

For Approval January 20, 2021

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau
Virtual Board of Directors Meeting
November 18, 2020**

Board Members Present: Pam Hemminger, Tanya Moore, Anthony Carey, Kayla Dempsey, Mark Bell, Sam Vadgama, Lydia Lavelle, Beverly Payne, Mark Sherburne, Tim Hoke, Jon Hartman-Brown, Matt Gladdek, and Jamezetta Bedford.

Not Present: David Brooks and Spring Council.

Staff Attendance: Laurie Paolicelli, Marlene Barbera, Patty Griffin, Tina Fuller, Susan Rice, Leslie Wilcox, and Katie Murray.

Also present: Barbara Foushee, Mayor Pro tem, Town of Carrboro. Dan Mayer, Executive Director, The ArtsCenter. Clean Design: Lee Davis, Managing Partner, Jessica Herschaft, Group Business Director, Jon Parker, Creative Director, and Zak Thompson.

Call to Order

Chair, Anthony Carey called the meeting to order at 8:03 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Anthony Carey requested a motion to approve the October 21, 2020 minutes. Tim Hoke so moved and Pam Hemminger seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Nominating Committee Report

Five positions are either vacant and/or expire on December 31, 2020:

- Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce seat vacated by Dixon Pitt earlier in the year.
- Orange County/Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce seat currently held by David Brooks.
- Economic Development Advisory Board-Orange County seat currently held by Anthony Carey.
- Orange County Arts Commission seat currently held by Tim Hoke.
- At-large seat vacated by Libbie Hough in September.

Orange County/Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce has nominated Aubrey Williams with WCHL for their seat.

Anthony Carey is eligible for a second term and has agreed to continue to serve for the Economic Development Advisory Board – Orange County seat and chair of our board.

Katie Murray and the Orange County Arts Commission have nominated Dan Mayer, Executive Director of The ArtsCenter for their seat.

Aaron Nelson and the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce has put forward Manish Atma for their seat on our board. There are two considerations in filling this position. 1.) We have been tasked by the Orange County Board of County Commissioners to try to diversify the makeup of this board, 2.)

There are two positions representing hoteliers. Early organizers limited the number of hotelier held seats to prevent this board from becoming a “hotel association.”

Anthony Carey shared that the Chapel Hill-Carrboro Chamber of Commerce seat does not have to come from their board but can actually come from their membership, allowing the nominating committee a wider field from which to choose a representative that will help us diversify our board.

Executive Director's Report

Visitors Bureau physical move to 308 West Franklin Street. There have been a few delays but the move is still on. We had a \$250,000 budget from fund balance to retrofit but the bids came in a little higher than that. The County has delayed another capital project and will use those funds to prioritize the Visitor Bureau move. That's on the Orange County Board of Commissioners meeting agenda in December and, once that's approved, renovation construction will begin. We anticipate that to take about three months with a move around spring 2021.

Presentations

Clean Design, Inc. [presentation](#) on how CARES Act grant funds were spent.

New Business/ Roundtable

- Commissioner Jamezetta Bedford – Orange County Board of Commissioners
 - The Orange County Board of Commissioners approved last night establishing an Orange County broadband taskforce.
 - The Orange County Board of Commissioners reviewed the first quarter budget. Everything is on track. Sales tax was a little higher than expected because so many people are ordering online. Property taxes are paid in December so we'll know more at the end of December of where our budget stands. Many restrictions added to budget such as no hiring, no salary increases, no travel, etc. Biggest need at this time is housing assistance.
 - If you are able, please donate a toy to Friends of DSS, which works to ensure every foster child has a toy for the holidays and also takes care of many seniors in the community.
 - Free COVID-19 testing at the Health Department. People do not have to have a social security number and/or can be undocumented and still get free testing.
 - Emphasized it is safe to come to Orange County if you practice the three Ws.
- Matt Gladdek – Executive Director, Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership
 - Hired Kaze Thomas to redo arts and culture.
 - Buskers street performers has been very successful. We're pausing this for now due to weather.
 - Working with the Town of Chapel Hill to do an outdoor/drive-in movies series.
 - Our attempt to do a holiday market this year is also on pause right now due to the higher COVID-19 numbers the Governor has been reporting. If Orange County's numbers remain good, we may restart the holiday market.
 - We've awarded about 15 grants for facades and outdoor dining.
 - Receiving more concerns about aggressive panhandling. We have a separate pot of money specifically for lights and cameras and we have been getting those installed. Reports from the employees of where these have been installed is that they feel safer. I feel this is how we help make downtown feel better. The County, through CARES Act funding, have street outreach members that are working with the population most in need in downtown Chapel Hill. We've given them office space in our offices and they're working really hard to get people housed and the services that they need. I'm thankful for the County prioritizing that money.

- Working with the UNC General Alumni Association on a Fundraiser for downtown highlighting the history of downtown. They're focusing on historic retail like Julien's and restaurants and they're partnering with the NAACP in February on Civil Rights history.
- The partnership between the Downtown Partnership, the Town of Chapel Hill and the Town of Carrboro on the Elizabeth Cotten Mural is complete and it looks great. The building owner is so excited he's offered his second wall on the other side of his building for another mural. Elizabeth Cotten should be referred to as Elizabeth and not by her slave name of Libba.
- Mayor Pam Hemminger – Town of Chapel Hill
 - Friday is Arbor Day and the town has planted over 201 trees. 201 because the town is 201 years old this year.
 - The Rosemary Hotel, an extended stay hotel, that wraps around the old town hall, is working through our system right now.
 - The wet lab building that's proposed to go where the current Wallace Deck is, the application will be filed next week and it will start working through the system as well. It is proposed to bring over 800 jobs.
 - The Booker Creek Basin Park behind Eastgate is going to be an incredible park. The bridge is in already. Storm water retention was one goal but having a place to be is another and it's going to have a walking trail, art, lights, and some wild life.
 - We'll continue to be virtual through the spring, with all these meetings. While the vaccine is coming, the priority is essential workers, emergency personnel, etc. so the prediction is the general public won't be able to get vaccinated until May or June.
 - We've had a lot of interest in people wanting to play Pickle Ball which is considered one of the safer activities that we've worked in partnership with the group to put lines on that state ramp in Southern area park. We're going to see how that works to co-use that facility. Pickle Ball is a way to bring people to our community safely.
 - Still slammed with development proposals.
 - In December the town will be meeting and talking about where to put our municipal services building.
- Mayor Lydia Lavelle – Town of Carrboro and Jon Hartman-Brown – Town of Carrboro, Economic Development
 - Carrboro Town Board met last night and definitively approved the [203 Project](#). We project groundbreaking to begin next fall and construction should take a little over a year.
 - Carrboro Town Board also approved last night the Community Works building mural.
 - Also approved the lettering for a Black Lives mural on the Century Center.
 - Carrboro's Comprehensive Plan kick-off is tomorrow night at 7:00 p.m. CarrboroConnects.org. It's Carrboro's visioning process on how we put our community values in our built environment. We're hoping to engage as much of our community as we can in the months to come to be part of this process. Please spread the word to Carrboro folks you may know.
 - This weekend is the traditional weekend of the Carrboro Film Festival. Like everything else, it's moved online [Carrboro Virtual Music Festival](#).
- Jon Hartman-Brown – Town of Carrboro, Economic Development
 - We launched our new [Visit Carrboro](#) website. Jon provided a preview of the website, specifically specialized itineraries and the timeline of Carrboro's history. Jon thanked Dan Mayer, who is on the Carrboro Tourism Development Authority, for helping get this website setup and going.
- Tanya Moore – Associate Vice Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill
 - Winding down our academic year. Today is the first day of exams and they will run through next Thursday. Our students will then be on an extended break until January 13th when move in

starts and classes resuming on January 19th. As of now, we are expecting a net of 1,700 students coming back in January that we didn't have this fall. Most of our classes will still be remote. Only about 15% will be in-person. That includes all the graduate programs that are occurring now so, largely, still remote.

- We're working on a much more robust testing program that will involve testing at home before they come back, testing as soon as they arrive on campus, and then surveillance testing throughout the year.
- UNC Visitors Center depends on student staff so it will be open if students are willing and able to staff the front desk.
- Beverly Payne – Alliance for a Historic Hillsborough
 - The Colonial Inn opened and it was a big success.
 - The Alliance for a Historic Hillsborough had a village workday. The Occoneechee, The Alliance, the County, and the town are collaborating to rebuild the village. We have another workday this coming Saturday.
 - Orange County Historical Museum has an Occoneechee Exhibit through March 31st.
 - This past Veteran's Day, the Orange County Historical Museum did an exhibit for Occoneechee veterans.
- Katie Murray – Program Coordinator, Orange County Arts Commission
 - Hillsborough Arts Council had an open stage performance this past weekend near the parking deck at Weaver Street Market as part of their mobile music series.
 - Hillsborough's annual Solstice Lantern Walk can't happen in the typical way so they are doing a mobile solstice tour where community members still make paper lanterns and exhibit them on their porches. They're going to have a map where you can follow and see all the different lanterns.
 - My colleagues in Raleigh shared information gathered by their public art consulting firm of best practices across the county in using artistic elements to have more outdoor gathering space. I've shared it with Matt and I'm happy to send it to anybody else that is interested.
 - All the hard work of several grant programs continues. Our fourth round of relief grants for artists is open right now and closes on Friday. We've been posting a lot about it on social media, so if folks could share, I'd appreciate it. These are for essential, life-sustaining needs for our artists and arts industry workers.
 - The NC CARES Act grant closed a few weeks ago. This was money that was filtered down to each county in the state from the State Arts Council. It was up to each county to decide who was eligible to apply and, here in Orange County, we decided to allow some of our for-profit businesses to apply, which is out of the norm. We were thinking particularly about all of our live music venues here in Chapel Hill and Carrboro when we made that decision but none of them applied.
 - We are participating in the Economic Development Forum with WCHL
 - I want to encourage everybody to not just shop local but hyperlocal and, particularly, from our artists for the holidays. There is a holiday market coming up this Saturday at midway that is a bunch of different, really interesting vendors.
- Dan Mayer – Executive Director, The ArtsCenter
 - The Annual Elf Market, which we do every year for the last 15 years or so, will be at University Place. That attracts about 1,500 people in one day. We're doing this over two days this year.
 - We're also doing some holiday concerts. [Holiday Circle Show: Will the Circle be Unbroken](#) will be live streamed on Saturday before Christmas.
- Kayla Dempsey – Director of Marketing & Develop., North Carolina High School Athletic Association
 - Masks required for volleyball and indoor skills development.

- Basketball is still scheduled to begin on December 7th.
- We are following the guidance from the Governor and NC Department of Health and Human Services as it relates to spectators. Most school systems are not allowing spectators. NCHSAA allows 25.

Next meeting: *Wednesday, January 20th*

Meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.

DocuSigned by:
Laurie Paolicelli
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Minutes reviewed by:
Laurie Paolicelli, Executive Director

1/24/2021

Date

DocuSigned by:
Anthony Carey
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Minutes accepted by:
Anthony Carey, Chairman

1/24/2021

Date