

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, June 16, 2016. The meeting began at 8:05 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Ebert, Dan Martin, Bill Hottel, Karen Helm, Kristen Laise, Eddie Richard, Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel, Eric Campbell

Board Members Absent:

Staff: Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Bob Hess, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Andy Gyurisin, Alamo Drafthouse Cinema; Mary Braun, Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum; Len Capelli, Clarke County Tourism & Economic Development; Josh Janney, Winchester Star; Ben Gustafson, CVB volunteer; Jennifer Bell, Winchester Downtown Manager.

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

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The May 2016 minutes were approved on a motion by Sharon Farinholt, seconded by Dan Martin.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Kerns discussed the activities of the past month, including the Tourism Tuesday radio show and an appearance on Great Day Washington, with a guest from the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. He continues meeting with the regional DMO group. The group is working on the Shenandoah Spirits Trail and an upcoming travel show filming in the Shenandoah Valley in July. A successful blog post on ice cream hot spots in Winchester reached 35,000 people on Facebook. In addition, he continues work on a bus parking plan with Old Town Winchester and the Winchester Parking Authority. A draft application for the CVB's Virginia Tourism Marketing Leverage Grant has been submitted for Winchester-Frederick County's rebranding and marketing campaign. The CVB is also hosting a high school volunteer for the summer.

New Business:

Family Travel with Colleen Kelly – Justin Kerns

Mr. Kerns informed the board that 11 municipalities have pooled resources to bring a family travel TV program to the Shenandoah Valley to film an episode. The show will be filming in late July, and airs on public television. In addition to the initial run, the episode will play in reruns for two years.

Committee Updates – Marketing – Kristen Laise

Ms. Laise gave a brief overview of the marketing committee's most recent meeting, which included the integration of the Virginia Tourism Marketing Leverage Grant. If the grant is awarded to the CVB, the marketing plan will include participation in Virginia Tourism Corporation's Co-op Marketing Program. She also informed the board that the rebranding process will require an RFQ, rather than an RFP.

Committee Updates – New Committee Formation – Rebecca Ebert and Justin Kerns

Mr. Kerns noted that two new committees will be formed to address the organization's new branding and review of the board's bylaws. Board members were asked to volunteer. The board asked for clarification on what the committees entail, and the time commitment. Priya Patel and Andy Gyurisin

offered to serve on the branding committee. Dan Martin and Karen Helm agreed to serve on the by-laws review committee. Bob Hess recommended that the by-law review committee also take the city-county agreement into consideration during the review. The board concluded that another committee should be formed to review that agreement. Eric Campbell and Mary Braun offered to serve on the city/county agreement committee.

Chair and Vice-Chair vote

The board voted and it was determined that Dan Martin received the most votes for chairman, and Eric Campbell for vice-chairman.

Old Business:

Top of Virginia Artisan Trail Update – Karen Helm

Mrs. Karen Helm informed the board on the progress of the Artisan Trail.

Presentation – Len Capelli, Clarke County Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator

Mr. Capelli informed the board of some of the goals of Clarke County's tourism efforts, which include maintaining their beauty and agricultural assets, increasing Clarke's visibility, and bringing a small hotel to the county. Tourism revenue increased 50% in Clarke County from 2014-2015. He noted some of their assets, including the Appalachian Trail, Cool Spring Battlefield, Josephine School Community Museum, and the Shenandoah River, of which a portion is planning to be developed for public access. Clarke County is also applying for a marketing grant to develop a digital map. He explained that some changes will be taking place on the town council, and he hopes to see continued support for tourism development.

Confirmation of Chair and Vice-Chair

Ms. Ebert asked for a motion to confirm Dan Martin and Eric Campbell as chair and vice-chair of the tourism board. Eddie Richard made a motion, seconded by Sharon Farinholt.

Public Comments

Karen Helm announced that the Patsy Cline Historic House has been open five years this year, and that the Patsy Cline Music Festival will include a Saturday shindig at Harley-Davidson in a backyard picnic style event. Eric Campbell noted there is a new walking trail and Vermont at Cedar Creek weekend at Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park. Priya Patel said that the hotels are busy with wedding season, summer travel, and business travelers. Eddie Richard informed the board that Richards Farm Market will open July 7. Andy Gyuris described several film festivals being held at the Alamo Drafthouse Cinema in August and September, which bring many guests from out of the area. Jennifer Bell updated the board on events taking place in Old Town Winchester.

Mr. Kerns thanked Ms. Ebert and Mr. Hottel for serving on the tourism board, and presented them with certificates.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 am on a motion by Dan Martin, seconded by Eric Campbell.

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