

For Approved March 21, 2018

MINUTES

Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors Meeting February 21, 2018

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau met at
The Ernie Williamson Athletic Center, 450 Skipper Bowles Dr., Chapel Hill 27599

Board Members Present: Kayla Dempsey, Aaron Bachenheimer, Penny Rich, Lydia Lavelle, Jeffery Strickler-Vice Chair, Mark Bell, Annette Lafferty, Tim Hoke, Anthony Carey-Carey, Lee Storrow, Rosemary Waldorf, David Brooks, Shannan Campbell, Andrew Strickland, Mark Sherburne, Meg McGurk, Rachel Schaevitz

Not Present: Jeffery Strickler-Vice Chair, Lee Storrow

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

Also present: Max Fenske, Tar Heel Sports Properties; Sandy Sweitzer, Triangle Land Conservancy; Bob Ward, UNC Basketball Museum; Kristen Bilger and Matt See, FleishmanHillard

Call to Order

Chair Anthony Carey called the meeting to order at 8:07 am.

Introductions were given by all.

Host Welcome

Max Fenske of Tar Heel Sports Properties welcomed the board to the Ernie Williamson Athletic Center. He expressed his appreciation for the partnership his organization shares with the Chapel Hill Orange County Visitors Bureau and their work together to share all the wonderful and exciting opportunities available for visitors to the county. He invited the board to tour the newly renovated Basketball Museum after the meeting.

Approval of Minutes

Chair Carey requested a motion to approve the November 15, 2017 minutes. Penny Rich so moved and Andrew Strickland seconded. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Finance Report

Finance Chair Penny Rich reported that the budget is on target at this time. Occupancy taxes are slightly ahead of projections for the year. The 2018-19 budget request is being considered by the County Manager and that request includes greater support for the Arts Commission. Fund Balance will be allocated to advertising and strategic alliances.

Nominating Committee Report

The nominating committee, chosen by the greater board, recommended the appointment of Libbie Hough to the At-large seat vacated by Lee Pavao. Penny Rich made the motion and it was seconded by Tim Hoke. The motion passed unanimously. As part of that motion, and vote, Missy Julian will be invited to join meetings going forward as she is one recommended replacement for Aaron Bachenheimer as he transitions off the board in December after representing UNC for two terms.

Guest Report

FleishmanHillard, the ad agency hired by the board in 2017 to replace Clean Design, attended the meeting to give the board an update. When they began working with the Bureau they conducted an audit of social media traffic and found

that the majority came from inside the state of NC and they want to expand that. In 2018 they propose a shift to a multi-channel approach to promoting Orange County. The goal is to win over the potential traveler's heart, through storytelling (versus traditional paid advertisements), driving them to the Visitors Bureau website. They will place strategic messages towards out of state travelers: using social media, blogs, user generated content at the center, using social media channels to amplify the message. Since they have started they have seen the traffic numbers increased from those states that surround NC. For the months of January and February they have done four to five original blogs. They are targeting travelers planning three to five months in advance. They have focused on different parts of Orange County in an attempt to promote all areas. They are focusing their major push on Facebook and then Instagram and Twitter. They insert links in the blogs to take the reader to specific opportunities within the county and hotel websites. This makes for a more interactive search on the part of the traveler. Tags are being used on their photos to help potential travelers discern if the location is Chapel Hill, Carrboro or Hillsborough. They are following Instagram to reach out to Instagram users and asking to repost their photos from Orange County, putting the focus on the user by utilizing user generated content. This is relationship building. They are tailoring to three types of visitors, in-state visitor, out-of-state visitors, and UNC Alumni. They can tell, using a reporting dashboard, who is looking at the ads, and target those groups, which allow them to get the most out of the ad dollars. Most of their ads are not seen by people in Orange County as they are specifically focusing on users who are interested in specific things offered here. Facebook gives frequency scores and relevancy scores to measure ads and we do not want to go over 3 because the viewer begins to feel uncomfortable. This makes it possible for FleishmanHillard to retarget ads releasing them to those that really enjoy it. They have seen the greatest engagement coming from Florida. They recently orchestrated a twitter war with Durham over the Duke vs UNC basketball game with the losing CVB writing a poem for the winners. This war generated 14 original tweets from @VisitChapelHill, 1,004 engagements, 35,995 impressions, 64 new followers gained, and 2 earned media placements. They recently did their first Facebook live/Instagram story at Acme in Carrboro. They interviewed Chef Kevin and got a cooking demo that was all live on Facebook. In March they will launch their paid search campaign focusing on google search words.

Executive Directors Report

Laurie Paolicelli shared that most of us grew up in a world of four channels and now there are thousands in which to get information. With the digital approach to advertising we are seeing fewer tear sheets and more engagement reports. We are adjusting to this shift and it is working well. She suggests sharing our editorial calendar with the hotels as a possible roadmap of where we are going next in the digital ads. Paolicelli referenced new attempts to measure Airbnb activity. In working with AirDNA it has become apparent local governments are collecting less than what is actually being booked. She suggests that if they are operating legally we should have a reception in which to meet with them and give them our tourism information to share with their guests. Paolicelli reminded the board where the study stood with Convention Sports and Leisure. We originally did a two prong study with CSL after which they reported that there was a need for a multi-purpose center and indoor athletic facilities. There is a lot of information in that report that has not been shared yet. The BOCC would to have this item added to the agenda if Orange County hosts an Economic Development Summit.

Triangle Land Conservancy Guest Report

Sandy Sweitzer of the Triangle Land Conservancy shared her organization is celebrating its 35th Anniversary having originally been formed to protect Raleigh's drinking water. They have protected 18,000 acres around the triangle. Residence of Raleigh pay an annual fee to protect their water supply and some of that fee protects land in Orange County. They do conservation to safeguard clean water, connect people with nature, protect natural habitats, and support local farms and food.

Their main focus is on collaboration through ownership, assistance, and conservation easements. Highlighting the properties nearest us: White Pines in Chatham Co., Brumley Forest Nature Preserve in Northern Orange Co. on 600 acres including 13 miles of hiking trails, Johnston Mill between Turkey Farm and Mt. Sinai. Irvin Farm is in Southern Orange County but not open to the public. They have three easements on Maple View Farm.

Sales Report

Marlene reported that the March Madness UNC Meeting Planner event is scheduled for March 15. Sixteen properties are participating with a sales blitz preceding the event on campus. This year's event will be held at the student union. She will attend the Rendezvous South trade show in Dayton, FL the following week and has 19 one on one planner appointments set up. On Sunday, February 25 she will travel to Charlotte to attend a board meeting of the Carolina Bowl that may bring its All Star game to Chapel Hill in December 2018. She will pitch the county to the board.

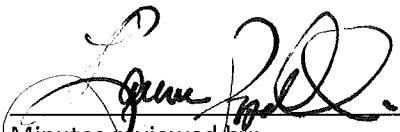
New Business/Roundtable

Chair Carey acknowledged all for updates in their respective fields:

- Meg McGurk shared new parking meters are being installed downtown over the next few months. Parking lots and decks will become fully automated. They will have large digital screens that will contain advertising. 10-12 town employs will be downtown ambassadors sharing information with visitors.
- Aaron Bachinheimer announced that the University will launch a spring weekend event to coincide with the spring football game to bring alumni back to engage with the university. He has recently moved into a new position. While still supporting off campus student housing his office will work more with graduate students.
- Annette Stone reported that Carrboro has hired a communications manager. South Greensboro St. will closed mid-June through August to build a round-a-bout. She asked the board to support Carrboro businesses during this closing. They are working with a Wayfinding consultant towards possible new signage in town. Farmer's Market pavilion will soon be completed with farmers moving back in in April.
- Shannan Campbell shared that she has been doing some research into AirBNB in Hillsborough and has discovered that they have six and she plans to reach out to them. The Alliance for Historical Hillsborough is working with the Garden Club to plant red poppies as a WWI remembrance. They have recently had an increase in requests for historical tours.
- Tim Hoke reported that the Art's Commission has completed their listening sessions and are now starting their annual grants application season. As a result of one of those listening sessions they have been asked to get involved with UNC's Arts Everywhere Festival April 6. This will be a collaborative community art project, hopefully in the former Ackland Art Store space, and will have a social justice theme. They are also working closely with the group that is putting on Local Fest in September.
- David Brooks reported that they are well underway in training for the spring season and will hold their farm charity event May 19. They will kick-off their spring season on May 5th with a match and Kentucky Derby Event.
- Kayla Dempsey shared that the High School Basket Ball 4A and 2A play-offs will be held on March 10 at the Smith Center. They will include a food drive with this event as they partner with United Health Care. They will hold a Student Leadership Conference on March 4 at the Sheraton.

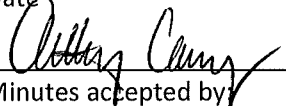
We will meet next month at the Barn at Chapel Hill.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:57 am.



Minutes reviewed by:
Laurie Paolicelli, Executive Director

3/21/18

Date


Minutes accepted by
Anthony Carey, Chairman

3/21/18
Date