

**Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors Meeting  
May 15, 2019**

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau met at  
The Rizzo Center, 150 DuBose Home Lane, Chapel Hill 27517

**Board Members Present:** Kayla Dempsey, Anthony Carey, , Annette Stone, David Brooks, , Andrew Strickland, Tanya Moore, Penny Rich, Mark Bell, Matt Gladdek, Jeff Strickler, Pam Hemminger, Rosemary Waldorf, Mark Sherburne, Libby Hough

**Not Present:** Tim Hoke, Lydia Lavelle, Shannon Campbell

**Staff attendance:** Laurie Paolicelli, Marlene Barbera, Allison Chambers, Patty Griffin, Tina Fuller, Steve Brantley, Katie Murray

**Also present:** Clean Design Staff

### **Call to Order**

Chair Anthony Carey called the meeting to order at 8:10 am. Chair Carey recognized the passing of Lee Pavao, longtime board member and great supporter of tourism in Orange County. Laurie Paolicelli spoke about is history of being a great community supporter and visionary. Penny Rich reminded the board that he was an advocate for senior citizens in the community and helped to make the first Orange County Senior Center a reality. Steve Brantley and Mark Sherburne shared memories as well.

Introductions were given by all.

### **Welcome by Host**

Mark Sherburne welcomed the board to the Rizzo Center on behalf of their GM, Brent Haste. This facility is part of the Keenan Flagler School of Business at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. It was developed on fifteen acres of land, along with the adjoining neighborhood of Meadowmont, on a part of the tract of land formerly owned by the Dubose Family. They focus on training for executives of fortune 500 businesses while utilizing business school staff. They have branched out since opening to accommodate corporate meetings and transient travelers following the latest expansion. While the Rizzo Center has a GM Mark Sherburne oversees this property as well as the Carolina Inn. The board was welcome to stay for a tour of the property follow the meeting.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Chair Carey requested a motion to approve the April 17, 2019 minutes. Libby Hough so moved and Penny Rich seconded the motion. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

### **Finance Report**

Penny Rich reported that March 2019 occupancy tax collections were up 20% as compared to March 2018. Airbnb paid approximately \$12,000 in occupancy tax but the bureau is still working on the comparison we have from AirDNA showing a higher than indicated occupancy. Mayor Pam Hemminger interjected that the town will be discussing Airbnb in June and appreciates the bureaus research efforts. Commissioner Rich responded that the county will follow the municipalities lead. The new fiscal year will begin on July 1 and the bureaus budget includes \$238K of fund balance appropriated. Chapel Hill is considering charging a home occupation fee in order to have funds to enforce zoning restrictions as they relate to short term rentals. The town would like to educate residents and let them know they are not trying to put owner occupied short term rental out of business.

## **Guest Presentation**

The bureau's ad agency Clean Design attended the board meeting to introduced our new campaign "just do you". They showed the board unique ads in print, digital and social but would like the board to keep in mind that all these ads can be used across all platforms. With the campaign they will: Capture the progressive, welcoming spirit of Chapel Hill and Orange County; embrace the individual while allowing people to picture themselves here; recognize our diverse audience members and their range of interests; promote experiences the area offers rather than solely focusing on business; achieve balance between Chapel Hill, Carrboro, and Hillsborough. Orange County has been removed from the logo. The team showed several examples of print ads, rich media digital ads, digital banner ads, Facebook news feed, Facebook slide ads, and Instagram carousel ads. To display a concept, several interest-based itineraries will be created that can be pushed out through Facebook Canvas ads and displayed on the VisitChapelHill.org website. Just Do You itineraries would include: Just Do... Food and Drinks, History, the Nightlife, the Classics, the Arts, the Outdoors, the Unexpected, and Just say I Do (weddings). They will develop mini-doc videos which will be human interest stories that show the power of a place where you can "just do you". They will identify places shown in photo to the extent that the copy can remain clean and have simplified the tag as requested by the Visitors Bureau board. The logo will be all three towns on a field of blue. The photos in the presentation are place holders, all new photography is planned. They are bringing in a secondary color pallet that we did not use in the past; the colors are orange and green to represent Orange County. Penny Rich mentioned the lack of diversity in the photos displayed and Clean Design assured the board that that would not be the case in the new photos taken for the campaign. The media mix for this campaign originally presented was 31% digital, 30% place-based, 19% print, 12% social and 8% search. The updated mix will be 31% digital, 19% print, 13% experiential, 12% social and 8% each for search, meetings & groups and website. A campaign timeline was presented which showed the media strategy focus for each of twelve months. They have partnered with a research vendor to better understand our target audience, identify existing perceptions of Chapel Hill, uncovering barriers that any potential visitors may have. The audience of the research will be past visitors, potential visitors and alumni. The survey and alumni poll was launched this week and will be ongoing for eight weeks with a full report available in early June. The next steps for the campaign will be to develop campaign assets including photography and video, finalize media flow chart, evaluate research findings and launch the campaign.

## **Executive Directors Report**

Laurie Paolicelli shared with the board that our Website Coordinator, Tina Fuller will soon begin working with a drone videographer. We heard great reviews from visitors about commencement. The Visitors Center was very busy this month. Manish Atma is going to buy the Sheraton and do renovations. Patty is working with influencers and is also readying the new version of the neighborhood guide for publication. Marlene is getting a significant number of leads from Connect and the tradeshow she has been attending and has recently taken charge of our merchandise line. She and Patty will attend a fundraising event at the Angus Barn featuring Mack Brown. Laurie will be away at a conference and will not attend the June meeting. Marlene will lead the meeting and bring in a guest from Expedia to talk about supply and demand locally for our hotel products.

## **New Business/Roundtable**

Chair Carey acknowledged all for updates in their respective fields:

- Mark Bell reported that May is Hillsborough's busiest month of the year. They just completed the garden tour. Coming up they have the last Friday Concert Series, the Artwalk and the historic Moorefields Gala.
- Libby Hough shared that the Orange County Library is having their first comet fair and other events that she offered posters about to the hoteliers present as well as the visitor's center.



- Annette Stone reported Carrboro's TDA is focused on improving their website presence. They are getting closer to completing their wayfinding design. The Freight Train Blues series will begin this coming Friday and will run for six weeks. At the end of June there will be a beer festival at the Town Commons. Pride month is being celebrated in Carrboro during June with many events planned.
- Pam Hemminger shared that there will be, as always here during the summer, many paving and constructions project. The CVS tower will return to being called 137 and will receive improvements. There will be more pop-ups downtown as the permitting process has been streamlined. The owners of 140 W. Franklin have submitted plans to green up the space and add seating. There is a big push right now by developers to complete apartments by the time students return in August. DOT has agreed to the towns request not to superstreet the intersection of MLK Blvd and Hwy 86 for at least five years so they can work with the new dynamics as they widen I-40. The Chapel Hill Public Library will be getting a few more parking spaces this summer and the sidewalk networks along Homestead Rd. to Chapel Hill High will be completed as well.
- Penny Rich reported that the county will do Local Fest again this year, but move it from the fall to the spring due to the high number of events planned across the county during the fall. The coming year's budget does contain funding to hold an economic summit, much like last year's summit held on WCHL Radio. She will attend, along with Katie Murray, an Arts Conference in June.
- Katie Murray announced that the Arts Commission has elected new officers. Fred Joyner will be the new Chair. The Talking and Singing the Gospel Event will be held May 21 at the Burwell School. A group has formed to identify possible space for the arts around Orange County. The Arts Commission may contract with a company that would come into the community and help identify the best places in the county for arts space. They are presently offering arts professional development classes and expanding their website with cultural arts events available in the county.

**Next Meeting:** *Wednesday, June 19, 2019 at the Carolina Club in Chapel Hill.*

Meeting Adjourned at 9:37 am.

Minutes reviewed by:

Laurie Paollicelli, Executive Director

Date

Minutes accepted by:

Anthony Carey, Chairman

Date