

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, March 17, 2016. The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

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

**Board Members Absent:** Dan Martin

**Staff:** Justin Kerns

**Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media:** Bob Hess, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Jennifer Bell, Old Town Winchester; Josh Janney, Winchester Star; Holly Redding & Bonnie Landy, Winchester Brew Works

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

**Roll Call:** Ms. Rebecca Ebert

### **Approval of Minutes**

The February 2016 minutes were approved on a motion by Sharon Farinholt, seconded by Kristen Laise.

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

Mr. Kerns updated the board on the production of the 2016-2017 Visitors Guide. The guide will be in the proofing phase next week, and should be to the printers by the following week. Mr. Kerns appeared on Tourism Tuesday, and WinLife TV to promote local activities and attractions. He met with the Northern Shenandoah Valley DMO group and branding firm, Mikula Harris. The Northern Shenandoah Valley beer, wine, and spirits trail logo and naming contract was awarded to Hive Creative. The CVB hosted an intern for a week in March from Radford University. She shadowed Mr. Kerns, worked on a blog post and assisted Mrs. Bayliss on content for the Visitors Guide.

The ABC License has been submitted to the City Manager for signature. The timeline for implementation is dependent on ABC approval. Mr. Kerns is also working with Prince William/Manassas Tourism on a tour that visits Manassas and Winchester-Frederick County.

### **New Business:**

#### **Visitor Survey Results**

The visitor survey was sent to 1,000 people, and received a high response rate of 26%. The data gleaned is very usable and the cost to conduct the survey was low. Results from the survey show that visitors are staying in the area during their travels through the Shenandoah Valley as a whole.

### **Civil War Weekend**

For the 2016 Civil War Weekend, the CVB will be hosting a trolley tour to preview the featured attractions and activities for the weekend.

### **Committee Formations**

The board discussed forming a Nominating Committee and a Marketing Committee. Priya Patel, Jennifer Bell, Sharon Farinholt, and Eddie Richard volunteered for the Marketing Committee. Kristen Laise and Rebecca Ebert volunteered for the Nominating Committee.

### **Old Business:**

#### **2016 Visitor Guide Update – Justin Kerns**

The Visitor Guide is still in production. Final ad sales total \$22,525, which is approximately \$5,000 more than printing costs.

#### **Presentation – Owners of Winchester Brew Works, Holly Redding and Bonnie Landy**

The owners of Winchester Brew Works gave an introduction of their business to the board. They will be opening their nano-brewery on Cameron Street in May 2016. They are one of very few female-owned and brewed breweries in the US. In the future, the brewery is hoping to host food trucks in the adjacent parking lot. Due to their very small production scale, they will not be distributing their beers, and their product will be available only in the local area.

### **Public Comments**

Mrs. Jennifer Bell informed the board of upcoming events in Old Town Winchester, including the Winchester Pipes and Drums fundraiser during the St. Paddy's Day Celtic Festival and the annual Easter Egg Hunt. Mr. Eddie Richard noted that Richard's Fruit Market will be closed for the summer until peach season. Ms. Karen Helm announced that Clarke County will officially be a part of the Top of Virginia Artisan Trail, and that they are keeping to the timeline that was originally agreed on. She also noted that the Patsy Cline Historic House will open April 1.

Ms. Kristen Laise reminded the board that Belle Grove Plantation is now open for the season.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 am on a motion by Karen Helm, seconded by Eric Campbell.

Meeting notes taken by Ms. Priya Patel

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