

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau**  
**Advisory Board Meeting at Carrboro Hampton Inn & Suites**  
**February 21, 2024**  
**8:00 – 9:15 AM**

**Board Members Present:** Grace Holtkamp, Tanya Moore, Karen DeHart- Chair, Sam Vadgama, Heidi Werner-Dawson, Anita “Spring” Council, John Hartman-Brown, Anna Richards, Matt Hughes, Paris Miller-Foushee, Randee Haven-O’Donnell, Meredith Saybe, Beverly Payne, Wendy Smith (prospective board member), Jeri Lynn Schulke (prospective board member), Donald “DR” Bryan (prospective board member), Shannan Campbell

**Not Present:** Sharon Hill,

**Staff Attendance:** Laurie Paolicelli, Marlene Barbera, Hannah Hemphill, Steve Brantley, Katie Murray

**Guests:** Regan Thomas, Dave Gephart

**Call to Order**

Karen DeHart, Chair called the meeting to order at 8:08 AM.

**Approval of Minutes**

Karen Dehart requested a motion to approve the January 17, 2024 minutes. Spring Council made a motion to approve the minutes and Beverly Payne seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

**University Place Updates – Regan Thomas Ram Realty**

**Presentation**

- Retail spaces being redeveloped to face externally. There will be a mix of local, regional, and national businesses, including shopping, restaurant, and entertainment. Will include 8 retail spaces for small businesses getting started in a brick and mortar location (called Upstart).
  - Retail rents are on track with Blue Hill and are average for the market. UP is willing to work with businesses to be more affordable.
- Residential Infill with 900 Willow, with 10% of units designated as affordable housing
- Common space for community events, with art being commissioned for mural space on parking deck, and other spaces.

**Questions:**

- How comparable are retail rents? Retail rents are on track with Blue Hill and are average for the market. UP is willing to work with businesses to be more affordable.
- Rental values for the 900 willow and how does it compare to rents on Franklin Street?
- Forecast on jobs and retail sales tax?

**Executive Director’s Report**

- **What’s Going on in Chapel Hill:** Presentation that includes information about new developments, including life sciences, retail, apartments, farms, sports, and more.
- UNC graduation will be on a Saturday instead of Sunday. This is a test to see if they want to permanently change it

For Approval March 20, 2024

- Major soccer tournament on July 23 at Kenan – Manchester City vs Celtics.
  - Last year people had trouble getting to Chapel Hill from the Airport.
  - Reaching out to restaurants/pubs to coordinate marketing, handouts for events/music/food/drink, meet & greets, etc.
  - Do we need a committee to discuss how to market cohesively?

## Results of Tourism Study

Moving discussion to the next meeting, 60 people attended.

## Sales Report

- **Sales Update- February 21, 2024 Presentation:** recap of year to date sales report and how Marlene Barbera, Sales Manager, is working with meeting planners to secure business in Chapel Hill.
  - CVENT subscription upgraded to 3 Diamond Listing to provide more visibility when planners are considering Raleigh/Durham.
  - Google Display Ads with a CTR of .77%
  - Clean Ad Agency has helped increase traffic on the CHOCVB LinkedIn Business page with increased ads
  - Our Google Search Campaign has increased the number of RFPs received through our website.
- **Mingle-n-Jingle Showcase of Events for UNC Meeting Planners**
  - This event included over 30 local vendors
  - 140 UNC Planners attended

## New Business

### Shannan Campbell

- “Mini downtowns” popping up over having one central downtown. Dean Dome being relocated or demolished? Tanya Moore confirms that UNC has commissioned a study on demolishing the Dean Dome.

### Anna Richards

- Developments in Mebane area – 12ish residential developments

### Jeri Lynn Schulke – Chapel Hill Downtown Partnership

- Placer software provides data about how many people are downtown, foot traffic counts, how much traffic are other business types getting, number of visitors, and hours and days of the week and compared over time.

### Katie Murray

- Black Futurism Show at Eno River Mill will remain up through Saturday
- March will feature a John Dempsey and Judith Ernst joint show
- First Friday with music maker
- March 7<sup>th</sup> - televised fundraiser for arts across the Triangle

### Heidi Werner Dawson

- The Carolina Inn is celebrating it's 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary with special events including Centennial Tea and Dinner services.

For Approval March 20, 2024

- Google getting rid of cookies by the end of summer which might impact SEO.

**Wendy Smith**

- Annual Gala Event March 16th at Haw River Ballroom celebrating the Arts Center's 50th Anniversary.

**Next meeting:** *Wednesday, March 20, 2024 at the Sheraton Chapel Hill*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:14 AM.