

Approved May 17, 2023

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau
In Person Board of Directors Meeting
April 19, 2023**

Board Members Present: Manish Atma, Mark Bell – Chair, Spring Council, Heidi Werner Dawson, Karen DeHart, Lili Engelhardt, Lisa Ganzermiller, Jon Hartman-Brown, Sharon Hill, Tanya Moore, Beverly Payne, Damon Seils, Karen Stegman

Not Present: Grace Holtkamp, Earl McKee

Staff Attendance: Laurie Paolicelli, Marlene Barbera, Patty Griffin, Tina Fuller, Susan Rice, Katie Murray, Shannan Campbell

Also present: Steve Brantley, Bubba Cunningham, Marcus Ginyard, Tim Hoke, Mark Sherburne, Michelle VanGelder

Guest Speaker: Nigel Wheeler, Hurricane's General Council

Call to Order

Mark Bell - Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:09 a.m.

Approval of Minutes

Mark Bell requested a motion to approve the March 15, 2023 minutes. Sharon Hill so moved and Karen Stegman seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Introductions

Mark Sherburne: Welcome to the Carolina Inn

Fridays on the Front Porch are back and very popular, rain is the only deterrent
The Carolina Inn is celebrating their 100th year anniversary this year
Renovations are being done on some of the rooms
Collaborating with the Carolina Brewery on a Carolina Inn brand beer
Business is seeing strong recovery in all segments

Guest Speaker - Nigel Wheeler: General Counsel at the Carolina Hurricanes

- Laurie and Nigel are members of the NC State Tourism Board and he thanked the Visitors Bureau Board for inviting him to speak on these timely issues before the General Assembly, which involves a new sports betting bill, HB 347, filed in the North Carolina General Assembly by Rep. Jason Saine. The proposed bill would authorize between 10 to 12 North Carolina sportsbooks. On March 30, 2023 – The North Carolina

House voted in favor of HB 347, 64-45. The bill will now pass onto the Senate, which passed a similar bill last session.

- Since 2022 there have been efforts to legalize North Carolina sports betting
- Sports bets can be made on your phone, tablet or computer or in person as a cash transaction
- There will be a multi-step processes to authenticate the user before bets can be made
- The Carolina Hurricane's will have a place at PNC that people can make a cash bet
- NC illegal betting amounts to about \$1.7 billion per year, legalized betting would be "out of the darkness into the light"
- A % of money collected would be used for: Oversight & regulations, Taxation, keep \$\$ in NC, provide help for problem gambling, Sports Competition Integrity
- Possible gains: \$95-\$125 million in state taxes by 2032
- Current legislation: Allow for 10 licenses, not more than 12 overseen by the NC Lottery Commission
- Tax rate of 14%
- \$2 million set aside annually for education treatment
- Trickle down – Each county in NC would receive \$10,000 annually for youth sports
- Local Interest: Increased Fan Engagement, Tourism, Economic Development – Jobs, Jolt, Joy
- Operators will apply to the Lottery Commission for the licenses
- Colleges were excluded in 2022 in the legislation but currently added back in
- Opposition: Moral Issues, Higher percentage of profits, Addictive Gambling
- Bubba Cunningham – Would this be the right thing for UNC Sports? What is the benefit for Professional vs. Colleges?

Note: Nigel subsequently mailed the breakout of where revenues will be allocated. This "waterfall" revenue stream can be found here: Waterfall Language:

https://assets.simpleviewinc.com/simpleview/image/upload/v1/clients/chapelhill/HB_347_Waterfall_Language_8f07ef7c-9ff0-4ad4-94fc-e8e88280f498.pdf

Executive Director's Report

- Laurie reported on the latest metrics: Recovery Mode now at record highs, in all metrics including revenues, demand and pace.
- Mark Sherburne confirming record high rates based on record high demand, reporting 2023 Commencement: \$899/night, 3 night minimum, predicted higher for next year
- Still some lag from business mid-week occupancy.
- Visitors Bureau Expanding advertising reach to include DC/Atlanta/Mid-Atlantic Region
- Fund Balance – There may be requests from County Manager for fund balance appropriations, Laurie will discuss at the next board meeting

- Marlene – a new board report will now be sent that includes consolidated information on key metrics, budget, projects and future focused initiatives.
- Reported on the new Accessibility/ADA guide which is a big hit
- BIPOC Businesses/www.chapelhilldiversity.com website is Being advertising on Spectacular Magazine. com

New Business

Katie Murray – Reporting on Uproar

- The Visitor Bureau Board has been very supportive – Thank you
- All the Art Work Applications have been submitted
- There is \$15,000 left to raise
- Katie presented to the BOCC
- Upcoming: Poetry Slam & Studio Show

Karen DeHart at the North Carolina High School Athletics Association

- 2 bills: Women’s Sports/Biologicals & Transgender – to which a lot of issues has been added to that bill
- Tickets to sporting events: Cash sales must be added, not digital only
- High School Football Championship will likely come back to UNC next year
- Plans to expand classifications for divisions being currently being studied

Shannan Campbell Hillsborough Economic Development

- Hillsborough is ramping up for summer events, Food and Beverage sales are up, feeling like normal (pre-covid) tourism demand

Beverly Payne, The Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation

- Alliance for Historic Hillsborough is working with Ayr Mount, Burwell School & OC Historical Museum to bring a Historic Hillsborough Day – June 24th
- Next Powwow is scheduled for October 14 & 15

Mark Bell

- New members will be needed for Chair and Vice Chair of the Visitor Bureau Board soon, please reach out to Mark if there is any interest in serving at this leadership level

Spring Council, Mama Dip’s Restaurant

- In response to media on the restaurant’s closing:
- Mama Dip’s will not close the restaurant until the building is sold
- Working on new branding element
- Plans are for a take-out restaurant with the most popular items off the menu

- Currently looking for a 3,000 sq. ft. building, hopefully in Chapel Hill

Tim Hoke

- Asked about workforce shortage issues today: Mark Sherburne reported on the Carolina Inn: they are fully staffed but most of the employees are new. The industry has seen a migration to healthcare and other sectors. Manish stated that the Sheraton's challenge is with housekeeping staff

Next meeting: *Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at the Sheraton*

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 a.m.