

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, July 21, 2022. The meeting began at 8:08 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Julie Shaffer, Levi Snapp, Gwen Walker, Ashley Sonntag, Victoria Kidd

Board Members Absent: Lani Pendleton, Laura Kerr Wiley, Joey Gawrysiak

Staff: Justin Kerns, Renee Bayliss

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Phil Milstead, Winchester City Council; Brian Brehm, Winchester Star; Judy McCann-Slaughter, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Cynthia Schneider, Top of Virginia Regional Chamber

Call To Order: Gwen Walker, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The June minutes were approved on a motion by Julie Shaffer, seconded by Ashley Sonntag.

Executive Director's Report

Justin Kerns reported that the Patsy Cline Historic House is now open, after a good meeting with them regarding improving communication with the CVB. The CVB has also received a \$10,000 grant for restoring the hillside by the Visitors Center from Giant Foods/Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful. He also told the board about radio spots that he is doing with Boomtown Radio in Richmond. He will be promoting Winchester and Frederick County on weekly segments for the next two months. He also went over the hotel statistics, noting that occupancy is leveling off, but ADR and RevPAR are up.

Committee Reports

New Committee Assignments – Gwen Walker

Gwen Walker pointed out that we need volunteers for the two committee openings, and also suggested the possibility of dissolving the video feature committee and leaving the decisions to Mr. Kerns and Renee Bayliss. Mr. Kerns suggested that at least one board member remain involved, even if it's not an official committee. Ashley Sonntag and Victoria Kidd volunteered to serve on the Video Featurette Committee. Levi Snapp volunteered to participate with the Sports Tourism Committee.

Member & Officer Nominations Committee – Lani Pendleton and Laura Kerr Wiley

Both members of the committee were absent.

Marketing Committee – Julie Shaffer and Joey Gawrysiak

Julie Shaffer reported that the committee did not meet, due to being on vacation.

Personnel Committee – Ashley Sonntag and Julie Shaffer

The committee met and went over the review with Mr. Kerns. Mr. Kerns told the board about the new temporary employee that starts tomorrow.

Finance Committee – Gwen Walker and Laura Kerr Wiley

Gwen Walker said that July starts the new fiscal year, so the numbers are still in flux, and the county's contribution will not be known until August.

Video Featurette Ad Hoc Committee – Arthur Kearns and Gwen Walker

The committee did not meet, but only one application was received, so Mr. Kerns lengthened the deadline.

Sports Tourism Ad Hoc Committee – Joey Gawrysiak

Mr. Gawrysiak was absent, so there was no report.

Old Business:

Tourism ARPA Project Update – Justin Kerns

Progress is being held up because Mr. Kerns was asked a question about the highway sign project, he responded with an answer but he hasn't heard back yet.

New Business:

Stakeholder Research for 2023 Campaign – Amanda Carter

Amanda Carter from Charrette Agency is attending the meeting today, and will be here doing stakeholder research for the 2023 advertising campaign. She gave a preview of the 15 and 30 second commercials, and the display ads for the current campaign. She noted that there will be a recap of the previous campaign next month. Mr. Kerns noted that he usually provides the Arrivalist data on traveler behavior, but he has switched to a new company, Datafy, which offers better options, and capabilities. This information will be available next month.

City and County Liaison Comments

Judy McCann-Slaughter reported that the Board of Supervisors is reviewing ordinances relating to short-term rentals. She asked Mr. Kerns if it was possible to break out the increases in lodging data by city and county. Phil Milstead asked about the radio promotion, and whether the CVB can tell whether the gift cards given out are spent in Winchester. He also said that the information from Datafy is very useful. Mr. Kerns asked Amanda Carter to explain attribution and how we can tell whether someone saw an ad and came to Winchester.

Public Comments

Cynthia Schneider noted that the Chamber of Commerce has moved to the airport, and the ultimate plan is to be inside the new terminal building.

The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Levi Snapp, seconded by Ashley Sonntag at 9:08 am.

Respectfully Submitted by Renee Bayliss, Creative Design and Visitor Services Manager, Winchester-Frederick County Convention & Visitors Bureau.