

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday August 17, 2017. The meeting began at 8:03 A.M. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

**Board Members Present:** Dan Martin, Andy Gyurisin, Kristen Laise, Karen Helm, Mary Braun, Eric Campbell, Eddie Richard, Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel,

**Board Members Absent:** NA

**Staff:** Justin Kerns

**Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media:** Jennifer Bell, Winchester Downtown Manager: Bill Ewing, Frederick County Board of Supervisors: Josh Janney, Winchester Star

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

### **Approval of Minutes**

The July meeting minutes were approved on a motion to amend the meeting start time to 8:05 by Karen Helm, seconded by Eric Campbell.

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

Mr. Kerns discussed the activities of the past month, which included MATPRA. Planning for MATPRA has been the focus this month. This year's MATPRA will see a record number of attendees. The photo shoot for the new ad campaign has also been completed. Mr. Kerns has been invited to be a guest speaker at the Southeast Tourism Society's Fall Forum in Biloxi, MS in October. The travel has been approved and the attendance fee was waived because he will be a presenter. Mr. Kerns attended the VADMO quarterly meeting in Fairfax, VA on July 27/28 where they discussed how to market event planning and retail shopping as an asset. Mr. Kerns has also been helping the Winchester Economic Development office in RFP selection process for a strategic planning firm. Blue Ridge Outdoors reached out to Mr. Kerns for a giveaway package, which included lodging at Pembroke Springs, Roma's certificate, and a voucher from Shenandoah Fly Fishing, in return received a full-page advertisement. New Travel Counselor Olivia Cather started this month and has already started making improvements to the retail layout of the Visitor Center. August 18-20 is Civil War weekend. The 2017 Visitor Guide circulation is still seeing a great demand, thinking of publishing the 2018 brochure a little earlier. The website refresh is still a work in progress. Mr. Kerns also updated on the Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership and the Shenandoah Spirits Trail. The Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership is contracting Berkeley Young to do a strategic plan and currently doing an RFP for PR, social media and SEO. Shenandoah Spirits Trail has a new map and the website has been completed and will launch at their next meeting September 28<sup>th</sup>. Finally, Mr. Kerns has partnered up with Shenandoah University Intern Program to help with separating financial numbers between government business and travel/leisure/corporate business in the Winchester/Frederick County area.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Marketing Committee-Sharon Farinholt and Kristen Laise**

The marketing committee will be meeting on Wednesday to finalize the photos and how to tie them into the rest of the ad campaign. Deadline for artwork placement is August 25<sup>th</sup>.

MATPRA Marketplace Taskforce-Karen Helm and Mary Braun

Ms. Helm discussed the need for volunteers, a website has been set up to schedule volunteers, the link will be sent to the rest of the board. Ms. Braun discussed the remaining sponsorships left. There are very few left as MATPRA members get first option to be sponsors. Mr. Kerns noted the top five travel writers are coming from Huffington Post, New York Times, L.A. Times, Fordors, Forbes, and National Geographic Travel.

### **Unfinished Business:**

#### **Website Refresh-Justin Kerns**

Still work in progress as Ms. Bayliss is out of the office.

#### **Patsy Cline Exhibit Opening Date-Justin Kerns**

The exhibit has received all the required signatures needed for the use of artifacts. The exhibit will open end of next week.

### **New Business:**

#### **Road Sign Update-Justin Kerns**

The road sign has been approved and will be installed in the next two weeks.

#### **Schrock bus wraps-Justin Kerns**

Schrock have agreed to give 2 bus wraps for free, the advertisement will travel across the country, only have to pay for the application of the decals. These decals have the new logo and were designed by Ms. Bayliss.

### **Public Comments**

Mary Braun from Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum informed the board of their annual fundraising Gala on August 28<sup>th</sup>, the Gala is responsible for raising 1/10 of their annual budget. Kristin Laise told the board of the Bell Grove Wine Fest on August 26<sup>th</sup>, the festival will have five wineries and a meadery. She reported that the 50<sup>th</sup> celebration at Bell Grove saw 437 people. There will be a sheep dog competition end of August. Karen Helm informed the board of the Patsy Cline Festival will be held on September 2<sup>nd</sup>, they will also be celebrating the Patsy Cline Fan Club's 23<sup>rd</sup> year. Eddie Richards made the board aware of the Peach Festival at Richards Farm Market, there will be a blue grass band. Jennifer Bell discussed Friday Night Live and Shape up Sundays. Dan Martin told the board about 44<sup>th</sup> Apple Harvest Festival will be on September 16<sup>th</sup> at the Frederick County Fair Grounds. Andy Gyuris discussed their nonprofit for the month-the Laurel Center. Eric Campbell noted that this weekend is Civil War Weekend.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 AM on a motion by Sharon Farinholt, seconded by Eric Campbell.

Respectfully submitted by Priya Patel, Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board Member