

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, April 21, 2016. The meeting began at 8:05 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Ebert, Bill Hottel, Kristen Laise, Eric Campbell, Eddie Richard, Priya Patel

Board Members Absent: Dan Martin, Karen Helm, Sharon Farinholt

Staff: Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Bob Hess, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Jennifer Bell, Old Town Winchester; Karl Littman, Candy Hill Campground

Call To Order: Ms. Rebecca Ebert, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The March 2016 minutes were approved on a motion by Priya Patel, seconded by Eric Campbell.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Kerns gave a review of the past month's activities, including the Tourism Tuesday Radio Show, WinLife TV show, blog posts to the visitwinchesterva.com website, the ABC License application, and several meetings with regional marketing groups. The Virginia Professional Communicators held their annual meeting in Winchester last week, and the CVB office contributed a raffle basket and welcome letter for participants. Two writers have already expressed interest in writing about the Winchester area since the meeting. Mr. Kerns is in the process of hiring a new Travel Counselor, as the latest hire has recently resigned. Finally, Mr. Kerns discussed the Shenandoah Valley Kids Trail's business model and whether or not the CVB would be able to partner with the organization.

New Business:

Civil War Trails Meeting Recap – Justin Kerns and Renee Bayliss

Mr. Kerns and Mrs. Bayliss attended a meeting in Staunton regarding the Civil War Trails program. The organization is asking localities and DMOs to help to inventory the signs that are in their area. A maintenance fee of \$200 will be applied to each of the signs, and the Trails programs is looking for local museums, historic sites, CVBs, etc. to "adopt" the signs and take responsibility for their maintenance. The CVB currently pays \$500/year to maintain one sign in Winchester.

Committee Updates/Bylaws Explanation – Becky Ebert

Ms. Ebert noted that while several members volunteered for the marketing and nominating committees, the board is only able to have two voting members per committee. The marketing committee will be Kristen Laise, Sharon Farinholt, and Jennifer Bell. The nominating committee is Priya Patel and Kristen Laise. Ms. Ebert noted that they have identified three potential members, including Andy Gyurisin from Alamo Drafthouse Cinema, Karl Littman from Candy Hill Campground, and Mary

Braun (or a representative) from the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. Kristen Laise made a motion to approve the nominees, seconded by Eric Campbell. Ms. Ebert also noted that since her term will be expiring, the board will also need to have a replacement Chairman. The Vice-Chairman, Eric Campbell, noted that he would be willing to step up to the position of Chairman.

Old Business:

Top of Virginia Artisan Trail Update – Justin Kerns and Kristen Laise

Mr. Kerns noted that the Artisan Trail is progressing, Clarke County has been officially added to the trail, and that an event was recently hosted at Belle Grove Plantation. Ms. Kristen Laise reported that the trail is currently in the process of gathering applications and fees from trail participants. The deadline to be included is the end of May. Ms. Laise also pointed out that there are more than just artists participating in the trail. There are numerous supporting sites, including lodging, dining, and other points of interest.

Regional Initiatives Update – Justin Kerns

Mr. Kerns reminded the board that he has previously discussed some of the regional initiatives in the Executive Director's Report. Ms. Rebecca Ebert requested a list of the regional initiatives that the CVB is participating in. The board also discussed moving the May meeting due to a conflict with a training Mr. Kerns will be attending. The board decided to set the meeting for May 26.

Presentation – Karl Littman, Candy Hill Campground

Mr. Littman gave the board an overview of Candy Hill Campground's operations and their role in their local tourism industry. He is a professional campground operator, and has worked in the industry for over 20 years. Candy Hill is dedicated to promoting the Winchester area because the destination is what brings campers to their business. Mr. Littman attends numerous travel shows from Canada to Florida to draw more visitors to the area and the campground. Candy Hill uses their trolley to transport campers to local businesses. He noted that during the summer, it is estimated that each Candy Hill guest spends over \$200 per day in the area. The Campground is also often going through renovations and updates, including a new swimming pool.

Public Comments

Kristen Laise noted that Beer Fest tickets are on sale, primarily online, but they will also be sold at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center this year. Mr. Eddie Richard reported that there has been a 90% loss of peaches in local orchards due to the cold weather, and apples may also be similarly affected.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 am on a motion by Bill Hottel, seconded by Eric Campbell.

Respectfully Submitted by Renee Bayliss, Visitor & Community Relations Specialist, City of Winchester