

For Approval May 19, 2021

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau
Virtual Board of Directors Meeting
April 21, 2021**

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

Not Present:

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

Also present: Lee Davis, Head of Agency-Owner, Clean Inc. Barbara Foushee, Mayor Pro Tem, Town of Carrboro. Lisa Ganzermiller, General Manager, AC Hotel by Marriott, Chapel Hill. Dwight Bassett, Economic Development Officer, Town of Chapel Hill.

Call to Order

Chair, Anthony Carey called the meeting to order at 8:00 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Anthony Carey requested a motion to approve the March 17, 2021 minutes. Sally Greene so moved and Mark Sherburne seconded the motion. Mayor Lydia Lavelle stated that there was a minor error in the minutes and requested the wording "Environmental concerns and staying within storm water regulations" be corrected to "Environmental concerns and storm water regulations". Sally Greene motioned to approve the March 17, 2021 minutes as amended and Mayor Lydia Lavelle seconded. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as amended.

Executive Director's Report

- Shifting advertising prioritization to working with local chambers and economic development to target both locals and visitors.
- Considering engaging Tom Jensen, a national pollster living in our community, to do a poll geared at both locals and visitors within 150 mile radius to find out what is keeping people from getting engaged in our restaurants and other venues and what they would like to see happen.
- Hoping we can have this groundswell campaign of both organic, local ambassadors and visitors being reminded of all the fun we have to offer and how it is safer here.
- Visitors Bureau James Taylor update.
 - o Video wall of James Taylor and his band singing "Carolina on my Mind" scrolling the lyrics and encouraging visitors to sing-a-long.
 - o Separate welcome video to be recorded by James Taylor.
 - o Possibly engaging UNC or NC State students to design and build the video wall.
- Beginning to review our hours and when it makes sense to be open. Laurie has been opening on weekend evenings when the Downtown Partnership has buskers or other events are happening in downtown Chapel Hill.
- The Assistant County Manager, Travis Myren, has given us the green light to use Recovery Act monies to fill-in any new building construction costs that we were unable to fund due to COVID-

19 lost revenue and were holding-up moving forward with construction at our new building at 308 W. Franklin.

- Laurie stressed the need for the Visitors Bureau to prioritize search engine optimization so that our destination shows up and gets seen in travel searches.
- Robert Gilmore with the Dept. of Social Services is organizing a virtual and drive-thru job fair and will be sending us a presentation. We will share more on this as it becomes available.

Presentations

Lee Davis, Head of Agency-Owner, Clean Inc.

[Presentation](#)

New Business/ Roundtable

- Tanya Moore – Associate Vice Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill
 - We have commencement lined up for May 14th through 16th. We are going to have five ceremonies one on Friday, two on Saturday, and two on Sunday, all in Kenan Stadium. We expect 1,000 graduates and 4,000 guests. That is an approximation but about 5,000 people for each ceremony.
 - Next weekend we have the Spring football game which is sold-out at reduced capacity. About 10,000 tickets were sold.
 - Baseball is doing well at about 700-800 fans in Boshamer Stadium which is that stadium's max.
 - Summer school will be in session this year with students on campus.
 - We have a process to allow camps to return. For children younger than 18, we are offering day camps only. For 18 and up, we have residential programs with community standards in place including testing. The provost is reviewing applications for all camps to ensure we are following state and campus guidelines to keep everybody safe.
 - Looking ahead to fall. We don't have dates for parents weekend, homecoming, etc. but those are being worked on now and should be announced soon.

- Dan Mayer – Executive Director, [The ArtsCenter](#)

- [The ArtsCenter relocation presentation.](#)

It has been the aspiration for The ArtsCenter to have a new home for about 15 years.

The plan is based on two things – our aging facility and the opportunity to do more and serve more of the community.

For the past 3½ years we've been doing a feasibility study and working on conceptual designs and recently holding community meetings and fundraising to build a new home.

We will be located on Jones Ferry Road right across from OWASA so just down the block from downtown Carrboro, Carrboro Town Commons, and CommunityWorx Thrift Shop a little over a mile from our current home. We are still in the community and we are in a neighborhood, which is an exciting, new opportunity for us.

It will be about a 13,000 square foot building on two floors and has spaces for performance, makerspaces, ceramics studios, fabric studios, classrooms, galleries, and all the basic functions we currently serve.

About 50% of the land will not be developed and will remain as a natural park/buffer for us to do outdoor programming.

We hope to break ground by early 2022 and be done by early 2023.

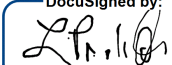
Total budget is \$6 million and we are half-way to goal. Gail Perry Associates is our fundraising consulting firm. We are in the process of hiring a capital campaign director and some fundraising staff and going from using consultants to bringing fundraising in-house.

- Mark Sherburne – General Manager, The Carolina Inn
 - Steady ramp-up in the market. This is occurring faster than we forecasted at the beginning of the year. There is weekday demand but it definitely peaks on weekends. Most of the demand is in the transient, individual segment. Group demand is lower and tends to be more focused around social and wedding related blocks. We are not up to 2019 levels yet but there is definitely positive momentum. With UNC having summer session, this positive momentum should continue. Group pickup is still farther out. It looks like it begins in the fall. A lot of what we will see in the fall will be a mixture of both some new business as well as business that had been on the books but moved the dates once or twice. Definite demand for the fall football schedule.
 - In the food and beverage world, with the lessening of the restrictions and relatively good spring weather and really strong local and state vaccination rate, people are definitely coming back out for dining and events. The unfortunate part is that the demand for restaurants and hotels is often exceeding what our reduced staffing levels are.
- Shannan Campbell – Economic Development Planner, Town of Hillsborough
 - Hillsborough is also seeing more people coming out and patronizing the restaurants. This is creating a bit of a challenge with the sidewalks and the noise. We are seeing more people than we can accommodate with seats and things like that so we are working on solving those issues.
 - The Colonial Inn is going gangbusters and doing really good business.
 - We are doing buskers as well which is doing well.
 - [Revolutionary War Living History Day](#) is coming up on May 8th and we are doing a modified version of that.
 - [26th Annual Art in the Garden Sculpture Exhibition](#) is May 1, 2, and 8.
 - The Hillsborough Garden Club is proceeding with their [Spring Garden Tour](#).
- Beverly Payne – Alliance for Historic Hillsborough
 - The Orange County Historical Museum opens a new exhibit called “Date Night! Orange County Fashion, Food, Music & Fun” on April 22nd. Curator, Courtney Smith will be giving a virtual tour at 7:00 p.m. tomorrow evening. The museum is open 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays by appointment.
- Matt Gladdek – Executive Director, Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership
 - The Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership just finished its annual meeting and announced our strategic plan, which will continue to do what we’ve been doing, focusing on music for downtown to build culture and community.
 - Buskers series is back up and running. Kaze Thomas was approached by someone who wants to give us a grant for that so we are pursuing that.
 - Scott Conary announced he is taking over Perennial Coffee and will be re-opening on W. Franklin. They have plans to increase outdoor seating there.
 - The Spindle Bar attached to SchoolKids Records is opening in May or June.
 - Franklin Motors Beer Garden is opening at the old Franklin Street Motors location. The same architect that designed Ponysaurus beer garden designed Franklin Motors beer garden.
 - The Pitt building that had the improv club went up for auction the end of March. That contract is not finalized yet but it looks like we will have a local investor in that building.
 - Jamil Kadoura who owns Mediterranean Deli has pickup West End Wine Bar and has plans for that.
 - Big Belly Que is moving from Blue Dogwood to the location between Al’s and Beer Study on Graham Street.
 - Spicy 9 has taken over the old Gentleman’s Corner space.

- This is the largest group of local chefs and diverse business owners I’ve ever had approaching me and looking for space.
- Spring Council – Mama Dip’s
 - Mama Dip’s is seeing a small increase in inside diners but the majority of our business is coming from curbside pickup.
 - Staffing is difficult. We have employees who had left and won’t return due to unemployment paying more or having gotten other jobs.
- Kayla Dempsey – Director of Marketing & Devel, North Carolina School Athletic Association (NCSAA)
 - UNC Chapel Hill will be hosting the 2020-2021 Football State Championship Program on Thursday, May 6 at 7:00 p.m., Friday, May 7 at 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, May 8 at noon & 5:00 p.m.
 - Kayla mentioned the current investigation by North Carolina State Legislators into the NCHSAA assets and offered to answer any questions.
- Commissioner Sally Greene – Orange County Board of Commissioners
 - County received \$29 million, not including funds going to the schools, in American Recovery Funds from the Federal Government and staff are working on strategies for how to use those funds. Some of those funds will be distributed to the municipalities proportionately. One use the County is looking at is providing broadband in order to improve the quality of high-speed internet service to Orange County residents. Commissioner Greene and Commissioner Earl McKee are co-chairing [The Orange County Broadband Initiative](#) taskforce.
- Jon Harman-Brown – Economic Development Director, Town of Carrboro
 - Receiving a lot of inquiries for new businesses and interest in starting new businesses.
 - New restaurant, Tesoro, is opening soon.
 - [Freight Train Blues](#) is kicking off in May. It is being held virtually every Friday in May and June.
- Mayor Lydia Lavelle – Town of Carrboro
 - Mayor Lavelle stated a challenge we are all facing right now is how to ease back into these outdoor gatherings and keep them safe and from becoming too crowded.
 - The Town of Carrboro has one of its first outdoor events tomorrow night at Carrboro Town Commons in celebration of Earth Day. Vegetarian and vegan food trucks will be offering food from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The organizers with the help and guidance from the Orange County Health Department ensured safety protocols and precautions are being followed.


Next meeting: *Wednesday, May 19th*

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 a.m.

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 Minutes reviewed by:
 Laurie Paolicelli, Executive Director

6/9/2021

Date

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 Minutes accepted by:
 Anthony Carey, Chairman

6/9/2021

Date