

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, June 20, 2013. The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Dan Martin, Rebecca Ebert, Tootie Rinker, Rainee Simpson, Dario Savarese, John Marker, Eric Campbell

Board Members Absent: Bill Hottel, Sue Robinson

Staff: Sally Coates, Renee Bayliss

Guests & Media: Vic Bradshaw, Winchester Star; Sharon Farinholt, Crown Trophy; Terry Heder, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation

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

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The May 2012 minutes were approved on a motion by John Marker, seconded by Tootie Rinker.

Executive Director's Report - Sally Coates

Mrs. Coates was pleased to announce that the Winchester City Council and Frederick County Board of Supervisors approved the reappointments of Rebecca Ebert and Bill Hottel, and the appointment of Sharon Farinholt to the Tourism Board.

Mrs. Coates has represented the CVB at several events to welcome visitors to the area, including the HP Pro Tour and Shenandoah University orientation fairs. Two tourism coalition groups, of which the CVB is a member, plan to meet to discuss ways to pool resources and work on new projects. Dan Martin and Rebecca Ebert agreed that these groups meeting to combine efforts and resources will be beneficial to the CVB and its goals.

The Virginia Sesquicentennial of the American Civil War Commission is sponsoring a Sesquicentennial Help Desk this summer, one of which will be held in Winchester on August 6. The Board discussed the possibility of reapplying for the History Mobile, a traveling Civil War exhibit. The goal would be to bring the exhibit to the Apple Harvest Arts & Crafts Festival in September of 2014.

The Board was informed of the opening of a new Civil War attraction, Star Fort in Frederick County. Mrs. Coates attended the dedication and presented a new driving tour, created by Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Foundation that includes the site.

Please see Sally Coates Executive Director's Report, which was emailed to all board members for reference.

New Business:

Report of Nominating Committee – Dan Martin

Mr. Dan Martin introduced Ms. Sharon Farinholt, who will be taking the open position left by Dario Savarese. The board collectively welcomed Ms. Farinholt.

Election of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson – Board

Mr. Dan Martin made a motion to nominate Ms. Rebecca Ebert to serve as Chairman of the Board. Ms. Tootie Rinker seconded the motion and Mr. John Marker made a motion to close nominations. The Board was all in favor. Ms. Tootie Rinker made a motion to nominate Dan Martin for Vice Chairman. Mr. John Marker seconded the motion, and all were in favor.

Mrs. Sally Coates presented Mr. Dan Martin a Certificate of Appreciation for his service and dedication to the Tourism Board. A plaque from Winchester City Council and the Frederick County Board of Supervisors was also presented to Mr. Dario Savarese prior to the start of the Board meeting.

Updates and news from the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation – Terry Heder, Director of Interpretation and Field Programs

Mr. Terry Heder, from the Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation gave an introduction to the organization, its mission, and described several of their current projects. SVBF manages a National Historic District, which includes preserving land and interpreting its historical significance to visitors. Mr. Heder's duties include Visitor Services, Education, and Tourism. The organization works with local partners, such as local CVBs and the National Park Service to achieve its goals. Mr. Heder describes the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War as six years to highlight the Civil War sites of the Shenandoah Valley.

Mr. Heder noted that they are trying to attract not only Civil War enthusiasts, but also anyone who appreciates and enjoys the green space that the organization has preserved. He also described some of the Foundation's marketing efforts, which include e-blasts and rack cards detailing events of the Sesquicentennial. Mr. Heder sees the Third Winchester Battlefield as a huge opportunity for our community; and described it as the "Valley's Gettysburg."

Mr. Dan Martin asked Mr. Heder if any area of the Valley is at risk, and Mr. Heder noted that the recent growth of Harrisonburg is a concern. The housing downturn helped the Foundation preserve more lands, but the decrease in federal funding is their biggest challenge at the current time. Mr. Martin thanked Mr. Heder for his presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m. on a motion by Rebecca Ebert; seconded by Dan Martin, motion carried.

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