

Approved April 20, 2016

MINUTES

Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors Meeting March 16, 2016

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau met at
North Carolina Botanical Garden, Chapel Hill, NC

Board Members Present: Andrew Strickland, Jeffrey Strickler, George Cianciolo, Debbie Hepp, Rosemary Waldorf-Chair, Mark Sherburne, Allison Nichols-Clapper, Karen DeHart, Aaron Bachenheimer, Lee Pavao-Vice Chair, Michelle Johnson, Nitin Khanna, Mark Bell, Penny Rich, Annette Stone, Meg McGurk, Lee Storrow,

Not Present: Shannon Campbell

Staff attendance: Laurie Paolicelli, Marlene Barbera, Allison Chambers

Also present: Elizabeth Pascal, Tom Hickey and Eleanor Talley from Clean Design

Call to Order

Chair Rosemary Waldorf called the meeting to order at 8:10 am.

Introductions were given by all.

Approval of Minutes

Ms. Waldorf requested a motion to approve the February 17, 2016 minutes. Penny Rich so moved, Lee Pavao seconded. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Guest/host speakers

Our ad agency Clean Design attended the meeting, reviewing our tourism media plan and also compared it to some of their other accounts. Ms. Pascal brought our attention to some of the ads they have been running for us this past year focusing on the major trends of culinary, breweries, and family friendly. The agency reviewed for the first time a campaign promoting bicycle tourism. George Cianciolo encouraged the board to work with the Sheriff and Police Chiefs to make sure these bicyclists feel welcome in our community. He cautioned against inviting bicycle tourists to Orange County only to find that they are not welcome. The logo was addressed, some board members questioning why we are using the Orange County logo. Paolicelli felt that this point any bicycle ad should contain the Orange County Logo as well as VisitChapelHill since all information is housed on the County website at present. Tom Hickey spoke about the current media mix in our campaign which includes radio and online. Online includes display ads, social media, email, native and search. They have increased their focus on the groups and meetings segment. Online digital media influences travel decisions. Some travelers still depend on traditional print media such as brochures. There is need for both in the market. Native advertising is an ad that does not look like an ad. In order not to trick the consumer into thinking these are original content these ads must be clearly market as sponsored content. The positive is that you can create compelling content and engage your target audience. They would like to see use build more native advertising into our plan. Ms. Paolicelli asked how Wilmington and Boone's spend compared to ours which is half a million. Tom replied that Boone's is roughly \$750K and Wilmington, which includes the surrounding beaches, is roughly a half million. Ms. Paolicelli will work with staff to put together a budget for next year's media plan and have Clean Design return to June's meeting to present to the board.

Executive Directors Report

Chair Waldorf stated that the ad hoc space needs committee that the board appointed last month met and asked Ms. Paolicelli to give a brief overview of where we are in the process. We have issued an RFP that has three prongs; first is a local needs analysis to get community members involved in the process; second is a market analysis to see what is in the pipeline locally and in the surrounding communities to assess the demand; and third looks at construction sites and funding which we do not need at this time. After reviewing the four responses received they are recommending Convention Sports Leisure Company located in Minneapolis. They have conducted many studies like the one we are looking for and have done work for UNC. Having already had experience in the community made them an attractive choice. Hiring CSL is the staff's recommendation. The committee will meet with CSL in May. The chair recommended they invite Aaron Bachenheimer and Anna Wu from UNC. They will have a recommendation by the June meeting.

Budget Update

Ms. Paolicelli reported that our proposed budget for next year is \$1.5 million. Of that \$460,000 is salaries, \$500,000 is tourism advertising and the rest is in operations and work with Orange County Community Relations. We have spent down our fund balance during the current fiscal year predominantly on advertising.

Sales Report

Marlene Barbera reported that she has put together a proposal to bring a travel writer's conference to Orange County. The organization is the North American Travel Journalists Association. Their meeting destination for May of 2017 has fallen through and she is working on getting them to come here. The conference is focused on getting the attendees acquainted with the area. The organization's membership is made up of journalists, bloggers, travel writers, photographers and videographers. Seventy percent of their membership is travel journalist and the remaining thirty percent are CVBs. Timing of the conference would be the week after graduation at UNC, May 15-19, 2017. Ms. Paolicelli reminded the Board that this is a large undertaking by a staff of six and that responsibilities already in place would continue. Chair Waldorf suggested we make funds available to bring in contract help.

New Business/Roundtable

Chair Waldorf acknowledged all for updates in their respective fields:

Annette Stone reports that the Carrboro Board of Alderman approved a conditional use permit which will allow for the building of an additional hotel in Carrboro, a Hilton Garden which will be built adjacent to the Hampton Inn.

Meg McGurk reported that the day after graduation at UNC major streetscape work will begin on Rosemary St.. The work will continue from May 16 until October and make it ADA accessible. Also starting the day after graduation, porthole alley will become pedestrian only. This is being called "Phase Now" by the University and will create pedestrian access from Memorial Hall to Franklin St.

Deb Hepp reported that this will be her last meeting with the board as she is moving to Chatham County. She stated that Tim Hoke, the Chair of the Orange County Arts Commission will be taking her place. Mr. Hoke is an Architect.

Chair Waldorf adjourned the meeting at 9:20.

Minutes reviewed by:
Laurie Paolicelli, Executive Director

Date

Minutes accepted by:
Rosemary Waldorf, Chairman

Date