

Approved March 21, 2012

MINUTES

Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors Meeting February 15, 2012

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau met at the Courtyard by Marriott, Chapel Hill

Board Members Present: Dave Gephart, Karen DeHart, Mike Gering, Greg Overbeck, Laura Morgan, Mark Sherburne, Lydia Lavelle, Lee Pavao, Annette Stone, Anthony Carey, Jim Parker, Gordon Jameson, Valerie Foushee

Members Absent: Donna Bell

Staff Present: Laurie Paolicelli, Linda Ekeland, Martha Shannon and Tina Fuller

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Dave Gephart called the meeting to order at 8:10 am

WELCOME

Chair Gephart introduced Crystal Bynum, General Manager of the Courtyard and host for this meeting. Ms. Bynum spoke on recent renovations at the Courtyard; the lobby has a new look, the addition of The Bistro and Starbucks Coffee. Ms. Bynum stated rates are slowly coming back; the Courtyard is offering added value to the customers stay. She also noted they are averaging 7 days out for bookings.

Chair Gephart began the meeting with New Business

NEW BUSINESS

Visitor Bureau Relocation Committee

Mr. Gephart informed board members that street traffic to the Visitors Center has dropped in the last months. Gephart stated he believes it is because the center is in a location not always accessible to visitors due to parking limitations and being camouflaged on West Franklin Street. Gephart suggested forming a committee to discuss the feasibility of the Visitor Bureau relocating to a better location. Gephart asked for volunteers. **Anthony Carey, Karen DeHart and Mark Sherburne volunteered.**

Special Event Committee

Mr. Gephart at the request of Executive Director, Laurie Paolicelli, asked for volunteers to form a special event committee. Throughout the year, the Visitors Bureau is asked by various organizations for sponsorships to assist them with their special event. The committee would discuss procedures and what kind of support should be given. **Anthony Carey, Jim Parker, Annette Stone, Dave Gephart, Laura Morgan and Lee Pavao volunteered.**

A follow up notice will be sent to both committees to schedule meeting dates.

Approved March 21, 2012

Re-Election of Board Officers

Executive Director Laurie Paolicelli informed board members that board officer positions would be up for re-election in June. She also noted that letters of recommendation have gone out for board members whose first terms have expired and would like to serve a second term. The BOCC would review these recommendations at their March 20th meeting.

Other New Business

Dave Gephart announced that the Orange County Cultural Center in Hillsborough hired a new director, Elizabeth Waugh-Stewart. The Center will offer studio space and events.

Ms. Paolicelli announced that she was invited to speak on tourism as part of the Town of Chapel Hill's 2020 Vision. She will be speaking in the Town's council chambers on February 22, 2012 at 12 noon.

REPORTS

As in the past two meetings, regular reports were suspended to hear the progress of Clean Designs proposed marketing plan. Before Clean Designs presentation, Ms. Paolicelli gave a brief summary of what has transpired thus far noting that the board voted to go with the **Alternative South** platform. She also reviewed what Clean Design would be presenting today.

Clean Design Report

Natalie Perkins, CEO of Clean Design, gave a quick recap on the creative ideas and introduction to media from their last presentation.

Stephanie Perri reviewed the survey, targeted groups and positioning matrix. She also reminded the board that all creative will spring from the Alternative South platform.

Scott Scaggs presented two campaign concepts.

- 1) Seek Unique. Described Chapel Hill and Orange County by "what it is not": no billboards, no IMAX, etc.
- 2) Edge of the Triangle. Explore the Edge of the Triangle, experience the Edge and unwind at the Edge

Scott noted that the current script logo would not work with either of these campaigns or the platform in general.

Scott then presented other ideas they were looking at:

- 1) Sports awareness of Chapel Hill - different side of the hill, not related to UNC but the cultural side.
- 2) Trendsetting, "what's next" – trends that have come out of this area and what might be next

Laurie Paolicelli commented to clarify that the 'Seek Unique' campaign would come back with examples of what is unique to our area? Natalie Perkins confirmed.

Dave Gephart commented that he wants the campaign to lead with Chapel Hill, but not to forget about Hillsborough and Carrboro. He inquired if these towns have been discussed.

Approved March 21, 2012

Laurie reminded that the Marketing committee voted to lead with Chapel Hill and in all fairness, Clean Design has done that. Laurie went on to say that if the board decides to lead with Orange County then they need to decide today.

The board commenced discussion and concluded that the Chapel Hill name is national and should lead the campaign. Both concepts can incorporate all three towns; especially in "Explore the Edge" campaign. It was also noted that when presenting a new campaign, concentration should be placed on what is known.

Greg Overbeck inquired if the tag 'Seek Unique' has been used before. Natalie Perkins stated that it did not come up in a Google search for the immediate area. Natalie also noted that in looking for the awareness of the Triangle, they found that the Research Triangle is known as the Triangle. Stephanie Perri commented that the business traveler will know Research Triangle.

Ms. Paolicelli inquired if Carrboro and Hillsborough venues and attractions would be a part of the 'Edge' and Chapel Hill 'Seek Unique'? Scott replied that it would be very easy to accommodate all attractions into both of these campaigns.

After some discussion, the board agreed they liked both campaigns with Seek Unique as the tagline and Edge of the Triangle as the main message. However, it was cautioned that we don't want to end up with a "three hump camel"

After the creative presentation, Tom Hickey presented strategy

- 1) Message hooks would be in digital messaging
- 2) Focusing on North Carolina geography (depending on budget, markets outside of NC can be tested)
- 3) Possibly billboards in Raleigh and Durham
- 4) May do some local

Both Anthony Carey and Mark Sherburne commented that in their experience for the past few years, guests have inquired about accommodations through digital avenues. However, Anthony also commented that editorials should still be in print.

Due to time constraints, strategy was cut short and would be presented in more depth at the next board meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Chair Gephart requested a motion to approve the January 18, 2012 minutes. Lee Pavao so moved with Lydia Lavelle seconding. With all members in favor, the minutes were approved as written.

Announcements

Laurie Paolicelli announced that Valerie Foushee has filed to run for a seat in the North Carolina House of Representatives. Ms. Foushee has served two full terms with the Board of County Commissioners. Valerie stated that she has lived in Orange County her whole life and has advocated for the county as a whole rather than a segment.

Lydia Lavelle announced that the Town of Carrboro hired a new town manager, David Andrews

Ms. Paolicelli announced that she will be presenting a report about the Visitors Bureau's support to Hillsborough at the Hillsborough/Orange County Chamber of Commerce's May meeting.

Next meeting venue

Durham Tech, Orange County Campus, in Hillsborough.

Approved March 21, 2012

And with no other business to discuss, Dave Gephart requested a motion to adjourn. Lee Pavao so moved and Greg Overbeck seconded. With all members in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 am.

Minutes reviewed by:
Laurie Paolicelli, Executive Director

Minutes accepted by:
Dave Gephart, Chairman

Date

Date