

For Approval November 17, 2021

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau  
Virtual Board of Directors Meeting  
October 27, 2021**

**Meeting Recording:**

[https://orangecountync.zoom.us/rec/share/r3EkfpN1z494w\\_ndmgZaS-rnuiz2FkjmU1a36B-KgGrkmlznRYGMS9beCjGjFhxJ.BwZpgsCuUSj1MhhR?startTime=1635335361000](https://orangecountync.zoom.us/rec/share/r3EkfpN1z494w_ndmgZaS-rnuiz2FkjmU1a36B-KgGrkmlznRYGMS9beCjGjFhxJ.BwZpgsCuUSj1MhhR?startTime=1635335361000)

**Board Members Present:** Manish Atma, Tanya Moore, Sharon Hill, Mark Bell, Anthony Carey, Lydia Lavelle, Beverly Jo Payne, Mark Sherburne, Spring Council, Jon Hartman-Brown, Matt Gladdek, Lili Engelhardt, and Sally Greene.

**Not Present:** Pam Hemminger, Aubrey Williams, Kayla Dempsey, and Daniel Mayer.

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

**Also present:** Wit Tuttell, Vice President Tourism and Marketing for the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina; Executive Director of Visit NC. Elise Tyler, General Manager, Colonial Inn. Richard J. White III, Carrboro Town Manager. Barbara Foushee, Mayor Pro Tem, Town of Carrboro. Tim Hoke.

### **Call to Order**

Chair Anthony Carey called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Anthony Carey requested a motion to approve the September 15, 2021 minutes. Mark Bell so moved and Mark Sherburne seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Laurie provided an update on the state of local tourism.

### **Presentations**

- Marlene Barbera's 2022 Group Sales Plan [presentation](#).
- Wit Tuttell Visit North Carolina Overview [presentation](#).

Laurie asked Wit to give a broad overview of ARPA funds for travel and tourism and what are the restrictions. Wit answered that it depends on the phrasing/language of the ARPA legislation. Also, Visit NC has to wait for the State to pass its budget. The Federal Government has passed ARPA legislation and within that language are Federal restrictions on what that funding can be spent on. Then, when the state passes that money on to Visit NC, they add additional restrictions on how that money can be spent in the language on the budget bill that gives Visit NC the funding.

Wit observed that the urban areas were really hurt through the pandemic however, the rural areas did well, some even having record tourism. Visit NC is going to highlight green and open areas of urban destinations to appeal to tourists currently opting for open, rural areas.

Mark Sherburne inquired about the Visitors Bureau sales strategy based on receiving ARPA funds. When are we anticipating those funds to be available and what happens if we don't receive those funds? Laurie answered that the County has received ARPA funds but that they are stair-stepped over the next three years through 2024. Commissioner Sally Greene added that the basic outline of the County ARPA funds is that the County is receiving a total of \$28,000,000 over two years. The Board of County Commissioners has decided to draw down a little less than half, \$12,000,000 rather than \$14,000,000. Katie Murray, who just spoke with Deputy County Manager, Travis Myren, about ARPA funds this week, added that Travis advised that the County will be making the final decisions about dispersing the rest of the ARPA funding by the end of the calendar year. Mark Sherburne asked, if there is a delay in the ARPA funds because the County is still making decisions on when potential funds will be released, are any of the strategies Marlene presented, ones we will want to deploy before we hear back on ARPA funds? Laurie responded that staff is already working with Clean Design and Clean Design is currently putting together a media plan with a cost estimate. Laurie and Marlene plan to call a meeting with hoteliers and those affected most by the lack of Sunday through Thursday business to review this media plan.

### New Business/ Roundtable

- Jon Hartman-Brown, Economic Development Director – Town of Carrboro  
The Carrboro Town Council has approved a COVID-19 Mitigation Business Grant Program for Carrboro-based businesses. Applications will be open beginning next Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> and will be open for three weeks. These grants target tourism-based businesses, BIPOC businesses, and businesses that have really be adversely harmed by the pandemic.
- Mayor Lydia Lavelle – Town of Carrboro  
The Carrboro Town Council is continuing the 203 Project and had another approval at last night's meeting. They are really close to releasing that and are hoping to get bids right after the New Year and go before the local government commission and have everything set-in-stone so they can have ground breaking in the spring.
- Tanya Moore – Associate Vice Chancellor, UNC-Chapel Hill
  - UNC had a great fall commencement and weekend for the Class of 2020.
  - There is a lot of excitement for upcoming basketball.
  - The UNC Visitors Center has had 11,000 visitors from all 50 states and 41 countries since reopening on a part-time basis in February.  
Tanya's department is currently rolling out UNC's vaccine requirement because UNC has \$165,000,000 in government contracts they are subject to President Biden's Executive Order on vaccines.
- Matt Gladdek – Executive Director, Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership
  - Festifall has been going great and is a big success downtown.
  - We are having outdoor markets the first three weeks of December on Sundays since The Carolina Inn can't hold them indoors.
  - The decision hasn't been made yet on an outdoor tree lighting.
  - We are working in collaboration with Carrboro and Hillsborough to get businesses to put lights up. Not necessarily holiday oriented so they can be kept up throughout the winter, inviting people downtown.
  - The Town of Chapel Hill's ARPA business grants are live and available.

- The Raleigh Jaycees no longer want to organize the Town of Chapel Hill's Christmas Parade. So we are taking a break from the parade this year and are working with Carrboro to come up with a new event next year.
- Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bell & Shannan Campbell, Economic Development – Town of Hillsborough
  - Food, beverage, and occupancy revenues are strong, compared to last year, despite everything that is going on.
  - The Town of Hillsborough is focusing on continuing our events safely. We have a lot going on this coming Halloween weekend encouraging everyone to come out, social distance, and wear masks. Last Fridays, which has expanded with a Makers Market, bringing the vendor component back, in a different location, the West End of Hillsborough.
  - The Hillsborough Chamber is moving forward with the Hillsborough Holiday Parade.
  - The tree lighting is still planned.
  - We are ramping up plans for "Shop Small" Saturday.
  - The Hillsborough Arts Council is planning to do their annual Lantern Walk, which brings a lot of people to Hillsborough. They are modifying the route to be a loop vs. backtracking on itself as it has done in the past.
  - Burwell School and the Orange County Historical Museum are still programming.
  - We are seeing strong event attendance and people are being responsible.
- Beverly Payne – Alliance for Historic Hillsborough
  - The Occaneechi Tribe has had two back-to-back workdays at the Occaneechi Village Replica Site this past weekend and the weekend prior. We are planning on opening the Occaneechi Village Replica Site and having a dedication on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.
  - The Orange County Historical Museum is planning a new exhibit, "Show Flavor" opening in February. We are working with some of Katie Murray's artists who creating a background for this exhibit of dishes from our collection. Our current exhibit, "Date Night", is going very well.
- Elise Tyler, General Manager, Colonial Inn
  - The Colonial Inn celebrates its one-year opening anniversary in two weeks.
  - We have a pumpkin-carving event with lots of toys on Saturday, October 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. and we have music and poetry happening from 5:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.
  - We are spear headers of Hillsborough's first "Glow Walk" encouraging the Hillsborough downtown shops to put out carved and lit pumpkins so there is a glowing, downtown atmosphere.
  - Our weekends are fully booked from September through December.
  - We are feeling the same pains with Sunday through Thursday business.
  - When the pandemic hit, we put a lot of our focus on food and beverage because that is what the majority of our customers are interested in at this time.
- Commissioner Sally Greene – Orange County Board of Commissioners
  - The Orange County Board of County Commissioners is having an in-person work session at Whitted on November 11<sup>th</sup>. We will be spread-out and this is a test to see how it goes. It is a work session, so no public comment. The topic of the work session is "Agriculture and the Food System." Orange County has a Food Council and Ag Extension that helps farmers and both organizations do great work but this work is not very visibly known and, in some ways, they are not working as well as they could together. Of course, Agritourism is a part of this discussion and I will be sure to bring it up during this work session. The hope is we will build on the great work in growing, producing, and distributing food in Orange County and strengthen the food distribution system so that we are able to consume more of the food that is being produced in Orange County.


**Next meeting:** *Wednesday, January 19, 2021*

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.

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

11/17/2021

Date

DocuSigned by:  
  
664FC3EA184D477...  
Minutes accepted by:  
Anthony Carey, Chairman

11/17/2021

Date