

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, July 17, 2014. The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Ebert, Theresa Gaines, Bill Hottel, Karen Helm, Eddie Richard, Priya Patel

Board Members Absent: Eric Campbell, Sharon Farinholt, Tootie Rinker

Staff: Sally Coates, Renee Bayliss

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Sherri Smith, Artisans Center of Virginia; Matt Armstrong, Winchester Star

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

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The June 2014 minutes were approved on a motion by Bill Hottel, seconded by Theresa Gaines.

Executive Director's Report – Sally Coates

Mrs. Coates announced that Winchester was recently named one of the Top 10 Most Exciting Cities in Virginia by Movoto Real Estate. Other cities included in the list were Richmond, Charlottesville, Fairfax, Alexandria, and Harrisonburg. Winchester City Council has listed a Patsy Cline Music Festival as a part of its strategic plan. Mrs. Coates explained how the Winchester-Frederick County CVB has been working with Celebrating Patsy Cline to develop and market the festival this year, to take place August 30. The CVB is also selling tickets at the Visitors Center.

Next year, the Appalachian Trail Hiking Through History Conference will be held at Shenandoah University, July 17-24. This is the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's 40th Biennial Conference. Mrs. Coates has been meeting with the organizers, who estimate 900-1200 attendees will travel to Winchester-Frederick County for the event. The CVB will have a space in the conference' exhibit hall, and will also be a contributing partner for a grant from Virginia Tourism Corporation.

Responding to feedback from the CVB's previous tours earlier this year, Mrs. Coates announced that a series of walking and trolley tours have been organized to take place this fall. These tours will be primarily marketed to local residents through Winchester Parks & Recreation.

Visitor and Community Relations Specialist's Report – Renee Bayliss

Mrs. Bayliss informed the Board of her recent work on the upcoming Cal Ripken 10-Year-Old World Series that will take place August 9-16. This event will bring teams from across the country to compete for a National title. Mrs. Bayliss has been involved in designing marketing materials including banners, souvenirs, advertisements, the program booklet, and more. In addition, she has been designing the Winchester Parks and Recreation's Fall 2014 Activity Guide, which will include information on the Patsy Cline Music Festival and the CVB's trolley and walking tours. She has been supporting the marketing efforts for the Patsy Cline Music Festival as well, by designing posters, flyers, advertisements, and setting up a Patsy Cline Music Festival Facebook page.

New Business:

Presentation on the Development of a Winchester-Frederick County Artisans Trail – Sherri Smith, Executive Director of the Artisans Center of Virginia (ACV)

Ms. Smith explained her role as Executive Director of the Artisans Center of Virginia, which includes traveling across the entire state to meet and work with communities to develop strategic alliances between artisans, venues, galleries, and retailers, in a program called the Artisan Trail Network. Participating sites may include artist studios, agri-artisans/agritourism, craft related venues, and supporting sites such as unique shopping/dining, recreational, and cultural points of interest. The Artisan Trail Network leverages its membership into a marketing campaign to reach consumers and tourists, while strengthening both the community's artisan industry and its economic vitality.

The first step in developing the Artisan Trail Network in community is to set up a management team to help with outreach to the community.

Once developed, the Artisan Trail Network will be promoted by print, social media, a website, blog, events, and more.

Mrs. Coates informed the board that the Winchester-Frederick County CVB has included the cost to begin developing the Artisan Trail Network in its budget.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 am on a motion by Karen Helm, seconded by Priya Patel.

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