

HAMILTON COUNTY TOURISM, INC. BOARD OF DIRECTORS
37 E. Main Street, Carmel, Indiana
Minutes of the Annual & February Meetings
Friday, March 6, 2020

Attending the Meeting in Person: Bob DuBois, Andrew Newport, Jimia Smith, Mark Truett, Angie Frazier, Toby Miles, Jackie Dikos, Jeremy Geisendorff and Scott Spillman

Not Attending: Gary Mille and Norman Burns.

Also attending:

Brenda Myers, President/CEO; Karen Radcliff, Vice President/CSO; Betsy Ekelof, Operations Director; Tina Rodgers, Director of Resources; S. 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.

II. February Annual & regular Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the February annual and regular meeting minutes were presented for review. S. Spillman moved that the minutes be approved as presented. A. Newport seconded. Motion passed.

III. Key Governance Items for Review

a. Budget Discussions

- **Sports Advocacy Funding** -- B. Myers presented background information on background information regarding the support of funding to explore an advocacy program through possible legislation to support Grand Park. The purpose of introducing the idea was to get a sense of direction from the Board and explore funding a research study and legislative counsel. R. McKinney noted that the Hamilton County Council would not support any proposal that included diverting local option income taxes. The motion was tabled until later in the meeting to understand the potential financial impacts of proposed activities.
 - **Asset Retirements** – B. Myers presented a list of computer equipment for retirement. A. Newport moved that the equipment be retired. M. Truett seconded. Motion passed.
 - **2020 Budget Amendments** – B. Myers asked that the Board make a simple budget adjustment to move the \$100,000 Grand Park proposed grant from sales/sports to the destination development grant line item as requested by the auditor. The audit firm proposed that all grants be attributed to the same line item for clarity. J. Geisendorff moved that the adjustments be made. J. Smith seconded. Motion passed.
 - **Nickel Plate Arts Campus** – B. Myers asked that the Board consider a proposal for up to \$30,000 in improvements to the Judge Stone House and Stephenson House owned by HCT but operated as part of the Nickel Plate Arts program. HCT would seek a façade improvement grant for up to 50% of the front sides of the house, likely providing another \$10,000 toward improvements which include new siding and painting of the Judge Stone House. A. Newport moved that the project move forward using reserves. M. Truett seconded. Motion passed.
- b. COVID19 Response** – B. Myers presented a plan to support the county during the impending pandemic, providing communications support to the county’s contract public relations professional. She also noted that sales has begun monitoring group attrition as well as Grand Park’s future business. She noted recent research varies as to the possible impact. She provided a preliminary forecast that anticipates a 15% loss in revenue for the year based on this research. The executive committee and Board will be updated as the scenario unfolds.
- c. 2020 Funding Agreement** – B. Myers updated the board on the funding agreement. It is currently still under review with minor adjustments needed. She asked that the Board authorize the executive committee to execute the document so long as legal counsel and the executive committee approves. J. Brown made the motion. M. Truett seconded. Motion passed.

- d. **Destination Development Individual Grants** – S. Buckner presented grants to support local non-profits and arts-related organizations with a tourism focus. (List attached.) A. Frazier and M. Truett must recuse themselves. R. McKinney asked why HAND was included on the list. B. Myers explained that HCT has had a long-established relationship with HAND as it works to support affordable housing which is needed by the local tourism industry for employees. S. **Spillman** moved. J. Brown seconded. Motion passed.
- e. **Hamilton County Sports Authority Grants** – L. Kelner presented sports grants for review. (List attached). S. Spillman recused himself. A. Newport made the motion. J. Geisendorff seconded. Motion passed.

IV. Nickel Plate Express Updates

Dagny Zupin, director of the Nickel Plate Express tourism railroad supported by HCT updated the Board on its successful 2019 first full year of operations and thanked the Board for its ongoing financial support. She provided a written annual report and answered questions.

V. Financials & Metrics

B. Myers presented a profit and loss statement and balance sheet for review. She noted tax revenue is ahead of budget, which puts the organization ahead of schedule heading into the downturn. J. Brown moved that the financial report be accepted as presented. A. Frazier seconded. Motion passed.

VI. Un-tabled Discussion Sports Advocacy

Everyone agreed that the \$45,000 in Tourism Economics research to understand the financial impact of Grand Park to the region would be an overall worthwhile investment. It was determined to hold off on legislative counsel for now. A. Newport moved to continue with the TE economic impact study. J. Smith seconded. Motion passed.

VII. Acknowledgement – Karen Radcliff

B. DuBois presented K. Radcliff with a gift and a thank you from HCT and acknowledged her 25 years of excellence and leadership support to the organization.

VIII. Adjournment —A. Frazier moved that the meeting be adjourned. J. Brown seconded. Motion passed.