

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, December 21, 2017. The meeting began at 8:15 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

**Board Members Present:** Karen Helm, Kristen Laise, Eddie Richard, Mary Braun

**Board Members Absent:** Dan Martin, Eric Campbell, Andy Gyurisim Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel

**Staff:** Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

**Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media:** Brian Brehm, Winchester Star

**Call To Order:** The meeting began at 8:15am.

**Roll Call:** Mrs. Renee Bayliss

### **Approval of Minutes**

The November minutes were not approved due to lack of a quorum.

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

Mr. Kerns informed the board of his appearance on the Great Day Washington television program. He was accompanied by Winchester Brew Works and Edible Elegance by Erin. Mr. Kerns estimated the value of the segment, which was free of charge, at \$6-8,000. He also attended the Southeast Tourism Society conference in Biloxi, Mississippi and was able to attend free of charge since he was one of the speakers.

Other activities in the past month included meeting with Dario Savarese to discuss developing Apple Blossom itineraries, meeting with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss collaboration opportunities, and participating in the Winchester EDA's strategic planning webinar.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Marketing Committee –Kristen Laise**

The Marketing Committee met last week and reviewed the budget. Mr. Kerns distributed copies of the budget to the board members. Eddie Richard asked about how the sales of wine and beer at the gift shop are doing, and Mr. Kerns replied that they are about 7-9% of total sales.

### **Unfinished Business:**

#### **Website Refresh – Renee Bayliss**

Mrs. Bayliss reported that she met with the web developer, which resulted in bringing up a lot of decisions that needed to be made on the website. She has been creating graphics such as maps and photo headers that will be used on the website, in addition to making decisions about which locations/businesses should be listed. Mrs. Bayliss is still not sure how to proceed with listing and maintaining listings for the numerous restaurants in Winchester and Frederick County, which is one of her next projects.

## **New Business:**

### **LOVEworks Program Interest – Justin Kerns**

Mr. Kerns is interested in encouraging the creation of a LOVEwork sign, in line with Virginia Tourism's recommendations. He noted that it can be permanent or moveable, and placed in either the City of Winchester, or Frederick County.

### **Tourism Ambassador Program**

Mr. Kerns announced plans for the Tourism Ambassador Program. The program will be held twice a year, in April and September. He is anticipating using Lord Fairfax Community College and City Hall as locations for the class. The budget for the program is not yet finalized, but he estimates it will cost \$7-800, and the majority of the cost will be for the use of the trolley for FAM tours.

### **Board Nominations**

Mr. Kerns reported that Dan Martin and Eric Campbell's terms on the board will end in June 2018. He anticipates creating a committee to replace them at next month's board meeting in January. Mary Braun asked if there needs to be a balance of members from the City and County. Mr. Kerns noted that there are requirements for which industry the members represent.

### **Public Comments**

Karen Helm reported that the Artisan Trail management team plans to meet January 8. They are working on developing and promoting Open Studio events. She also announced that the Patsy Cline Historic House is in the process of getting a National Historic Landmark designation. The house was contacted by the organization and the process can take 18 months to a year. Once they receive the designation, it will open them up to more opportunities.

Mary Braun announced that the new Smithsonian exhibit has arrived at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. Kristen Laise noted that Belle Grove Plantation will be open until December 30 before they close for the season. She announced the opening of a new building on their property, recognized as the Plantation Office and Store. Belle Grove will use the building for temporary housing for guests of Belle Grove, such as researchers.

The meeting concluded at 9:20am.

Respectfully Submitted by Renee Bayliss, Creative Design and Visitor Services Manager, City of Winchester