

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, October 19, 2017. The meeting began at 8:04 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

**Board Members Present:** Dan Martin, Eric Campbell, Andy Gyurisin, Karen Helm, Mary Braun

**Board Members Absent:** Kristen Laise, Eddie Richard, Sharon Farinholt, Priya Patel

**Staff:** Renee Bayliss, Justin Kerns

**Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media:** Josh Janney, Winchester Star

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

**Roll Call:** Mrs. Renee Bayliss

### **Approval of Minutes**

The August meeting minutes were approved on a motion by Mary Braun, seconded by Eric Campbell.

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

Mr. Kerns reported on the MATPRA Marketplace event for travel writers and DMOs that was held in September. He announced that eight blogs on our area have already been published by writers that attended, and that print publications will follow in the coming months. Results of a survey of attendees had positive responses, and just a few minor issues.

The Tourism office partnered with Economic Development to have a perception study done, and it was recently completed. Results will be available soon, but initial impressions indicate that only 1 in 5 surveyed were familiar with the Winchester area.

Other items discussed included updates to iTour mobile, the platform that hosts the CVB's mobile tours. The tours will now offer scavenger hunts and other interactive elements. Mr. Kerns also noted that new Patsy Cline merchandise is available from the museum in Nashville, and that Shenandoah University students are helping to separate business and leisure travelers in our local statistics. He distributed a handout with economic impact data for Winchester and Frederick County.

### **Committee Reports:**

#### **Marketing Committee – Sharon Farinholt and Kristen Laise (Justin Kerns reporting)**

Mr. Kerns distributed mockups of the new ad campaign.

#### **MATPRA Marketplace Committee – Karen Helm and Mary Braun**

Karen Helm asked Mr. Kerns about the wrap-up meeting for the event, which has not yet taken place. Mary Braun noted that a survey should be given not only to the attendees, but also to the local businesses and others involved that participated to see how things went. She also asked Mr. Kerns about the Family Travel with Colleen Kelly television show that was filmed in Winchester, and if it has aired. He responded that he has seen the show, it has aired, and it will continue to be shown on various PBS affiliates.

## **Unfinished Business:**

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

Mrs. Bayliss informed the board of the progress being made on the website update. Much of the content has been migrated to the new platform and she is working with the web developer to make decisions on the design and look of the site, including incorporating the CVB's new branding and color scheme.

## **New Business:**

### **Southeast Tourism Society Board of Directors Appointment – Justin Kerns**

Mr. Kerns reported to the board his interest in accepting a position on the Southeast Tourism Society's Board of Directors. Karen Helm asked if there are any additional travel expenses this might entail. Mr. Kerns replied that he would already be attending as a member, so it would not be any extra cost.

### **Tourism Strategic Plan Ad Hoc Committee**

The board discussed the creation of the tourism strategic plan. Karen Helm noted that once we have the results from the perception study, it will help guide the strategic plan. Dan Martin and Mary Braun both volunteered to be on the Strategic Plan Committee. Mary Braun suggested that other stakeholders should be brought into the committee. Dan Martin and Andy Gyurisin also agreed that there should be a variety of businesses involved. There was a discussion on how to structure the committee and the process of drafting the plan.

### **Tourism Ambassador Program Creation for 2018**

Mr. Kerns reported his interest in creating a Tourism Ambassador program for front line employees. It could be held twice a year, participants would be given quizzes and awards for completing the program.

### **Public Comments**

Karen Helm announced that the Patsy Cline Historic House is closing for the season soon. Mary Braun informed the board of several events at the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum, including a new Smithsonian Water/Ways exhibit opening December 16. Andy Gyurisin reported that the Lost Weekend event at the Alamo Drafthouse went well and will take place again in February. He also mentioned upcoming special guests.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 am on a motion by Karen Helm, seconded by Mary Braun.

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