

HAMILTON COUNTY TOURISM, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS
37 E. Main Street, Carmel, Indiana
Minutes of the Annual & February Meetings
February 7, 2020

FEBRUARY 2020
Minutes of the Annual Meeting

Attending the Annual and Regular Meetings:

Bob DuBois, Andrew Newport, Jimia Smith, Norman Burns, Mark Truett, Jackie Dikos, Toby Miles, Scott Spillman, Jeremy Geisendorff and Gary Miller.

Also attending:

Brenda Myers, President/CEO; Karen Radcliff, Vice President/CSO; Betsy Ekelof, Operations Director; Ashley Ledford, Director of Marketing & Promotions; Sarah Billman, Visitor Experience Manager; Tina Rodgers, Assistant Director of Resources; Carol Sergi, Director of Marketing, Economic Development; Sarah Buckner, Destination Development Manager; Christine Altman, Counsel; and, Rick McKinney, Hamilton County Council representative.

I. Welcome

President Bob DuBois opened the meeting at 8:32 a.m. The minutes of the 2019 Annual Meeting had been approved in March 2019.

II. 2019 KPIs & Year-In Review

B. Myers provided an overview of 2018 KPIs and successes for the year:

Sports/Sales/Visitor Experience

- Expanded Visitor Experience – More than Doubled Groups Served
- Hamilton County Sports Authority Strategic Vision Planning
- Hamilton County Sports Authority Facilities' Sponsorship Program
- Rest Easy Targeted Sales Campaign to 200+ Meeting Planners

Marketing, Promotions & Public Relations

- New Web Site Launch with Hugely Successful Metrics
- Successful Ad Campaign Results – HCT's Numbers Beat the National Average
- New Research Insights: UberMedia Mobile Tracking
- Google Travel Activation Successful
- 45 Partners trained
- 124 tours shot and published – adding tours to VisitHamiltonCounty.com as well
- 700+ miles of Streetview (Google place documentation) completed
- 2019 US Travel Association Destiny Award Winner for Integrated Advertising Campaign
- 2019 Indiana Tourism Association Best Leisure Tourism Marketing Campaign
- Jordan Musall named a Destinations International a 30 Under 30

Destination Development

- White River Vision Plan Completed
- Creative Economies Program Launched
- River Monster Promotion Created Countywide Buzz & Excitement
- Successful Nickel Plate Heritage Railroad Full Calendar Year
- 4-H Fairgrounds Design Book – Project Moving to the Next Step

Operations/Resources/Strategy

- New Auditor = Clean Audit Report
- New Budgeting Software Implemented for Use in 2020
- Full Implementation of Concur Credit Card Software Program
- Named a 2019 Best Places to Work in Indiana

Workforce Strategy

- Successful launch of revised Invest! Brand
- Worked with Hamilton County on Workforce Study
- Named a 21st Century Talent Region

Tourism Works Reflects New Values Focus for Hamilton County Tourism Staff

- Tourism as Business – We are an economic catalyst
- Tourism as Community – We put community first
- Tourism Supports Sustainability – We care about our environment

2020 Training Will Emphasize Leadership Development, Improve our Toolkit for Project Design and Deepen the Bench to Make Us Stronger for the Future

III. Election of Board Members

B. DuBois presented the two new nominated board members. Each was asked to give a little information about themselves. Their proposed terms of office would be 2020-2021.

- Jackie Dikos
 - Owner – Field Brewing Company
 - Owner – Nutrition Success
- Toby Miles
 - Owner – Rail Restaurant/Cone & Crumb

He then asked the remaining Board members to introduce themselves and noted that five board members are up for re-election to two-year terms. Al Patterson, whose term ends in 2020, is leaving Hamilton County Parks. His position will need to be replaced as well.

The five board members are: Norman Burns, Gary Miller, Mark Truett, Angie Smitherman & Scott Spillman.

A. Newport moved that the slate be approved as presented. J. Smith seconded. Motion passed.

IV. There being no further business, N. Burns moved that the Annual Meeting be adjourned at 9 a.m. G. Miller seconded. Motion passed.

FEBRUARY 2020

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

I. Welcome

B. Dubois welcomed everyone to the February 2020 HCT Board of Directors meeting at 9 a.m.

II. Review Minutes November 2019 Meeting

B. Myers noted that minutes of the November 2019 had been emailed to the Board and placed in Boardable.com.

S. Spillman moved that the minutes be approved as presented. M. Truett seconded. Motion passed.

III. Key Governance Items for Review & Possible Action

B. Myers noted that she had worked with B. DuBois to change the agenda format by moving key actionable items earlier in the agendas. Everyone agreed to the new format.

- 2020 Funding Agreement** – B. DuBois noted that the Board officers had met with HCT's key administrative staff over concerns about the new 2020 funding agreement proposed by the Tourism Commission. The changes are all acceptable and informed but the concern is with a 30-day clause that would be challenging. He noted he has talked with Perry Williams, President of the Tourism Commission, who understands the concerns. The changes will be discussed at the upcoming February 13 Commission meeting and brought back to the Board in March. Meanwhile, the agency is operating from an automatic renewal that took place 9/30/2019.
- Proposed Policy: Selling/Donating Obsolete Computer Laptops** – B. Myers introduced the proposal that HCT would move to add to its financial policy a program where partner non-profits that operate on a McIntosh system could receive donated laptops where appropriate, and also staff could additionally purchase old computer equipment when appropriate. B. Ekelof noted that two of these computers are no longer used but

have a small asset value on the books. She had contacted the auditor about this policy and they agreed it was appropriate so long as the Board wrote those assets off. She also noted that HCT always keeps reserve computers for use by interns, as loaners should someone’s computer be in the shop, etc. Computers are depreciated on five-year schedules. Two of the computers on the current list would be donated, one each to Nickel Plate Arts and Nickel Plate Express, and the remaining equipment would be offered up by way of sealed bids from staff. Funds from the sale of computers would go into the HCT staff Tourism Gives annual charitable donation project (the staff fundraises all year long and donates the money raised to a charity chosen by staff). A. Newport moved that the financial policy be accepted and G. Miller seconded. Motion passed. B. Ekelof then presented the items to be decommissioned under the new policy:

Retired	Asset Group	Quantity	Serial Number	Model	Purchase Date	2020 Book Value
2'20	424	1	C02MV1JHG2CD	Macbook Air	Jul-2014	\$0.00
2'20	436	1	C1MPV623G944	Macbook Air	Jun-2015	\$0.00
2'20	445	1	C1MRC6T2G944	Macbook Air	Mar-2016	\$28.20
2'20	438	1	C02RH7WCG8WN	Macbook Pro 15"	May-2016	\$125.20
2'20	424	1	C02RXAYUG8WN	Macbook Pro 15"	Jul-2016	\$219.19

*Paper cutter to be donated to Nickel Plate Arts

S. Spillman moved that the equipment be retired as proposed; J. Geisendorff seconded. Motion passed.

C. **Proposed 2021 Tourism Budget Committee & Approval Timeline** – B. Myers presented a draft proposal for a new Tourism Budget Committee that the Tourism Commission requested be introduced into the budget planning process. The officers of each entity would meet with HCT’s operations and administrative staffs and preview the forecast report and budget drafts prior to the May board and commission meetings, when it is moved to the County Council for consideration. B. DuBois commented that while he fully understands why the Commission is interested in being involved in the budget process prior to receiving the draft in May, the budget should remain at a higher level at this point in the process and HCT should still be allowed to direct the budget’s goals and outcomes for review in the Fall. N. Burns agreed but noted that allowing the Tourism Commission in on the budget process would increase transparency and raise awareness about how much thought goes into the budgeting process. B. Myers agreed, saying she has no problem with the process so long as everyone understands large R. McKinney noted that budget reviews would take place Aug. 6 and stated that the County Council wants to see additional funds invested back into the County and hopes the budget committee process can support that. B. Myers noted that there have always been two phases to the budget review process: 1) the “big buckets” view with a goal toward appropriations and then, after late summer planning a 2) more refined budget presented at the October HCT Board meeting for input and a final presented at the November HCT Board meeting and then to the Tourism Commission. The new funding agreement will likely move the HCT’s contract renewal date for the coming year back to August 31. That means the Tourism Commission needs to meet in October prior to the adoption of the HCT Board. That idea will be presented to the Commission for review at its Feb. 13 meeting. With the caveat that language be added to the budget committee process to allow for this flexibility, N. Burns moved that the budget committee structure be presented to the Commission; A. Newport seconded. Motion passed.

D. **Proposed Policy re. Future Incentive Commitments** – B. Myers provided background on why the HCT directors would bring this policy to the Board, stating that both not having a long-term contract with the Tourism Commission and a request for a larger-than-usual commitment gave the staff pause. K. Radcliff noted that for years, HCT has committed to supporting future events with incentives ranging from sponsoring transportation service or a breakfast for a few thousand dollars to perhaps the largest commitment, \$40,000 to underwrite and attract a national tournament. An event calculator is used that takes into consideration economic impact, lodging tax production, time of year the event is held and visibility of the event. A simple spreadsheet captures future commitments with the understanding that there is an unwritten “cap” that staff adheres to, currently under \$50,000. As the product has grown so have “bid fees” have given ways to “incentives” due to highly competitive states like Texas providing large pools of enticement funds, difficult decisions need to be made on how important business is to capture. After some discussion, the Board voted to table the idea until the futures

budget has been developed to understand how setting aside up to 3 percent of the budget for incentives might impact future investments in other activities.

- E. **HCEDC Management Agreement** – B. Myers presented the HCEDC management agreement, noting that the amount may change based on transactions that occurred between 2019 and 2020. The current contract amount is \$375,000 and provides for marketing, 2.5 staff members, rent and essential services. There were no questions about the MOU, which was a replication of the 2019 contract. A. Newport moved that the MOU be accepted. M. Truett seconded. Motion passed.
- F. **Community Support Updates** – B. Myers noted a written report she provided in the board members packets and on Boardable.com updating everyone on 2020 projects HCT is investing in or working on with the community. She also provided a 2019 Nickel Plate Express Annual Report and 2020 Business Plan to read.
- G. **Board Comments** B. DuBois asked if the Board had any additional comments and noted this would be a new addition to the agenda. There was none.

IV. **Financials & Metrics**

B. Myers provided year-end profit and loss and balance sheet statements and noted that there should be at least a \$200,000 surplus for 2019, which, even with funding depreciation, should help make up for the 2018 deficit of about \$120,000. She also noted that January lodging receipts were ahead of schedule. All reports were available in Boardable.com. There were no questions about the financial and lodging/tax reports. G. Miller moved they be accepted. A. Newport seconded. Motion passed.

V. There being no further business, A. Newport moved that the meeting be adjourned at 10:15 a.m. G. Miller seconded. Motion passed.