

MINUTES DRAFT, APPROVED MARCH 25, 2025

Howard County Tourism Council, Inc. Board of Directors Meeting

January 28, 2025, 8:30 - 10:00 AM

DIVE BAR & GRILL, [8600 Foundry St. Savage, MD 20763](#)

In-Person Strongly Encouraged / Virtual Alternative:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81448491121>

Meeting ID: 814 4849 1121 +1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

11 of 20 voting members are required for a quorum. P = present, E = Excused Absence, A = Absent

Term Ends EOFY		First	Last	Present
non-voting		Katie	Fry Hester	E
non-voting		Dan	Burns	E
non-voting		Terry	Hasseltine	P
non-voting		Kathy	Johnson	E
non-voting		Mike	Milani	A
non-voting		Sharron	Christiansen	P
non-voting		Felix	Fachine	P
FY26 (2nd)	President	Tricia	Hudson	P
FY26 (1st)	President-Elect	Jayquin	Bella	P
FY25 (2nd)	Past President	Yolande	Lacan	P
FY26 (2nd)	Treasurer/Secretary	Jim	Starke	P
FY28 (special)	Nominating Chair	Martha	Clark	P
FY28 (special)	Exec. Board	Chuck	Chandler	P
FY26 (1st)	Exec. Board	Vince	Culotta	P
FY25 (1st)	Exec. Board	Steve	Carne	P
FY25 (1st)	Voting	Grace	Anastasiadis	P
FY28 (2nd)	Voting	Margaret	Barry	P
FY25 (2nd)	Voting	Nina	Basu	P
FY25 (1st)	Voting	Mae	Beale	E
FY28 (2nd)	Voting	Cheryl	Clemens-Everidge	E
FY25 (1st)	Voting	Phillip	Dodge	P
FY26 (1st)	Voting	Adam	Winer	P
FY28 (1st)	Voting	Dave	Simmons	P
FY26 (1st)	Voting	Nicole	Motsay	P
FY28 (2nd)	Voting	Soo	Park	P
FY26 (1st)	Voting	Rod	Vese	P
FY28 (1st)	Voting	Donna	Wecker	E

Staff in attendance:

Amanda Hof
Denisa Smith
Alex Sullivan
Kaelynn Ball
Adam Workman
Calli Ivester

AGENDA

Call to Order (Tricia) 8:50 am

Host Greeting (DIVE BAR & GRILL / SAVAGE MILL)

Board Meeting Minutes: November (VOTE)

<i>Motion to approve November minutes</i>	Vince Culotta
<i>Second</i>	Chuck Chandler

All in favor: **Yes** ▾

Motion **Passed** ▾

Financials (Jim/Amanda)

- Accounting Update:
 - New accountant starting Feb 1st
 - No financials available to review (July - December)
 - Plenty of funds in a bank - we're in a good shape
 - Jim: approved the procedure we went through to find the new accountant
- FY26 Funding Request
 - It is in and has been approved last Friday:
 - 2 scenarios:
 - One at the current funding formula
 - One with a proposed 1% hotel tax increase

Old Business

- HoCo Room Tax Increase ask update (1% increase to go to Tourism)
 - Favorable response from the hotels - all onboard
 - Senator Guzzone - drafted a bill language - moved forward to the Howard County delegation draft
 - Taste of MD - talked to various Howard County representatives. Del. Watson was confident about the proposed bill.
 - Tricia praised everyone for working really hard on this
 - Chuck: if you have a chance to say thank the delegation for their support

New Business

- Tourism Day Briefing
 - Invitation for board members to attend has gone out
 - In the process of making appointments
- Board Member Nominations for FY26
 - Will have some openings, the nomination process opens in March; the board is a diverse mix of tourism industry businesses and geographical representation of the county
- Member Benefits - Change to Visitor Guide Listings (VOTE)
 - Proposal from Staff to eliminate a visitors guide listing front he standard membership benefits. Instead, members can add to a listing for \$50. The add-on listings will be larger and more robust than the current small, phonebook-style listings.
 - Jim: can we cover it for the existing members and just offer the new structure for the new members coming onboard? Amanda: No, because existing members are a majority and giving them all the larger listings will take additional room in the guide when the goal is to reduce the amount of space listings take.
 - Vince is onboard
 - Adam Winer: re-evaluating the listings is important and how it benefits a consumer. What sticks out in the book? What categories are important to visitors (hotels, restaurants, etc.)?
 - Phillip Dodge: Can we increase th4e membership from \$50 to \$100? Amanda: We will likely lose members who do not want to pay \$100. Also, we will not achieve fewer listings.

<i>Motion to approve Change to VG Listings</i>	Vince Culotta
<i>Second</i>	Martha Clark

All in favor: Yes ▾

Motion Passed ▾

Departmental Updates

- Executive Director
- Sales & Membership
- Visitor Services

Task Force Statuses

- Community Relations Plan
- Ambassador Program
- Welcome Center Renovation
- Employee Well-being Program & Inclusivity Statement
- Employee Handbook

Chuck was asking about updates from the county:

Felix: Funding for indoor track study from the county - in 6 months we should see the results

Will be similar in size to the one in PG county

Save the Dates

- February 14, 2025, 7:00 am - 3:00 pm Tourism Day in Annapolis (shuttle provided)

Next Board Meeting(s)

- Tuesday, March 25, 2025, 8:30 - 10:00 AM, Location TBD
- Tuesday, May 27, 2025, 8:30 - 10:00 AM, Location TBD

Adjourn: 10:08 am