

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, March 16, 2017. The meeting began at 8:05 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Dan Martin, Eric Campbell, Karen Helm, Kristen Laise, Eddie Richard, Mary Braun

Board Members Absent: Andy Gyurisin, Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel

Staff: Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Mayor David Smith, Winchester City Council

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

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The February meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Eric Campbell, seconded by Eddie Richard.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Kerns announced that he received a proclamation naming Mayor Smith as liaison to the Tourism Board and welcomed him to the meeting. He then reported on the activities of the past month, including the Visitors Guide. Mrs. Bayliss noted that it is nearing completion. All of the advertisements are approved but the cover photo is still being determined. Mr. Kerns reported that he has also been participating in budget meetings for FY18, which is very similar to FY17. Beer and wine sales have officially begun at the Visitors Center. Mary Braun asked how sales have been going, and Mr. Kerns said that they have been slow, but that March is still part of the center's slow season, and a good time to implement the change.

The Visitors Center is also participating in an advertising "blitz" at the Clear Brook Welcome Center in March. Other items discussed included work with the Civil War Trails organization regarding local signage, an update to the Patsy Cline exhibit in the Visitors Center, and an overview of the Shenandoah Valley regional group meetings. Karen Helm gave an update on the newly formed Patsy Cline Enterprises – the organization that oversees the image, name, and likeness of Patsy Cline, in regards to updating the exhibit at the Visitors Center.

Mary Braun asked about the current budget, and whether it has been presented to the board. She noted that it would be helpful in relation to the board making decisions. Eric Campbell responded with his previous experience being on the budget committee. In the past, the committee would be presented with the budget and review it. It would also be printed and distributed to the board. Several members noted that they would like to see the FY18 budget.

Committee Reports:

Branding Committee – Justin Kerns

Priya Patel and Andy Gyurisin of the branding committee were not present, so Mr. Kerns gave an overview of the logo design process. The committee and CVB staff narrowed the options down from seven to three, which are being presented for the first time. There was discussion among the board, and Mr. Kerns noted that a decision needs to be made quickly due to the Visitor Guide production deadline. After two rounds of voting and input from Mr. Gyurisin via phone conference, the board decided that the third option was the choice for the logo. It was considered to be a compromise between two options that the board was split over. The votes for option three were as follows: first choice of Mary Braun, Kristen Laise, and Dan Martin. The third option was second choice for Eddie Richard, Karen Helm, Eric Campbell, and Andy Gyurisin. Option one and two each had 3-4 total votes.

Unfinished Business:

National Trust for Historic Preservation solicitation – Justin Kerns

Mr. Kerns distributed information for the National Trust for Historic Preservation's request for the Tourism Board's support of increased funding. This involves Dan Martin, Chairman, signing a letter of support. Mary Braun made a motion to approve the request, seconded by Kristen Laise, all in favor.

New Business:

Tour guide discussion – Justin Kerns and Renee Bayliss

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

Committee Reports:

Bylaws Committee – Karen Helm and Dan Martin

Karen Helm and Dan Martin will discuss any updates to the by-laws and present at the next meeting. The change may only be updating wording from "hoteliers" to "lodging."

MATPRA Marketplace Committee – Karen Helm and Mary Braun

Committee members noted that there is a lot of engagement with the participants planning the event, and that the group is on schedule for necessary deadlines.

Public Comments

Karen Helm announced that the Executive Director of the Patsy Cline Historic House has resigned, and they will be advertising the position, in addition to recruiting volunteers. The museum is still slated to open April 1. Eddie Richard noted that Richard's Fruit Market will be open this Saturday, and thanked Mr. Kerns for the support and recent referrals. Mary Braun reported on several upcoming events at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum, and the opening of a new exhibit. Kristen Laise announced that Belle Grove is opening for the season this Saturday, and also informed the board of an upcoming anti-slavery movement talk being given by a historian in the St. Thomas Chapel in Middletown.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:25 am on a motion by Kristen Laise, seconded by Karen Helm.

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