

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, April 20, 2017. The meeting began at 8:03 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

**Board Members Present:** Dan Martin, Karen Helm, Kristen Laise, Eddie Richard, Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel, Mary Braun

**Board Members Absent:** Andy Gyurisin, Eric Campbell

**Staff:** Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

**Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media:** Mayor David Smith, Winchester City Council; Bill Ewing, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Jennifer Bell, Winchester Downtown Manager; Josh Janney, Winchester Star; Chester Ramey, Albert McGilvray

**Call To Order:** Dan Martin, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

**Roll Call:** Mrs. Renee Bayliss

### **Approval of Minutes**

The March meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Sharon Farinholt, seconded by Eddie Richard.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Kerns informed the board that the 2017 Visitors Guide has been completed and sent to the printers. A small quantity should be delivered tomorrow. After attending the Southeast Tourism Society's Spring Symposium in Knoxville, Mr. Kerns received his Tourism Marketing Professional certification after 3 years of classes. The CVB has been in discussions with the Civil War Trails organization regarding sponsors for the nearly 40 Civil War Trails signs that exist in Winchester and Frederick County. The area has the more signs than any other locality in Virginia. Sponsors will help pay for the maintenance of the signs. Kristen Laise asked if there is a list of the sign locations, and CVB staff noted that Mrs. Bayliss created a spreadsheet, and this can be emailed out to the board.

Mr. Kerns noted that the Patsy Cline exhibit is being updated, in collaboration with the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley and Celebrating Patsy Cline. Karen Helm noted that a piece from Celebrating Patsy Cline's collection will be on display for the first time. Mr. Kerns announced that the city of Winchester's new Development Services Director has been hired, and he will be the tourism board meeting guest in May. Other meetings in the past month included one with Mayor Harbaugh from Middletown, Gary Casteel, regarding the National Civil War Memorial and Winchester as a potential site, and the Shenandoah Spirits Trail group, which plans to expand with additional localities included.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Branding Committee – Andy Gyurisin and Priya Patel**

Mr. Kerns distributed copies of the Brand Essence document created by the branding company. He also circulated copies of two recent ads that were produced and placed in publications recently. The ad campaign has not yet been completed by the branding company, Mikula-Harris.

### **Marketing Committee – Sharon Farinholt and Kristen Laise**

Mr. Kerns reported that a photographer has been hired to do a set number of shots for the ad campaign. The campaign will have several ads targeted to different demographics including multi-generational travelers. Sharon Farinholt noted that the committee would like to hear suggestions on publications others have used that they feel have been beneficial.

### **MATPRA Marketplace Committee – Karen Helm and Mary Braun**

The marketing committee reported that the itineraries are now set, and the group is starting on budgeting and costs, including which items will be provided complimentary, and which will incur costs.

### **Unfinished Business:**

#### **Tour guide discussion – Justin Kerns and Renee Bayliss**

Mr. Kerns explained that recently, additional groups have been doing tours in the area, including history tours of Old Town and ghost tours, although the group of high school students giving tours has recently disbanded. The CVB has been organizing and promoting Civil War history tours given by two local guides for many years. Mr. Kerns wants to make sure that the CVB is fair to the other groups and explained the informal working situation with the Civil War guides. After a discussion, Mary Braun suggested that an MOU be created between the guides and the CVB to define the relationship with the guides used by the CVB.

#### **FY18 Board Appointments (Tabled from March) – Justin Kerns and Dan Martin**

Mr. Kerns noted that after review, Dan Martin has one more year remaining in his term. Karen Helm and Priya Patel's terms are up for renewal. Mr. Kerns explained that they will need to acknowledge whether they would like to continue for another three year term.

### **Public Comments**

Jennifer Bell announced upcoming events in Old Town Winchester, including a Jazzathon with a free concert at the Taylor Pavilion, the March for Science, Apple Blossom, and the opening of the Old Town Farmer's Market on May 13. Kristen Laise gave details on Belle Grove's Beer Festival. Tickets may be purchased at the Visitors Center. Karen Helm reported on the Patsy Cline Historic House, explaining that the PBS documentary and new museum in Nashville has given them a boost in visitation. Mary Braun told the board that the new bee exhibit has opened at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. Eddie Richard announced that Richard's Fruit Market will open on June 8, and that the prospects of a good peach crop are positive. Mr. Kerns asked the board if they are amenable to the Visitors Center selling tickets for a Chamber of Commerce raffle, and all agreed it was fine.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 am on a motion by Sharon Farinholt, seconded by Mary Braun.

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