

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau  
Advisory Board Meeting  
Courtyard Chapel Hill  
September 25, 2024  
8:00 – 9:15 AM**

**Board Members Present:** Tanya Moore, Karen DeHart – Chair, Sam Vadgama, Jon Hartman Brown, Wendy Smith, Jeri Lynn Schulke, Steve Peck, DR Bryan, Shannan Campbell

**Not Present:** Grace Holtkamp, Anna Richards, Heidi Werner Dawson, Matt Hughes, Paris Miller – Foushee, Randee Haven- O'Donnell, Meredith Saybe

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

**Guests-** David Putnam (Town of Chapel Hill – Economic Development), Dan Brosz (NCDNCR)

**Call to Order**

Karen DeHart called the meeting to order at 8:15 AM.

**Round Table Introductions**

**Approval of Minutes**

Requested that August minutes be resent. Approval of the minutes postponed until October meeting.

- I. **Ann Arbor Recap:** Focus on collaboration with economic development agencies, cooperating forces vs competing forces, public bathrooms at 1mil a year, 10 units and modular
  
- II. **Executive Director's Report:**
  - **Chapel Hill Hockey Rink Fundraising:**
    - Focus on raising funds for a rink near Carraway Village.
    - Collaboration with NCHHS and VB for insights to present to Town Council, including an economic index calculator and potential high school usage of the rink.
  - **Airbnb Discussions in Chapel Hill:**
    - Aim to understand the market for short-term rentals, including pricing and location.
    - Other markets, such as Raleigh, are embracing AirBNB. The Greater Raleigh Convention & Visitors Bureau hosted a reception for AirBNB owners and provided Visitor Information
  
- III. **America 250 Grant Opportunities**
  - Overview of the America 250 Grant, commemorating the July 4, 2026 celebration.
  - Funds are available through the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources.
  - Orange County received \$10,000 for the initiative include, revolving around themes such as:
    - Revolutionary NC: History and revolutionary acts in the state.
    - National Identity: Exploration of freedom and struggles for equality.
  - Community Grant Program:
    - \$2 million in total, with \$1 million remaining; 50 grants of about \$990k have been awarded.

Approved October 16, 2024

- Community Grant Programs range from \$2,500 to \$30,000 (15% match required for Tier II & III Counties).
- Capital projects are excluded, but public art can be considered.
- Themes for the Community Grant include:
  - Visions of Freedom
  - Gathering Voices
  - Common Ground
- Application cycle open until November 1.
- Discussion on gathering voices category and aligning with local projects like the Chapel Hill peace and justice plaza.

#### IV. Visitors Bureau Logo Discussion **\*include link for logos\***

- Issues with Orange County branding; emphasis on attracting visitors rather than locals.
- Ad Agency proposed a more “funky” logo; feedback will be requested via Doodle Poll.
- Suggestions:
  - Wendy Smith: Combine funky logo with streamlined font.
  - Jeri Lynn: Improve marketing to retain local flavor.
  - Shannan: Consider out-of-town perspectives in branding and what will resonate with visitors from out of town.

#### V. New Business:

- **Steve Peck:** Outlandish Festival at Ayr Mount (rain or shine); Spirit Tours scheduled for October 18-19; OC Museum has ongoing events.
- **Sam Vadgama:** October bookings look strong; baseball bookings are soft this year.
- **Shannan Campbell:** Hillsborough to move tree lighting to Small Business Saturday; holiday parade to be separate.
- **Tanya Moore:** Mia Hamm scheduled for commencement; planning to maintain Saturday night event.
- **Katie Murray:** Paint it Orange Plein Air fundraiser; 90 painters participating. Events include:
  - Opening for paintings on Friday, October 4.
  - Rocky Horror Picture Show on October 26.
  - Uproar 2025 kick-off on the first Friday of August.
- **Wendy Smith:** October is a major fundraiser for the ArtsCenter; local restaurants to contribute a percentage of sales.
- **Steve Peck:** Inquiring about involvement in discussions on relocating the Dean Dome. Laurie discussed that focus groups are currently being conducted at this time.

**Next meeting:** *Wednesday, October 16, 2024 at the Innovate Carolina Junction – 136 E Rosemary St., Chapel Hill, NC 27514*

The meeting was adjourned at 9:26 AM.