

HAMILTON COUNTY TOURISM, INC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
37 E. Main Street, Carmel, IN 46032
Friday, May 2, 2025
8:30-10:15 a.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION AGENDA

I. Welcome and Introductions

Nick Weber, Executive Director of Economic Development City of Carmel, Mayor Sue Finkam, City of Carmel and Shawn Gustafson, Hunden Group presented to the HCT Board of Directors.

II. Carmel Master Plan

The board heard an executive summary of the Carmel Master Plan project as the research, data collection and concepting comes to an end.

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

Board attendance: Chris Stice, Mark Truett, Susan Miller, Anne Clendenin, Scott Spillman, Norman Burns, Michael Balcolm, Vince Dora, Bob DuBois, Jimia Smith, Kayla Arnold, Matt Trnian

Also in attendance: Anne Poindexter/counsel, Betsy Ekelof, Carl Daniels, Ashley Ledford, Sarah Buckner, Chris Kersteins, Tina Rodgers, Laura Kelner, Jill Doyle, Karen Radcliff, Brad Lynn

I. Welcome and Introductions

S. Spillman called the meeting to order at 9:41 a.m.

S. Spillman welcomed new HCT board member, Matt Trnian, Director Grand Park Sports Campus.

II. Minutes of the March 2025 Meeting

N. Burns made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, K. Arnold seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

III. Financials & Metrics -- CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A. 2025 Visitor & Lodging Report

K. Radcliff presented on the current state of travel from Q1 data sources. While Q1 held to revenue projections, consumer and business sectors lack of confidence in the economy is showing in future booked business. Weekends continue to pace as projected, but weekday business travel—still not recovered from the pandemic—looks to push its recovery even further into 2026 or later due to volatility from the national tariff discussions. Limited service hotels generally did not fare as well as full service in Q1.

B. 2025 Tax Remittance Reports

C. 2025 HCT Financial Report

B. Lynn presented on the 2025 tax remittance and financial reports. Still very cash strong, reinvested the CD in April. Asked for volunteers for the audit committee. N. Burns, K. Arnold, A. Clendenin volunteered depending on schedules.

V. Dora made a motion to approve consent agenda as presented, M. Balcolm seconded. No discussion. Motion passed.

IV. New Business

A. 2026 Recommendation to Tourism Commission for Appropriations

B. Lynn discussed the process required for the 2026 appropriations request to Hamilton County Council. The amount must be submitted on behalf of the Tourism Commission to the county council in June. In looking at the preliminary draft budget for 2026, N. Burns asked why marketing is budgeted to be up but the sports department is down, K. Radcliff informed the state sports grant is not expected for next year which alters

revenue for sports. B.Lynn informed that sports did increase after the grant was removed. K. Radcliff stated that forecasted revenue shows a flat year due to less events but additional hotel rooms, and the plan is to adjust end of year spending if revenue increases or decreases. K. Arnold asked if we have marketing plans for the increased budget. A. Ledford assured that we do. K.Radcliff provided a few scenarios. M. Balcolm asked how Cincinnati performed. A. Ledford informed on performance for cities.

C. Stice moved to approve the 2026 budget for appropriations request, B. Dubois seconded. No discussion, motion passed.

B. 2025 Staffing

K. Radcliff shared that we have an open Vice President of Marketing & Sales job description ready to share. Plan to have someone in place by mid-July. N. Burns asked where we will post, T. Rodgers shared her list of places we share.

C. AI Policy

T. Rodgers introduced C. Kersteins to discuss the Generative AI Policy they created together to make sure staff follows best practices. N. Burns asked if HCT plans to cite that AI as our source, K. Radcliff informed that we will when needed. K. Arnold advised to be careful when using AI for foreign language. A. Poindexter asked to change the document to “foreign language drafts.” B. DuBois asked about adding confidential documents to the platforms. C. Kersteins and T. Rodgers referred to page 2 of the document for the policy.

J. Smith made a motion to approve AI Policy with the “drafts” edit, K. Arnold seconded. No further discussion, motion passed.

D. HC Economic Development MOU Amendment

B. Lynn presented on behalf of Invest Hamilton County; they have requested to amend the previously approved MOU. This amendment states the 2025 fee for services amount not to exceed \$855,971.64.

C Stice made a motion to approve the amended MOU as presented, N. Burns seconded. No further discussion, motion passed.

V. Old Business

A. LIV Golf Event Update

K. Radcliff presented that the event plans are moving along, we will try to get all board members and a guest out during the event if they would like to attend.

B. PSDA and TID Legislative Update

K. Radcliff shared that the PSDA legislation requested by the cities of Westfield and Noblesville was not approved, they will attempt to go back. The statewide TID legislation was also not taken up for approval, but had generally received positive feedback.

C. BEST Grants Update

K. Radcliff reported that BEST funds were distributed to four grant recipients. Tourism Commission attorneys had to work through the process.

D. 2025 Marketing Plan 2.0

A. Ledford presented that we are out in the market. Louisville, Ft. Wayne, statewide in Indiana. .5 million media buy including premium digital, and digital “out of home” at gas stations or restaurants. Campaign launched April 14.

E. Noblesville Creates Building Update

B. Lynn reviewed work done so far on Noblesville Creates buildings: siding is done, new HVAC has been completed. We have \$34,000 for future projects. Going to move forward with applying for a façade grant from the City of Noblesville to make the front porch of the Stephenson House ADA compliant. Tuck pointing and foundation issues still need to be addressed.

VI. Adjourn until 8:30 a.m., June 6, 2025

J. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting, K, Arnold seconded, no discussion, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 10:26 a.m.