

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, February 15, 2018. The meeting began at 8:10 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Dan Martin, Andy Gyurisin, Karen Helm, Kristen Laise, Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel, Mary Braun

Board Members Absent: Eric Campbell, Eddie Richard

Staff: Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Blaine Dunn, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Jennifer Bell, City of Winchester Downtown Manager; Brian Brehm, Winchester Star; Louis Milholland, Northern Virginia Daily

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

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The January minutes were approved on a motion by Priya Patel, seconded by Kristen Laise.

Executive Director's Report

Mr. Kerns gave an update on the Visitors Guide production and noted that there will be twelve pages of ads, and that he is working on getting printing quotes because the printer used previously went out of business. Meetings Mr. Kerns attended this month included the Old Town Development Board's new Tourism Taskforce, the MATPRA (Mid-Atlantic Tourism Public Relations Alliance) quarterly meeting, a Chamber of Commerce Branding Committee meeting, and a local planning meeting for the iEARN international conference. He noted that the Shenandoah Spirits Trail will be hosting a blitz at the Clearbrook Welcome Center from February-April.

Mr. Kerns' regional updates included the Shenandoah Valley Tourism Partnership's first look at a rough draft of the strategic plan, and the one year anniversary celebration for the Shenandoah Spirits Trail, which was held with a guest speaker who presented marketing and PR tips for breweries and wineries.

Committee Reports:

Marketing Committee – Kristen Laise and Sharon Farinholt

The Marketing Committee has a meeting nearly confirmed for a date in two weeks. Kristen Laise asked about one new publication included in the marketing plan, and Mr. Kerns explained that American Road magazine will help replace some of the advertising leads that are being lost from Civil War Traveler.

Strategic Plan Committee –Mary Braun and Dan Martin

The Strategic Plan Committee has not met yet, but Mr. Kerns reported that Shawn Hershberger, the Development Services Director, would like to participate.

Unfinished Business:

Website Refresh – Renee Bayliss

Mrs. Bayliss reported that the website is on hold until the Visitors Guide is completed and sent to the printers.

Tourism Ambassador program update – Justin Kerns

It was confirmed that the date of the program is April 18-19. Kristen Laise asked about registration, and Mr. Kerns said that he will send a press release out next week with details on how to RSVP.

New Business:

LOVEworks Program Community Taskforce – Justin Kerns

Mr. Kerns announced that there will be a community meeting next week. Andy Gyurisin suggested to use Facebook Live to show the meeting to those that may not be able to attend.

Special Guest Presentation – Fay Stump – iEarn Ambassador and Project Facilitator

iEarn is an education and research network across 140 countries that facilitates global collaboration. They will be having their International Conference and Youth Summit in Winchester this July. Ms. Stump gave an overview of the organization, their goals, and information about how the students and teachers will be descending on the area for a week. The organization is expecting approximately 500 attendees from 30 countries. Ms. Stump distributed materials and noted that they will be looking for volunteers and sponsorships.

Public Comments

Jennifer Bell announced that Celtic Fest is the next Old Town Winchester event, and she distributed rack cards on this year's events in Old Town. Mary Braun noted that Olympic Night is happening at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum. Andy Gyurisin reported that Alamo Drafthouse Cinema will be holding screenings for African-American History month to benefit the local NAACP, and that Film Club's Lost Weekend is next weekend. Sharon Farinholt noted that her business, Crown Trophy, is collecting toiletries, undergarments, and new shoes for Bright Futures. Karen Helm reported on the Open Door Tours that the Artisan Trail has organized for the first Saturdays of the month.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 on a motion by Karen Helm, seconded by Priya Patel.

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