

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, September 19, 2013. The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Ebert, Dan Martin, Bill Hottel, Rainee Simpson, Eric Campbell, Sharon Farinholt

Board Members Absent: Sue Robinson, Tootie Rinker, John Marker

Staff: Renee Bayliss, Sally Coates

Guests & Media: Jennifer Bell, Downtown Manager; Mayor Elizabeth Minor, Winchester City Council; Vic Bradshaw, Winchester Star; Cassie Ward, Long Branch Plantation.

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

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Executive Director's Report – Sally Coates

Ms. Coates reported on the MATPRA Marketplace that she attended in August. One of the contacts made at this event has already resulted in an article being published in the Washington Post. Mrs. Coates' contact traveled to Winchester for the media preview of the Becoming Patsy Cline exhibition. She also visited the Patsy Cline Historic House, and was given a private tour by Mel Dick, Patsy's brother-in-law. Mrs. Coates and Mrs. Bayliss both attended the media preview at the MSV and the opening of the new Old Town Winchester Welcome Center. Mrs. Coates also attended the unveiling of the cell phone audio tour by the French and Indian War Foundation.

In regards to the RFQ that the CVB sent out last month for video production, Mrs. Coates informed the board that four companies responded, and one has been chosen to complete the project. Mrs. Coates and Mrs. Bayliss agreed that working with Josh Wyckoff of JScott Entertainment will be a good fit for the organization.

Mrs. Coates informed the board of Governor McDonnell's announcement that tourism revenue increased in all localities of the state in 2012. The Governor also recently announced that Celebrating Patsy Cline, Inc. was selected to receive up to \$50,000 in funding as part of the Virginia Tourism Corporation's Marketing Leverage Grant program. The CVB partnered with the organization to earn the grant.

A new director of Parks and Recreation has been hired, and has agreed to continue the sharing of employees Renee Bayliss and Jennifer Stotler. Mrs. Coates also discussed a new slideshow for the TV screen in the Visitors Center, her Tourism Tuesday guest, and the Murder Mystery Tour event at City Hall.

Please see Sally Coates Executive Director's Report, which was emailed to all board members for reference.

Old Business:

Winner of "LOVEwork" contest – Renee Bayliss

Mrs. Bayliss announced the winner of the photo contest, who was from Staunton, Virginia. There were less than 10 entries, but the staff still had a difficult time choosing from about 3 top contenders. They decided on the winner because of her pose and unique response that included geocaching in Old Town Winchester and the Peach Festival at Marker-Miller Orchards.

Approval of Minutes

The August 2013 minutes were approved on a motion by Rainee Simpson, seconded by Bill Hottel.

New Business:

Appointment of one Board member, representing the non-profit sector, to the Budget Committee to join with Bill Hottel, representing the private-sector

Mr. Eric Campbell volunteered to join the Budget Committee with Bill Hottel.

News from Historic Long Branch – Cassie Ward, Director of Public Programs

Ms. Ward gave the board a historical background of the Long Branch Plantation and its owners. The current stewards of the property have recently developed a strategic five-year plan that will focus on history and heritage. A new website is being developed, and should be online this week. Ms. Ward explained that Long Branch will be hosting a larger number of small scale events, rather than one large annual event. Those events will focus on history and education. Long Branch will be hosting a Grand Re-Opening Weekend on October 25-27. New hours for the property have yet to be determined, but the grounds are always open dawn to dusk, and the home is open by appointment.

Report on What to See & Do at the 2013 Apple Harvest Arts & Crafts Festival – Bill Hottel

Mr. Bill Hottel informed the board of the events at the Apple Harvest Arts & Crafts Festival, which will include live music, inflatables, apple displays, an apple pie eating contest, arts & crafts vendors, and more.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 a.m. on a motion by Dan Martin; seconded by Rainee Simpson, motion carried.

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