

Convention
and Visitors
Bureau
Program
Resource
Summary

Appropriation Summary

	FY 2003-04 Actual	FY 2004-05 Amended	FY 2005-06 Proposed	FY 2005-06 Adopted	% Change
Expenditures	1,655,921	1,722,684	1,685,141	1,757,689	2.03
FTE	11	7	8	8	14.29

Department Mission

The Portsmouth Convention & Visitors Bureau (PCVB) will actively market the city as a leisure and business travel destination, thereby creating jobs for citizens, generating revenue for businesses, and increasing the tax base through the collection of lodging, meals, and other related taxes.

Willett Hall strives to bring quality arts and entertainment to the local community there by enhancing the quality of life for residents.

Department Budget in Brief

To foster a good public image, the CVB will promote the city as a viable meeting destination. The CVB and visitor Information Center staff closely coordinates efforts with hotel staff, reservation experts, City of Portsmouth toll-free phone callers, North Landing Visitor Center and Gift Shop visitors, private sector resources, news media, publications, regional and statewide tourism personnel, and hospitality industry vendors. Additionally, by providing clerical support and budget management, the CVB acts as the Portsmouth Invitational Tournament administrative office. Budget management services are also provided to Willett Hall by CVB staff.

While positively impacting admission and sales tax revenues, Willett Hall strives to present quality entertainment to local citizens. In the last year, in addition to ticketing, programming, selling, and auditing the Portsmouth Invitational Tournament, Willett Hall has hosted 118 events. Along with ticketed events, in an effort to increase community involvement and general awareness, Willett Hall sponsored free Wednesday at Willett concerts. Military concerts, Portsmouth Community Concerts, Inspirational/Gospel events, and children's theater remain popular at Willett Hall. Upgraded paging and sound systems have also added to Willett Hall's quality.

Department Operational Summary

In the area of marketing and public relations, the Bureau phone interviews, supplies photos, and proofs and edits articles. The Director and Media Relations Manager work as part of the city's marketing committee to ensure appropriate coverage in trade and consumer publications, and to promote the city at every possible opportunity. The department maintains photo files, creates collateral, provides for the fulfillment of visitor inquiries, and serves as liaison with the media.

The sales effort involves participation in trade shows, sales missions, and conferences, thereby maximizing Portsmouth's visibility and promoting the city as a destination. The Bureau's sales manager maintains superior relationships with local hotels, partnering with them whenever possible. Direct sales, telemarketing, and direct mail are also important

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components of the sales efforts. These efforts serve to increase the number of overnight visitors as well as the number of day-trippers.

The PCVB operates a full-service, state certified Visitor Information Center that is open seven days a week, providing superior customer service and travel assistance to the city's visitors. The Visitor Center staff is comprised of highly trained experts who promote the city's attractions, restaurants, hotels, shops, activities and amenities. Revenue from the Visitor Center gift shop totaled over \$75,000. Additionally, the department provides a full range of convention services to conventions, tour groups, conferences, and reunion groups. These services include providing welcome speeches, name badges, hospitality tables, tour and itinerary planning services, mayor's letters, etc. Full-scale citywide customer service training is also planned.

The Bureau takes every opportunity to speak to local groups about the importance of tourism for the community. The department is actively involved with local civic groups such as the Olde Towne Business Association and works closely with all attractions, venues and events. The PCVB provides media relations, fiscal, and administrative support for the Portsmouth Invitational Tournament. It also provides fiscal support, budget management and media relations for Willett Hall.

Involvement in regional and statewide tourism initiatives is a vital part of generating positive awareness of Portsmouth as a destination and aides in developing partnerships. To that end, the Director serves in leadership roles in such statewide organizations as the Governor's Conference on Tourism, the Virginia Association of Convention & Visitors Bureaus, the Virginia Civil War Trails, and the Virginia Hospitality & Travel Association.

The department works closely with all city initiatives that serve to attract visitors and is actively involved with the promotion and marketing of the new Virginia Sports Hall of Fame. Additionally, the PCVB assists with city events and any other concepts or improvements that impact visitation.

Willett Hall, a 2,000-seat auditorium, is administered through this department. The staff is involved in sales, promotion, planning and event coordination. This includes outside promotions, and the city's booked events. The staff works closely with promoters, technical personnel, advertisers, vendors and concessionaires. The events held there serve to enhance the quality of life for Portsmouth's residents.

Strategic Goals

1. Generate positive awareness of Portsmouth as a destination
2. Generate visitation to Portsmouth from groups and individuals
3. Heighten community awareness and support of tourism
4. Encourage product development and infrastructure improvements that will enhance Portsmouth as a destination
5. Enhance and extend the stay of Portsmouth's visitors
6. Through Willett Hall, increase city revenue by presenting quality entertainment

Department Trends

The tourism industry is one of the most significant revenue producers in the country. For calendar year 2004, tourism produced \$555 billion in revenue in the United States and provided 7.2 million jobs. Tourism spending produced \$95 billion in tax revenue for local, state and federal governments. One in 18 jobs are directly created by travel and tourism. In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the numbers are equally impressive with tourism revenue at \$15.2 billion, up 5.2% over the previous year. The travel industry was the fifth largest private

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sector employer in the state with over 280,000 direct full-time jobs; that represents 7.9% of working Virginians. Tourism is economic development and is responsible for \$2 billion in state tax revenue. In keeping with national and state trends, Portsmouth's tourism revenue has experienced growth. In 2002, revenue from meal tax and lodging tax totaled \$5,588,350. In 2003, it was \$5,916,338, and in 2004, it was \$6,268,917.

Tourism trends indicate that travel is on the rise and the outlook in the industry is positive, however, with neighboring cities (Virginia Beach and Hampton) building new convention facilities, and new convention hotels opening (Norfolk, Hampton, and Virginia Beach) competition is intense. Studies show that convention delegates spend an average of \$266 per day. For Portsmouth to stay competitive, it is necessary to have a stronger presence in the tourism sales arena. Understanding the city's niche is key to proper planning. The convention markets most likely to be successful here include the state education and state association markets, the small government market, and the military reunion market. Additionally, Portsmouth has a unique small-town, historic seaport charm that especially fits the profile for the tour & travel (motorcoach) market. Research shows that one overnight stay at a destination by one motorcoach contributes up to \$12,000 to the local economy.

Departmental Performance Measures

With Portsmouth's tourism revenue from meals and lodging tax alone at over \$6.3 million, it is easy to realize that The Convention and Visitors Bureau is an investment. That figure does not include revenue to businesses from hotel stays, restaurant meals, attraction admissions, and shopping which accounts for millions of dollars more. The PCVB's programs support the city's vision in producing expanded tax revenue necessary for a robust and prospering economy. With every sales call, every interaction with the visitor, and every media encounter, the department engages in direct promotion of the city and its historic waterfront appeal. Our advertising campaigns, arranging of historic tours and production of tourism collateral all speak to the pride of past and promise of the future which the Bureau promotes to tens of thousands of visitors each year. The revenue generated from tourism provides support for a quality educational system as well as for enhanced community amenities.

Fiscal Year 2006 will be a benchmark year for gathering performance statistics in the following areas:

- Number of conventions serviced
- Number of visitors to our Visitor Center
- Taxes generated from hotels, and meals
- Trade shows attended
- Total number of visitor inquiries fulfilled
- Trade shows attended
- Room nights booked
- Number of events held at Willet Hall

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Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Expenditures	FY 2003-04 Actual	FY 2004-05 Amended	FY 2005-06 Proposed	FY 2005-06 Adopted
<i>Salaries</i>	333,599	314,585	333,743	359,936
<i>Benefits</i>	71,884	88,813	73,424	83,779
<i>Contractual Services</i>	80,975	128,240	77,709	77,709
<i>Materials and Supplies</i>	96,285	53,887	54,426	54,426
<i>Other Operating Expenses</i>	34,037	39,076	40,780	40,780
<i>Internal Service Charges and Expenses</i>	13,836	34,083	26,949	26,949
Total Expenditures	630,616	658,684	607,031	679,579

Willett Hall

Revenues	FY 2003-04 Actual	FY 2004-05 Amended	FY 2005-06 Proposed	FY 2005-06 Adopted
<i>Charges For Services</i>	804,586	813,500	827,610	827,610
<i>Interest</i>	-	500	500	500
<i>Operating Transfers In</i>	265,000	250,000	250,000	250,000
Total Revenues	1,069,586	1,064,000	1,078,110	1,078,110

Expenditures	FY 2003-04 Actual	FY 2004-05 Amended	FY 2005-06 Proposed	FY 2005-06 Adopted
<i>Salaries</i>	93,347	92,910	98,568	98,568
<i>Benefits</i>	31,026	11,458	12,131	12,131
<i>Contractual Services</i>	883,726	788,456	867,243	867,243
<i>Materials and Supplies</i>	16,919	81,500	9,595	9,595
<i>Other Operating Expenses</i>	287	89,676	90,573	90,573
Total Expenditures	1,025,305	1,064,000	1,078,110	1,078,110