

For Approval April 21, 2021

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau  
Virtual Board of Directors Meeting  
March 17, 2021**

**Board Members Present:** Pam Hemminger, Manish Atma, Aubrey Williams, Tanya Moore, Anthony Carey, Kayla Dempsey, Mark Bell, Sam Vadgama, Lydia Lavelle, Mark Sherburne, Daniel Mayer, Spring Council, Jon Hartman-Brown, Matt Gladdek, Shannan Campbell, and Sally Greene.

**Not Present:** Beverly Payne

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

**Also present:** Michael J. Landguth, A.A.E., President & CEO, Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority. Barbara Foushee, Mayor Pro Tem, Town of Carrboro. Lisa Ganzzermiller, General Manager, AC Hotel by Marriott, Chapel Hill. Tim Hoke.

### Call to Order

Chair, Anthony Carey called the meeting to order at 8:02 a.m.

### Approval of Minutes

Chair Anthony Carey requested a motion to approve the February 17, 2021 minutes. Mark Bell so moved and Manish Atma seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

### Executive Director's Report

[Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau Tourism Recovery presentation.](#)

### Presentations

**Michael J. Landguth, A.A.E., President & CEO, Raleigh-Durham Airport Authority.**

[State of Raleigh-Durham Airport presentation.](#)

### New Business/ Roundtable

- Mayor Lydia Lavelle – Town of Carrboro
  - Carrboro Town Council approved the for-use permit for [The ArtsCenter project](#) at last night's meeting. The new center will be on Jones Ferry Road and includes:
    - Plenty of parking for bicycles
    - Signage to instruction autos to the proper parking rather than in neighborhood.
    - Proper routing of traffic during events held at The ArtsCenter.
    - Environmental concerns and storm water regulations.
  - Dan Mayer, Executive Director of The ArtsCenter added:
    - Will be able to continue to work with The ArtsCenter traditional partners but also develop new partnerships within the new neighborhood.
    - Provides great opportunity to do new and more programming.
    - New space allows The ArtsCenter to work with a variety of people in the region for events and programs but still within walking distance of downtown Carrboro.

- Mayor Lavelle continued: The Town of Carrboro is working on its comprehensive plan for several months and it will continue for a few more months. Tomorrow night is our next community-wide planning meeting and begins at 7:00 p.m. as a Zoom meeting. We had between 150 to 200 people on our first Zoom kick-off meeting so we have had good participation so far. You can join and participate at <https://www.carrboroconnects.org/>.
- [The 203 Project](#) continues with 100% support from the County Commissioners and Town of Carrboro Board. Hoping to break ground this fall.
- Jon Hartman-Brown – Town of Carrboro, Economic Development
  - The Carrboro Tourism Development Authority (TDA) is working with parks and recreation on the [Freight Train Blues Festival](#) coming this May.
- Mayor Pam Hemminger – Town of Chapel Hill
  - The Town of Chapel Hill will be announcing a new program that the University of North Carolina and the town have been working together on called Downtown Together. We have formed a working group task force to enhance downtown and the university to encourage more significant investments in our downtown area. The goals are to clean things up and make downtown a nicer experience so that more of our downtown building are leased or even pre-leased and bringing more full-time jobs so that we have more office workers that contribute to our business community and using services downtown.
  - The East Rosemary Parking Deck is slated for demolition in June. This will be a yearlong project, so we are shifting folks around to two other places as we temporarily lose those 300 parking spaces.
  - The 136-137 project has more businesses interested.
  - The repaving project for West Franklin and Main Street Carrboro has been postponed until the summer 2022. This allows us to experiment a little longer with our expanded sidewalk project and what works for our community.
  - We have started providing free parking on the west end on Saturdays and after 6:00 p.m. on weekdays through August.
  - We have not made a decision about the 4<sup>th</sup> of July yet so more to come on that in the coming months.
  - We have 41 development projects on our list. This shows there is a lot of interest in our community looking forward.
- Matt Gladdek – Executive Director, Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership
  - The Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership annual meeting will be Tuesday, April 13<sup>th</sup> at noon. The consultant who did our strategic plan will be giving a presentation on downtown trends during COVID-19. One of the main things from our strategic plan is trying to re-center downtown as a place for live music since we have such great venues already between Carrboro and us.
  - In anticipation of re-centering downtown as a place for live music, we hired Kaze Thomas who we will be taking on as a permanent staff member in our next fiscal year starting in July. He has started his [“Save the Music”](#) series again. We did our first couple of artists this past weekend, which was a little bit cold. We are starting slow with a couple of artists, one on East Franklin and one on West Franklin, and moving them around until it gets really nice out. We are pursuing some sponsorship dollars to try to expand what we can do.
  - It is too early to make an official announcement but we have a number of small property deals that are underway now. These involve local owners. One of the large complaints we have had about Franklin Street is that it is out-of-town owners that are disconnected from the street. We are seeing some important properties that are switching into local hands and doing exciting things for downtown.

- Tanya Moore – Associate Vice Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill
  - We have commencement lined up for May 14<sup>th</sup> through 16<sup>th</sup>. We are going to do about five ceremonies depending on what our RSVP rate looks like. We have heard from 3,700 students that they are interested in attending but we are not through as registrations are still coming in so that number will increase. Once we have our final numbers, we will divide those students into their schools and departments and assign them either a Friday, Saturday, or Sunday ceremony.
  - We are planning to welcome our class of 2020 back on October 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. We are inviting May, August, and December graduates to join us for that weekend event. There is also a football game and other activities planned that weekend. Our event staff have not started counting those RSVPs yet.
  - [The University of North Carolina Chapel Hill's Visitors Center](#) is now open Monday – Friday. We are seeing great demand. Many people coming in, lots of prospective students this week. Just two days ago on Monday, we saw 100 guests between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
  - Over 50,000 undergraduate applications received.
- Kayla Dempsey – Director of Marketing & Devel, North Carolina School Athletic Association (NCSAA)
  - Basketball went off without a hitch.
  - Soccer and lacrosse are next weekend at Cardinal Gibbons High School.
  - We are preparing some FAQs to send to our partners in response to the recent news about the North Carolina General Assembly have said about the NCSAA
- Mark Bell – Mayor Pro Tem, Town of Hillsborough
  - Our tourism numbers are tracking what is going on in the County. The highlight of those numbers is the Colonial Inn, which is continuing to do a lot of activity. They will be adding a breakfast service as well.
  - No major development activities currently in Hillsborough like there are in Chapel Hill and Carrboro.
    - Shannan Campbell – Economic Development Planner, Town of Hillsborough added that, while the Town of Hillsborough has not had formal development applications come in, there have been many pre-development meetings where people are scoping various sites. Many calls about people wanting to start businesses and looking for available space.
  - We are unpacking the potential of the financial impact of the latest relief package. With a lot of money to municipal governments, we are starting to determine what we might do with those funds.
  - The Alliance for Historic Hillsborough has created a walking tour about African American community and the contributions they have made to the downtown area, [Hillsborough's African American History: A Walking Tour](#).
  - The Hillsborough/Orange County Chamber of Commerce has been doing a gift card giveaway, [Share the LOCAL Love](#), to help promote missing business to downtown.
  - The Hillsborough Arts Council is doing a soft relaunch [Hillsborough's Last Friday's Art Walk](#). As usual, various galleries are open and various artist shows up as well.
  - The Burwell School's [gift shop](#) is online now. You can pick up purchases either at the curb or in-person at the Burwell School. They have released a new video about the life of [Elizabeth Keckly](#).
- Katie Murray – Program Coordinator, Orange County Arts Commission
  - Big Night in for the Arts was held last week. We raised just over \$350,000. Thank you to those of you that made donations and provided support! The majority of that money is going to be used for relief efforts for our artists and arts organizations in the county. Depending on what our take is, we are hoping to develop a countywide arts equity program in partnership with the towns and The ArtsCenter.

- We have a production airing next Saturday at 2:00 p.m. in partnership with The ArtsCenter, the State Arts Council, and the Orange County Community Remembrance Coalition. It is called Haunted by playwright Sonny Kelly. He is addressing our one documented lynching in Orange County as well as some of the more recent racial terror events that have happened around the country. This will be available for streaming online for a while as well.
- The Town of Hillsborough Economic Development and Orange County Arts Commission is partnering on another mural in Hillsborough.
- Funding. We are also hoping for funding from the federal bill that just passed. We are also hoping allocations from the National Endowment for the Arts will filter down to our level. We are still waiting on the final word from the Save our Stages Act. Lastly, the Orange County Arts Commission is working with the county to smooth out our budget, which comes from a percentage of the occupancy tax.
- Steve Brantley – Orange County Economic Development Director
  - We are working on presenting and issuing a press release on a summary of the small business and small farm financial assistance that we have been able to assist with over the past 12 months. We look at this as a combination of existing loan and grant programs as well as three special COVID-19 related emergency financial assistance programs the board of commissioners approved a year ago. Over the last twelve months, we have awarded 171 financial assistance grants to Orange County small businesses and farms. That totals \$829,000. All of that came from Article 46, which is the quarter cent sales tax; money Orange County receives and contributes towards various economic development programs. None of that was Cares Act money, none of that was state or federal money. It was all Orange County money. Of those 171 awards, 94 were to women-owned businesses, 27 were to minority-owned businesses, 19 were to women, and minority owned businesses. We also have metrics of where the geographic location of these businesses were if you are interested in that, primarily Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough. We will continue this grant activity in the new fiscal year as we anticipate the replenishment of our agriculture grant and small business grant programs.
  - Buckhorn area plan. The discussion is still ongoing between Orange County Board of Commissioners and the City of Mebane Council on a study of what areas near Mebane make sense or not make sense in future years for additional growth and development, including residential, commercial, retail, and light industrial.


**Next meeting:** *Wednesday, April 21st*

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

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

4/21/2021

Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
 Minutes accepted by:  
 Anthony Carey, Chairman

4/21/2021

Date