repairs and Maintenance	\$ 500.00
<b>2020</b>	<b>Office</b>	
2010	Utilities	\$ 500.00
2012	Telephone/Internet	\$ 2,000.00
2023	Postage	\$ 500.00
2024	Office Supplies	\$ 500.00
2022	Software	\$ 2,000.00
2021	Equipment	\$ 2,000.00
<b>2025</b>	<b>Insurance</b>	
2026	Directors & Officers Liability	\$ 830.00
2027	General Liability	\$ -
<b>2040</b>	<b>Board Expenses</b>	\$ 500.00
2028	WV State Filing Fees	\$ 200.00
<b>2050</b>	<b>Dues/Membership</b>	\$ 2,000.00
2051	Subscriptions	\$ 300.00
<b>2060</b>	<b>Education Expenses:</b>	
2061	Conferences/Education	\$ 2,000.00
2062	Webinars	
<b>2070</b>	<b>Travel &amp; Lodging</b>	
<b>2071</b>	<b>Lodging</b>	\$ 2,000.00
<b>2072</b>	<b>Meals</b>	\$ 1,000.00
<b>2073</b>	<b>Travel (Mileage reimbursement)</b>	\$ 2,500.00
5001	EIDL Loan Repayment	\$ 2,600.00



## Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau

2090	Out of Budget/Contingencies	\$ 1,600.00
	<b>Subtotal Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 31,230.00</b>
<b>50000</b>	<b>MARKETING EXPENSES</b>	
<b>5010</b>	<b>Marketing Support Staff</b>	\$ 22,000.00
<b>5030</b>	<b>Marketing Services &amp; Contracts</b>	
5031	Website	\$ 7,000.00
5032	Graphic Design	\$ 3,000.00
5033	Marketing Contracts	\$ 2,000.00
5034	Photography	\$ 3,000.00
5035	Social Media	\$ 500.00
5036	Videography	
<b>5040</b>	<b>Tourism Promotion Grants</b>	
5041	Tourism Advertising Program	\$ 2,500.00
5042	HCBQT Grants	\$ 1,000.00
<b>5050</b>	<b>Community Outreach Committee</b>	
5052	Scholarship/Internship	
5054	Donations to Community	\$ 3,000.00
<b>5070</b>	<b>Special Projects Committee</b>	
<b>5072</b>	<b>Marketing Committee</b>	
<b>5060</b>	<b>Marketing Products</b>	
5061	Ride the High 5	\$ 4,000.00
5062	Hardy County Visitors Guide	\$ 10,000.00
5063	Civil War Trails Map/Brochure	\$ 2,000.00
5068	Other Printing/Production	\$ 2,000.00
5065	Civil War Trail Markers	\$ 1,200.00
	<b>Subtotal Marketing</b>	<b>\$ 63,200.00</b>
<b>60000</b>	<b>ADVERTISING</b>	
<b>6020</b>	<b>General Advertising</b>	
6022	Contracted Advertising	\$ 80,000.00
6023	Non-Contract Advertising	\$ 2,000.00
6029	Community Ads	
6028	Heritage Weekend	\$ 250.00
6031	Hardy County Chamber	\$ 500.00
6040	WVTO Co-op Advertising	\$ 1,500.00
6044	Potomac Highlands Regional Advertising	\$ 1,000.00
6045	Ride the High 5 Advertising	\$ 2,300.00
	<b>Subtotal Advertising</b>	<b>\$ 87,550.00</b>
	<b>Total Non-Operating /Program Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 150,750.00</b>
59.12% (+/-)	<b>Total Marketing &amp; Advertising Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 150,750.00</b>
28.335% (+/-)	<b>Total Staff Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 73,020.00</b>
12.247% (+/-)	<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 31,230.00</b>
	<b>Total 2024 Annual Budget Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 255,000.00</b>
	<b>Total 2024 Restricted Funds Budget</b>	<b>\$ 131,250.00</b>
40/40/20 required %	<b>Total 2024 Budget inc reserved &amp; restricted funds</b>	<b>\$ 386,250.00</b>



2025 Restricted Funds Budget		
INCOME OVERVIEW		
	<b>Restricted Funds carried over from 12/12/2024</b>	\$ 80,000.00
	HCCVB Higgins House	
	Town of Moorefield/ Higgins House Funds	
	Hardy County Commission/ Higgins House Funds	
	WV Humanities Council /Higgins House Funds	
	HCCVB T Fund Interest	
	<i>subtotal 2024 income carryover</i>	\$ 80,000.00
	<b>New Restricted Income in 2024</b>	
	WV Humanities Council /Higgins House Funds	\$ 12,000.00
	New Restricted Grant Funds	\$ 20,000.00
	Unrestricted Funds from HCCVB Budget ( <i>Committed matching funds</i> )	\$ 15,000.00
	HCCVB T Fund Interest	\$ 4,250.00
	<i>subtotal new restricted income in 2024</i>	\$ 51,250.00
	<b>TOTAL RESTRICTED INCOME 2024</b>	\$ 131,250.00
INCOME DETAILS		
7000	<b>Higgins House Museum Development Income</b>	
7001	WV Humanities Council /Higgins House Funds	\$ 20,000.00
7002	HCCVB Higgins House - Matching Funds for WVHC Grants	\$ 24,000.00
7003	HCCVB Higgins House - for Americorp fees. (2 qtrs)	\$ 3,000.00
7004	AFNHA/Higgins House Funds	\$ 20,000.00
7005	Other Higgins House Museum Funds	
	<i>subtotal Museum income</i>	\$ 67,000.00
	<b>Higgins House Construction Income</b>	
7100	Hardy County Commission/Higgins House Funds	
7101	Town of Moorefield/Higgins House Funds	
7102	Other Construction Grant Funds	\$ 2,100.00
7103	HCCVB Higgins House	\$ 37,000.00
7104	T-fund Account Interest	\$ 4,250.00
	<i>subtotal Construction income</i>	\$ 43,350.00
7200	<b>Hardy County Heritage Trail Income</b>	
7201	Unrestricted Funds from HCCVB Budget/ Mountain Heritage Trails	\$ 10,400.00
7202	Unrestricted Funds from HCCVB Budget-Future Projects	
7203	Unrestricted Funds from HCCVB Budget-Civil War Trails	\$ 5,000.00
7204	Future Grants-Civil War Trails Org	\$ 2,500.00
	<i>subtotal Heritage Trail income</i>	\$ 17,900.00
7300	<b>Mountain Bike Trails Income</b>	
7301	Unrestricted Funds from HCCVB Budget- Match to MTB Trail Grants	\$ 3,000.00
	<i>subtotal LR Mtn Bike Trail income</i>	
	<b>Total Itemized Income</b>	\$ 131,250.00
RESTRICTED FUNDS EXPENSES		
80000	<b>HIGGINS HOUSE</b>	
8050	<b>Museum Development Expenses</b>	
8051	Fixtures, equipment and supplies for museum	\$ 18,000.00
8051a	FES WVHC	
8051b	FES AFNHA	
8051c	FES Other	
8052	Interpretive, display & educational material	\$ 20,000.00
8052a	IDE WVHC	
8052b	IDE AFNHA	
8052c	IDE Other	
8053	AmeriCorps	\$ 3,000.00
8054	Contractor Fees - WVHC	\$ 8,850.00
8055	Contractor Fees - AFNHA	\$ 20,000.00
8056	Other Museum Expenses	\$ 5,000.00
8075	<b>Construction Expenses</b>	
8076	Hardy County Commission/Higgins House Funds	
8077	Town of Moorefield/Higgins House Funds	
8079	Other construction costs	\$ 38,000.00
	<i>subtotal Higgins House expenses</i>	\$ 112,850.00
8100	<b>Hardy County Heritage Trails Expenses</b>	
8101	Mountain Heritage Trail AFNHA AmeriCorps	\$ 5,880.00
8102	Mountain Heritage Trail Grant Match	\$ 4,520.00
8104	Future Heritage Project Development	\$ 5,000.00
8400	<b>Mountain Bike Trails Expenses</b>	
8401	Lost River Trails Coalition	\$ 2,000.00
8402	Other MTB Trail Expenses	\$ 1,000.00
	<i>subtotal Other Program expenses</i>	\$ 18,400.00
	<b>Total Restricted Funds Expenses</b>	\$ 131,250.00

VISIT HARDY 2024 ANNUAL REPORT  
AND 2025 MARKETING PLAN





## Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau Visit Hardy 2024 Annual Report & 2025 Marketing Plan

Developed & written by Michele Mouré-Reeves, Executive Director  
and Jess Rinker, Marketing Associate

Marketing Plan reviewed by the Marketing Committee Chair

Visit Hardy's mission is to strengthen and sustain Hardy County's tourism industry through education and collaboration and by promoting the awareness, visibility and uniqueness of the County as a travel destination.

Visit Hardy's vision is to acknowledge that we exist to strengthen and promote Hardy County's tourism industry and to do that successfully, we must:

- Support community development efforts that diversify, strengthen and expand Hardy County's tourism industry thus economically sustaining the County;
- Develop and maintain local and regional partnerships engaging in regular and supportive discourse and collaborations;
- Support our community and local tourism partners through education, information sharing, and grants
- Recognize the social and environmental impacts of tourism, the need for inclusivity, and the imperative that the rural character of Hardy County is protected while Visit Hardy responsibly grows tourism.

### 2024 Planning

During our June 2024 Board meeting, the 2023 Strategic Plan (submitted with the 2023 Annual Report) was reviewed. The planning document was initially for one year with reviews and amendments made annually to move the CVB forward. The following addresses the specific administrative actions which took place with our financial management and within our marketing plan and its implementation.

- Visit Hardy changed accounting firms at the end of 2023 and the restructuring of our chart of accounts and budget organization changed significantly in 2024 and has been continuing in 2025. This restructuring has made it much simpler to keep the restricted funds from getting mingled with the regular operating and marketing funds thus making budget development and grant reports easier to compile. In addition, we opened a separate bank account for the restricted funds.
- An unexpected banking issue caused significantly more work for the executive director and the accountant when our local bank merged with a much larger regional bank. It seemed that for months nothing ran smoothly but all has now been resolved.
- The \$760,500 in grants that the CVB has written for asset development for the most part have been written in the name of the project's organization or sponsor. Of that amount, the \$157,000 in grants that have gone directly to the CVB have been primarily related to construction of the travel center and development of the Robert Higgins House Museum. It is anticipated that once this project is completed the restricted funds budget will be reduced significantly, however, applications will continue to be made to provide funding for continuation of special projects, just not at the amounts raised to date. It should also be noted that the construction expenses for the travel center are now being accounted for under "Fixed Assets: Leasehold Improvements-Higgins House".
- Consistent with the other changes taking place, the 2025 Marketing Plan is being approached differently this year as well. This is explained more fully in the Marketing Plan.
- Please note that the Hardy County Convention & Visitors Bureau began referring to ourselves informally as Visit Hardy rather than our full business name, or HCCVB, which often leaves people wondering what we do. Though a small change, we feel Visit Hardy is easier to remember, understand, and makes much more sense in our marketing of the county.



# Congratulations

to the **Best of West Virginia** Awardees

## GOLD

Lost & Found Pizza  
and Provisions

**BEST NEW RESTAURANT**  
(OPENED 2023-2024)

The Inn at Lost River

**BEST BED & BREAKFAST/INN**



## SILVER

Farms Work Wonders

**BEST PLACE TO WORK**

Lost & Found Pizza  
and Provisions

**BEST PIZZA**

The Lost River  
General Store & Cafe

**BEST COFFEE SHOP**

**BEST HOT DOG**

**BEST SANDWICH**

Wardensville Garden  
Market

**BEST SPECIALTY FOOD**  
**MARKETPLACE**

## COMMUNITY CHAMPION

POTOMAC HIGHLANDS  
REGION

Michele Mouré-Reeves

**HARDY COUNTY CONVENTION**  
**AND VISITORS BUREAU**

## BRONZE

Farms Work Wonders

**BEST CHARITY/NON-PROFIT**  
**ORGANIZATION**

Mack's Bingo Bakery

**BEST BAKERY**

## REGIONAL

**BEST IN THE POTOMAC**  
**HIGHLANDS**

Mack's Bingo Bakery

**BAKERY**

Mack's Bingo Kitchen

**CASUAL DINING**

Guesthouse Lost River

**FINE DINING**





### 2025 Marketing Plan

#### 2024 PROGRESS OVERVIEW

Throughout 2024, we successfully implemented several key initiatives to strengthen Hardy County's marketing efforts:

- Consulting & Staffing: Hired a consultant to guide our marketing strategy and brought on a part-time contract support staff. *(Completed)*
- Marketing Metrics Campaign: Developed a new marketing initiative to provide data-driven insights for future strategies. *(In Progress)*
- Website Updates: Continued a comprehensive update to our website. *(Near Completion)*
- Photography & Video Library: Folkways completed the initial phase, with ongoing contributions from the marketing team. *(Ongoing)*
- New Travel Guide: Postponed to 2025-2026.
- Updated and simplified Visit Hardy logo

#### 2025 MARKETING FOCUS AREAS

##### Advertising & Audience Engagement

Our primary target audience remains the same, with Hardy County positioned within a two- to three-hour drive of over 8.5 million potential visitors from the DC/MD/VA Metro Area, central and western Virginia, eastern Pennsylvania, and in-state West Virginia markets. Additionally, we are exploring outreach to western North Carolina, while testing digital engagement in Pittsburgh, Orlando, and New York through social media campaigns.

##### Digital Marketing

- Email Marketing Campaigns: To commence upon website launch (currently 1,500+ subscribers).
- Strategic Digital Advertising: Invest in established periodicals with tracking capabilities for metrics such as website clicks and social engagement.
- Social Media & Google Ads Testing: Allocate targeted ad spend to optimize return on investment (ROI), e.g., measuring performance such as \$80 = 200 website visits.

##### Print Advertising

- Streamlining Print Campaigns: Focus on the most effective publications and long-standing media relationships.
- Seasonal Campaigns (4 Focus Areas):
  - Bluegrass Festival
  - Heritage Days / Fall Festival
  - Bike & Foot Races
  - Outdoor Recreation & Adventure Opportunities
- Community Engagement
- Distributed "Things to See & Places to Go" window clings with CVB website & QR Code (2nd round) and travel literature to local businesses



### **HARDY COUNTY TRAVEL CENTER & ROBERT HIGGINS HOUSE MUSEUM**

The most significant initiative for 2025 is the development and launch of the Hardy County Travel Center and Robert Higgins House Museum in Moorefield. This will include:

- Public Programming: Guided museum tours for both adults and youth.
- Educational Outreach: Classroom-based activities for elementary and middle school students.
- Hands-on Experiences: Interactive exhibits for young children to engage with Hardy County's history.
- Promotional & Print Campaigns: Dedicated marketing materials and advertisements to support the travel center's and museum's opening.

### **NEW & UPDATED TRAVEL LITERATURE**

#### **Ride the High 5**

- A regional travel map created in a collaboration with Hardy, Hampshire, Pendleton, Grant, and Mineral County CVB directors.
- Set for spring 2025 publication, with distribution in visitor centers, motorcycle clubs, and online.

#### **Civil War Trails Map**

- An updated and redesigned Five-County Civil War Trails guide will be produced.
- New narrative elements will include perspectives from diverse historical voices to enhance visitor engagement.

#### **Robert Higgins House Museum Brochure**

- A new brochure highlighting the museum's inclusive narratives, family-friendly activities, and local historical significance.
- Distributed through visitor centers, historical societies, local businesses, and regional tourism partners.

#### **Hardy County Travel Guide**

- Postponed to late 2025-early 2026 for a more comprehensive update and expanded distribution strategy.

#### **Additional Print Literature**

- Further evaluations will determine which existing brochures will be updated or newly created.

### **WEBSITE DEVELOPMENT & PROMOTION**

Our new and improved website will provide a modern, image-driven experience that enhances visitor engagement. We contracted website and graphic designers to carry out our vision. Key updates include:

- Expanded Business Listings: Featuring new lodging, dining, and activity options.
- Enhanced Navigation: A more intuitive layout for seamless exploration of history, events, and recreation.
- Increased Digital Promotion: Leveraging social media and paid digital advertising to maximize reach and website traffic.
- Reorganization and redesign of pages and expanded Stories and Trails content



### **SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY**

Our goal is to expand online reach and engagement across key platforms:

- Active Channels: Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Pinterest.
- Performance Tracking: Analyzing website traffic, audience engagement, and content effectiveness.
- Content Prioritization:
  - Short vertical videos continue to generate the highest engagement.
  - Event promotion for businesses and attractions that cater to both locals and visitors.

### **OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS**

- A dedicated CVB phone has been purchased for social media activity and media storage.
- Marketing staff will continuously gather new digital assets to build a robust content library for future promotions.

### **UPCOMING INCENTIVE PROGRAMS (UNDER DEVELOPMENT)**

To drive visitor engagement, we are developing new tourism incentive programs, including:

- Hardy County Geocache Trail
- Hardy County Great Glass Egg Hunt
- Hardy County Trails & Treats Bingo

These initiatives will encourage visitors to explore Hardy County through interactive and rewarding experiences for all ages, taking advantage of our natural resources—parks and trails—and friendly towns.

### **CONCLUSION**

Our 2025 marketing plan builds upon the progress made in 2024, with a strong emphasis on digital strategy, print advertising optimization, social media engagement, and the launch of the Hardy County Travel Center & Robert Higgins House Museum. By refining our outreach efforts and leveraging data-driven insights, we aim to increase visitor engagement and strengthen Hardy County's reputation as a premier travel destination.

VISIT HARDY COMMITTEES, PROGRAMS, AND PROJECTS





### Visit Hardy Committees, Programs, and Projects

#### STANDING COMMITTEES

Each Visit Hardy board member volunteered or was assigned to a specific committee where the work of Visit Hardy is accomplished. The committee chairs schedule the meetings and present the committee reports to the full board for their approval. The board members have been participating fully in the planning process, a process that is integral to the success of Visit Hardy.

- The Community Engagement Committee will focus on internal marketing, increasing the visibility of Visit Hardy within Hardy County, management of our Tourism Advertising Program and the Hardy County Barn Quilt grants, and the new Hospitality Scholarship Program.
- The Marketing Committee will focus on our external marketing, reviewing the marketing plan, and advertising schedule, and working with our social media contractor to increase our online presence.
- The Special Projects Committee researches and initiates projects but the development of new projects is currently on hold. Presently there are several projects that are active or in early development, enough to keep us well occupied for a while.
  - The Hardy County Travel Center and Robert Higgins House Museum (Active)
  - Ride the High 5 Motorcycle Map (Active)
  - Hardy County Heritage Trails
    - The Civil War (In development)
    - Agricultural Heritage (In consideration)
  - Lost River State Park MTB Trail System (Active)
  - The Fairfax Line Documentation (Active)
  - Hardy County Geology Signage (Active)

Continued work on the Higgins House and travel center is paramount for 2025 and the development of the Lost River State Park MTB Trail System, an important tourism asset for Hardy County, will be an ongoing and long-term project.

#### PROJECTS & PROGRAMS

Successful grant applications from previous years (written by the Executive Director) have provided restricted funds enabling Visit Hardy to expand the county's tourism assets and to fully realize our mission. Community individuals that Visit Hardy has been working with have now developed nonprofit organizations (Mountain Heritage Trails and Lost River Trails Coalition), gained their IRS 501c3 status, and are building their organizational and volunteer capacity. They have taken full responsibility for their organizations/projects with Visit Hardy serving in a consultant/volunteer/sponsor capacity when asked.

The various projects undertaken by Visit Hardy reflect our efforts to increase the number of assets available for the community and visitors to enjoy, to better understand our sense of place, and to provide activities to encourage visitors to stay longer. Our outdoor recreation –paddling, hiking, cycling, fishing, hunting, ice skating, horseback riding – keep our visitors very busy but there is a need for additional assets and activities, especially for those who are not outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

In addition to marketing the tourism industry for Hardy County, a primary responsibility of Visit Hardy is to support existing and develop new tourism assets. For a project to be considered, a community group interested in the project must come together



with a volunteer group. Except for the travel center and museum, the CVB does not operate tourism assets or host events due to limited staffing and funding issues. But, to continue to grow the Hardy County tourism industry, Visit Hardy has advocated for and supported the following projects through grant writing, planning, and organizational development assistance:

- **Lost River State Park Mountain Bike Trail System:** Working with the park (LRSP) and Lost River Trails Coalition (LRTC), a community organization, Visit Hardy has written and been awarded several grants for the Coalition for their organizational development, trail activities, and creation of a fully accessible mountain bike trail system. In addition, Visit Hardy has attended trail related conferences both in person and virtually, and sought partners to assure the success of the project, served as a liaison between WVU Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative, LRSP and LRTC, and worked with LRTC to strengthen the organization. LRTC announced receipt of a 2023 International Mountain Bicycling Association Trail Accelerator Grant, an important achievement for the organization. The resulting Concept Plan and Design Brief outlines the work to be accomplished within the first two zones located in the north of the park.

Completing the first two zones of the trail system will be a \$1.4 to \$1.7 million dollar project and will be a major economic boon for the county. Visit Hardy submitted a \$300,000 Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant and LRTC has successfully raised the necessary match. The Hardy County Commission agreed to be the sponsoring organization for the project (with IMBA's Trail Solutions). The grant was awarded, and we are working with the WV Department of Highways and IMBA to finalize the paperwork. Construction will begin in mid-2025. A second RTP grant was awarded for \$250,000 for construction in 2026.

In the interim, LRTC has continued to organize trail workdays in the park and to raise money through its Lost River Trail Run in May and Lost River Classic Gravel Race in August. In 2024, registered Race participants kept pace with 2023, providing extra funds to support the Hardy County's National Interscholastic Cycling Association youth team, the Cryptids. The Lost River Trails Coalition's website is <https://lostrivertrailscoalition.org>

- **The Hardy County Heritage Trails Program** develops driving trails and print literature for projects related to the county's heritage by providing organizational support and funding acquired through grant writing. In addition to the Fairfax Line and the Geological Interpretive Signs, additional heritage trails include:

- The Hardy County Barn Quilt Trail, one of the first heritage tourism project Visit Hardy worked on is managed by the Lost River Educational Foundation. Visit Hardy has assisted the organization in updating applications and guidelines for the trail. The Hardy County Barn Quilt Grant is offered through Visit Hardy to assist residents who wish to have a barn quilt painted and to become a part of the trail system.
- The Hardy County Historic Schoolhouse Trail (a driving tour posted on TheClio.org) was developed and managed by an AmeriCorps member who plans to continue the project. The AmeriCorps member founded her own 501c3 organization, Mountain Heritage Trails, and received a grant from Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area for the Restored Humanity: The African American Burial Grounds of Hardy County project. Visit Hardy has provided some matching funds for this grant. The Mountain Heritage Trails website is: [www.mountainheritagetrails.org](http://www.mountainheritagetrails.org)



The next two heritage trail endeavors under consideration are a multi-county Civil War Trail and a Hardy County agricultural heritage project. The five counties (Grant, Hampshire, Hardy, Mineral, and Pendleton) have already begun discussions about the scope of the Civil War project.

- For the Hardy County Travel Center and Robert Higgins House Museum, Visit Hardy has written four WV State Historic Preservation Office grants for the Higgins House restoration and has been awarded two WV Humanities Council grants, an Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area grant, a WVHUB grant, and a Hardy County Community Foundation grant for the



Higgins House Museum; worked with six consultants to develop content and design for the museum and created a master plan for the project. In addition, Visit Hardy received grants from both the Hardy County Commission and the Town of Moorefield to support the construction of the Hardy County Travel Center, worked with an architectural firm to acquire construction drawings for the additions, and have developed the necessary scopes of work. The Higgins House has been the primary focus of the Executive Director in 2024 and 2025.

Approval of the designs and for the construction of the additions has been received from the WV State Historic Preservation Office and from the Moorefield Historic Landmark Commission. The construction on the two additions began in mid 2024 and will be completed shortly. The exterior siding and windows of the Higgins House are the last of the restoration work to be done. Landscaping will follow in 2026.

The Moorefield Town Hall is adjacent to the 18th century Robert Higgins House where Visit Hardy will open the travel information center and install and manage a museum. The Visit Hardy office and travel information center is located temporarily in the Town Hall while we complete the Higgins House construction. The Town Hall is next door in an historic building and is open daily (Monday-Friday) from 8:30-4:30. Our travel literature racks, labeled with Visit Hardy's contact information and QR Code, are set up in the front lobby for easy access. Upon completion, the new facility will be open to the public with regular hours and will have additional volunteer and staff to support those hours.

The QR Code is also printed on our exterior wayfinding sign (as is our telephone number and website) for access to information about restaurants, lodging, shopping, events, recreation, and Visit Hardy stories. Travel literature with free display racks and QR Code door films are provided by Visit Hardy to local businesses and other tourism sites to create broader distribution of the tourism information.

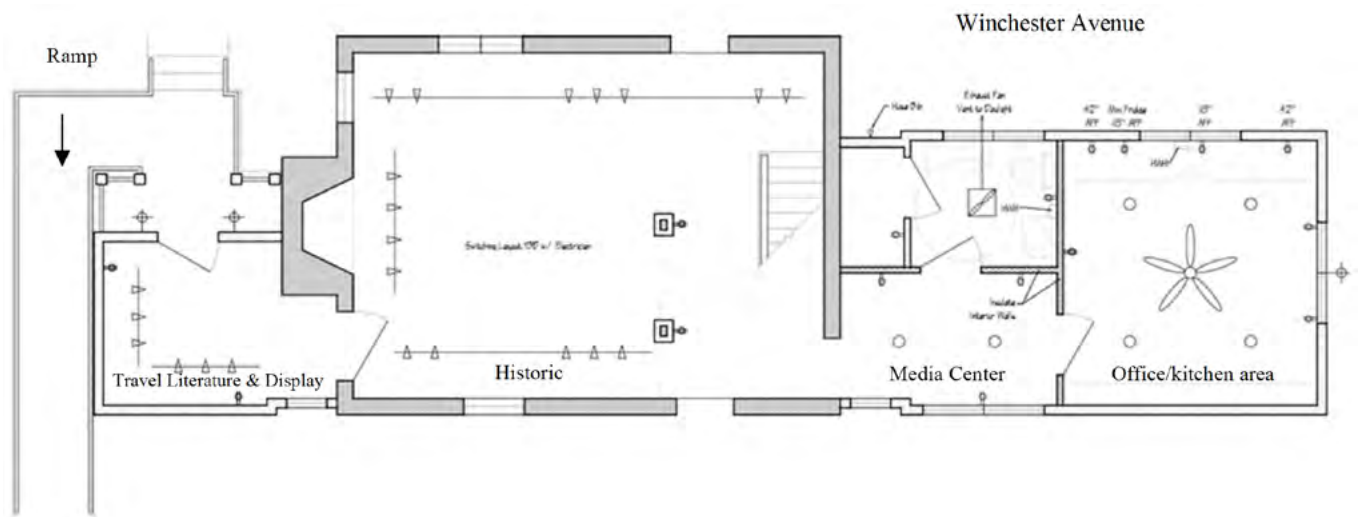
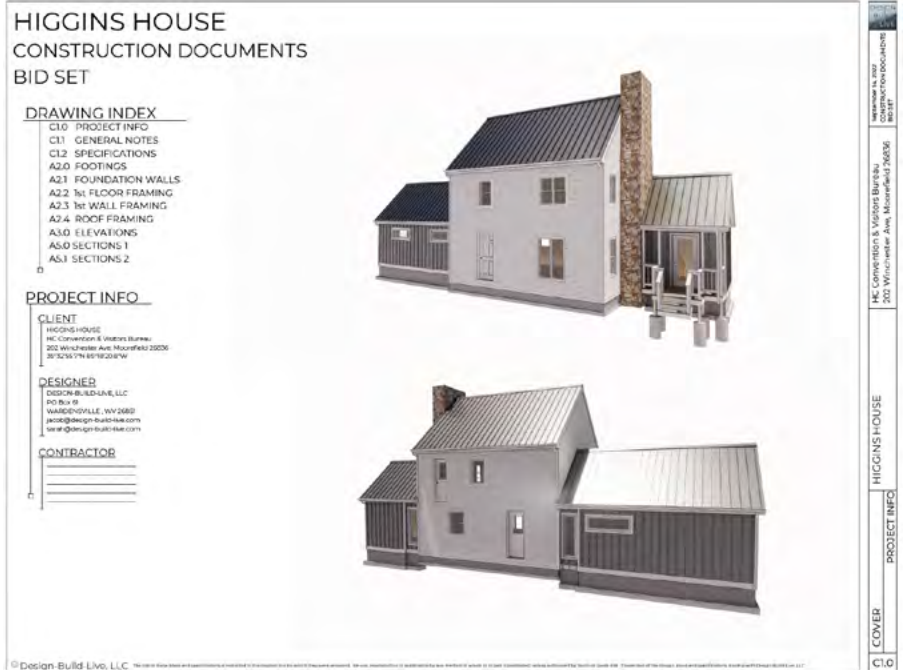
- Through the Tourism Advertising Program Visit Hardy provides reimbursable grants to the community to support local events, advertising, and print literature. The Hospitality Scholarship Program is new and has yet to be clearly defined. Working with the hospitality programs at the two local high schools and the community college, the parameters of that program should be defined this year. Encouraging greater community participation in these Visit Hardy programs is the responsibility of the Community Engagement Committee.
- The Donations to the Community program supports event and organizational sponsorships. Letters are submitted by organizations or community groups and are funded at the discretion of the Executive Director with approval of the Board. This program is used to market Visit Hardy and increase awareness of our role within the county's tourism industry.

## FULL PROJECT DESCRIPTIONS





**Robert Higgins House Museum  
& Hardy County Visitors Center**  
202 Winchester Avenue  
Moorefield WV 26836



The Robert Higgins House is the oldest extant residential building in Moorefield and one of the few 18th century buildings in the County. After its founding, a year following the writing of the Declaration of Independence, the Town was surveyed, and lots were sold. Robert Higgins, having returned from his service as an 8th Virginia Regiment Captain, including three years as a prisoner of war, purchased the 10th lot, #33 on Winchester Avenue.

On its original foundation, the House has undergone notable changes since the logs were first laid. Research has shown that the house may have suffered a fire and was possibly rebuilt (c.1827) using some of the original logs (c.1790). The house was later subsumed into a large Queen Anne structure that wrapped around the corner onto Elm Street. Thanks to community efforts, the Higgins House remained after the larger structure was razed in the late 1980's and is now owned by the Town. For more than three decades, it has stood empty, opening only once a year for the Heritage Weekend House Tour.



Together, the Town of Moorefield and Visit Hardy, entered a partnership to preserve the historic structure and create the Hardy County Travel Center. Recognizing the historical value of the Higgins House and the stories it had to tell; it was determined that the visitors center needed to be accommodated in new construction on the east and west of the historic structure.

Visit Hardy has written four grants to WV State Historic Preservation Office and the Town has matched the awards to accomplish the building's restoration. Five additional grants, awarded by the WV Humanities Council, Appalachian First National Heritage Area, the Hardy County Community Foundation, and WV HUB to Visit Hardy, have funded architectural research, development of a master plan, and support for displays and contractors for the museum's content and design. The Hardy County Commission and the Town of Moorefield have awarded funds for the construction of the Visitors Center additions and Visit Hardy has also allocated funds toward its design and construction.

## The Hardy County Travel Center

Legislative action in 2021 (the Convention & Visitors Bureau Oversight Bill) set forth specific requirements for CVB's to qualify for receipt of the Hotel/Motel tax revenue. In addition to accreditation, all CVBs must have a visitors center open 40 hours per week. While Visit Hardy has had a temporary office and visitors center area in the Moorefield Town Hall, this has put additional pressure on Visit Hardy to complete the Higgins House additions and resolve staffing issues.

When completed, the Hardy County Travel Center will provide visitors with information about places to stay, eat, shop, and recreate while visiting our county and region. In addition to printed travel literature, a media center will feature videos about the county's history, recreation sites, and trails.

The Robert Higgins House Museum has two stories to tell. The primary story, the life of Robert Higgins, explores how the founding and evolution of our nation is embodied in the life of this man – a child living in rural western Virginia during the French & Indian War, a local farmer, a husband and father, a lieutenant in the local militia, an officer in the 8th Virginia Regiment of the Continental Army, and a prisoner of war for three years after capture at the Battle of Germantown, the builder of a log house, possibly a merchant, and the founder of a town in the Ohio frontier. The story will also speak of the rural western Virginia lands in which he lived, the Native Americans, challenged and displaced, and the enslavement of others.

The museum's other story will be about the Higgins House itself (the primary artifact of the museum). Fortunately, the log interior of the House remains basically intact. Built, possibly rebuilt, renovated, subsumed, revealed, and restored, the House holds clues from the many stages of its existence and reveals a picture of what the 18th century structure looked like and what architectural decisions were made throughout its life to accommodate the needs and desires of its owners. Using research and science, the complexity of this architectural history will be explored and interpreted in displays about the history of log cabins.

Unable to create physical access to the second floor, the entirety of the museum's second story content will be recreated in a closed-captioned video that will be available on the first floor. The building itself and displays will meet and/or exceed ADA requirements assuring the facility will be accessible to all.





## Lost River State Park Mountain Bike Trail System Lost River Trails Coalition

Lost River Trails Coalition (LRTC), a nonprofit 501c3 organization, was formed to promote the development of a grassroots, community-oriented, sustainable mountain bike trail system in Lost River State Park (LRSP). Creating a fully accessible, universally designed, and constructed trail system, the first construction phase of the project will be the Jay Moglia Beginner Trail.

Recently awarded a Trail Accelerator Grant by the International Mountain Bicycling Association, and with the support of WVU's Outdoor Economic Development Collaborative and other partners, LRTC will continue working with Lost River State Park to bring mountain biking trails to Hardy County, trails that are accessible to all who wish to experience the exhilaration of the sport.

Importantly, this trail system will be the only purpose-built system designed to accommodate standard mountain bikes, hand-cycles, and e-bikes. The proposed LRSP trail system fills what is currently a blank spot in the mountain biking landscape with a much-needed trail system in Hardy County. Lost River State Park sits at the heart of a network of legendary mountain bike trails with the Lost River Valley located just 2 hours outside of Washington DC and poised to become a central destination for riders exploring the region.

### Primary Goal for 2024 and Accomplishments:

- *Begin construction of Phase 1 of the Jay Moglia Beginner & Intermediate MTB Trail!!!* The LRSP Concept Plan & Design Brief lays out the trail system developed by IMBA's Trail Solutions for Zones 1 & 2 linking the Dove Hollow Trail Head with the top of Big Ridge. Funding is in place for Zone 1.
- An initial goal of LRTC was to establish a youth cycling group with the intention of forming a local National Interscholastic Cycling Association (NICA) team. Starting with just one rider in early summer of 2023, by the summer of 2024 there were 20 youth riders, and they expect further growth in 2025. Choosing the name "The Cryptids", the team has embarked on a fundraising campaign and was recently awarded several small grants including two from the Hardy County Community Foundation. Visit Hardy provides a sponsorship donation each year and the LRTC continues to support the youth team.
- LRTC hosted the 2022, 2023, and 2024 Lost River Classic, a four-route gravel-ride fundraising event. 180 participants, double the number from 2022, were supported by volunteers who contributed their time, as well as numerous sponsors who contributed to the success of the event. LRTC volunteers have been repairing the existing MTB trails at the park and will be working to clear the trails of the winter and fire damage. The 3rd annual Lost River Trail Run in May and the 4th annual Lost River Classic will be held in August of 2025.
- The uniqueness of this trail system has the potential to open small business development opportunities throughout Hardy County including lodging, bike rentals and maintenance, restaurants, etc. But most importantly, the very nature of the trail system should open opportunities for new and existing businesses and organizations to consider their facility and program designs in meeting the needs of visitors with a range of abilities. Universal design should be incorporated into not only environments but also services and products, assuring access to all who wish to participate.
- A GoFundMe account, the Jay Moglia Fund, was created in memory of the person who initiated the trail effort and who believed strongly that this project would greatly benefit the sport and Hardy County. The donations from the fund, and the grants from Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area, International Mountain Bicycling Association, the Hardy County Commission, and the Jonathan D and Mark C. Lewis Foundation will go toward the construction of the Lost River State Park Mountain Bike Trail System. Fundraising and grant writing will be absolute necessities for this project to be realized (design, engineering, building), for on-site training for youth and for riders of adaptive equipment, for ongoing trail maintenance, upgrades, etc.
- The Visit Hardy executive director has written most of the grants for LRTC but has also been working with the Coalition to help them write their own grants and to strengthen their organization. Completing only the first two zones of the trail system will be a \$1.4 to \$1.7 million dollar project and will be a major economic boon for the county. The trail system has been awarded 2023 and 2024 Recreational Trails Program grants to begin construction in 2025.





## Hardy County Heritage Trails

When Visit Hardy first discussed creating the HC Heritage Trails (HCHT), we anticipated completing two or three trails a year. But once we began the process, it became very apparent how open-ended the content could be for each trail. The **Hardy County Barn Quilt Trail** (managed by the Lost River Educational Foundation) was the first trail developed and the work on that trail made it very clear that each trail will be an open-ended project.

In doing so, the trail system will consider numerous segments of Hardy County's heritage and physical environment including local stories, images, and factual material that will be woven into the fabric of the tours. Users can explore Hardy County's Heritage Trails from home on The Clio, linked/embedded on the Visit Hardy website. They can then use the app when they visit for an in-person tour. The trails will also:

- Encourages community dialogue, interaction, then engagement
- Provides an interactive educational tool for public and home-schooled students.
- Becomes an economic driver, energizing the community and increasing the number of visitors to Hardy County
- Creates a platform for cultural, historical, and genealogical research.
- Develops an appreciation for the complexity of 'heritage' and connects our heritage to that of the world's.
- Offers a broader understanding of our heritage, what factors created it, ways it has been interpreted (or misinterpreted), and how it informs our future.

One of the goals of our projects is to work with a community organization that carries the mantle for the project and is deeply committed to its development and management such as the **Lost River Educational Foundation**. With the emergence of the new nonprofits such as **Lost River Trails Coalition** and **Mountain Heritage Trails**, and collaborations with regional counties, Visit Hardy will be doing less direct trail development but will provide some limited support for projects that enhance our tourism industry.

## Historic Schoolhouses of Hardy County



When Cullers Run School (in the Mathias area) was restored by members of the community, several agreed to be interviewed to provide a history of the school that went beyond the structure and the artifacts. Shefa Benoit facilitated and edited the interviews. Her passion for the project was obvious and the work at Cullers Run serves as a model.

This project has become the sole responsibility of AmeriCorps member, Shefa Benoit. Employing her significant skills, she has designed a trail that has intrigued our community. Moorefield Examiner articles keep the project in front of the community and have encouraged their engagement with calls coming in from former students and their families.



Research for the schoolhouses was accomplished with the assistance of the graduate and undergraduate students from the Public History Program at WVU as part of the WVU Fulcrum Project grant. Historical information about education in WV, a snapshot of daily activities in the classroom, the community around the school, and the memories of former students/teachers/family members, will become part of the content. The trail of 21 schoolhouses was posted to TheClio.org in fall 2022.

### **Ride the High 5 Motorcycle Map**

Our county roads are not only great for cyclists but also for motorcycle touring. Primarily a marketing project, the first motorcycle map project was completed in 2013-14 and then taken up again in 2018. Ready for distribution in early 2019, we had slightly more than one year of use before Covid shut down distribution. We continued to use the 2018 map until recently. The now five-county partnership (Mineral County joined the collaboration with Grant Hampshire, Hardy, and Pendleton) is about two months away from receiving the new maps. The routes have been reconfigured by Road Runner who is also designing and printing the maps. Distribution will be managed out of house with each CVB receiving enough copies for local distribution and direct requests.

### **Future of Hardy County Heritage Trails**

In collaboration with the WV Department of Highways and the WV Geological Survey in 2023, Visit Hardy's Board President, Pete Sullivan, worked to have three interpretive kiosks installed on the Mountain Skyway (Route 48) to inform visitors and the community about our mountains and the formations that can be seen as they drive along the highway, formations made visible by the cuts created in the highway's construction. In 2024 this work was continued with interpretive signage located at Lost River State Park.

Currently in process, the Restored Humanity: The African American Burial Sites of Hardy County project is an undertaking of MHT. The Fairfax Line project, also overseen by our board president, is ongoing. Considerations for future endeavors include, among other options, Hardy County's agricultural heritage; a 'trail' on TheClio.org about the Fairfax Line, an important 18th century demarcation of a 17th century land grant; and a multi-county Civil War Trail.