

Approved October 16, 2013

MINUTES

Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau Board of Directors Meeting September 18, 2013

The Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau met at
Extraordinary Ventures, 200 S. Elliott Rd. in Chapel Hill

Board Members Present: Anthony Carey, Dave Gephart, Jack Schmidt, Jim Parker, Karen DeHart, Laura Morgan, Lydia Lavelle, Mark Sherburne, Mike Gering, Penny Rich, Annette Stone & Meg McGurk

Not Present: Gene Pease, Gordon Jameson, Greg Overbeck & Lee Pavao

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

Also attending: Daniel Wallace, author; Stephanie Perri and Tom Hickey from Clean Design

Welcome

Chairman Anthony Carey began the meeting at 8:11 am and welcomed everyone to Extraordinary Ventures (EV). Mr. Carey introduced Cyndi Whisnant, Event Director at EV and thanked her for hosting this meeting. Ms. Whisnant described for the board the organization's history and mission to help older persons with developmental disabilities find a place in the community by providing them jobs and responsibilities. Ms. Whisnant also spoke about current programs and future plans of the organization.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Carey requested a motion to approve the August 21, 2013 minutes. Dave Gephart so moved and Penny Rich seconded. With all members in agreement, the minutes were approved as submitted.

Guest Speaker

Mr. Carey introduced Daniel Wallace, author of Big Fish and new release, The Kings & Queens of Roam. Mr. Wallace confirmed Big Fish is on Broadway and played a song from the musical. Mr. Wallace spoke on the importance of highlighting this areas resource of authors in the Chapel Hill/Orange County branding to bring in visitors. Mr. Wallace stated that he is amazed at how positively this one book he wrote (Big Fish cost him \$70 to write) resulted in so many people being employed, from book stores to artists, Broadway staff and a \$14 million production. He made this point to illustrate the economic power of the creative class.

Other News

Speaking about the Hampton Inn & Suites Ribbon Cutting event, Mr. Carey gave kudos to many on the successful grand opening of the new hotel. He gave the floor to Annette Stone for remarks. Ms. Stone mentioned that the hotel has been open for about two weeks and the (Town of Carrboro) is happy to have them. She noted that the parking deck would be a great asset to the downtown area.

Jack Schmidt confirmed his resignation from The Carolina Inn and his new appointment as Director of Sales at the Washington Duke Inn & Golf Club. Mr. Schmidt reported that The Carolina Inn is in the top two, of all the Destination properties, for customer service scores and as the DOS and GM for The Carolina Inn, he is proud that he was able to contribute to that honor. He gave kudos to the VB and Clean Design for their marketing abilities.

Reports

Marketing Update

Tom Hickey, Media Director for Clean Design took board members through an overview of past and present key initiatives, media mix and goals for the year ahead. Mr. Hickey reported that online advertising would increase slightly and print would decrease the same with this year's media plan. He also reported that 21% of the advertising budget would go to group meetings compared to 7% last year. Mr. Hickey explained that they were putting less emphasis on The Edge of the Triangle, leaving it as a tag line, and focusing more on the 'experience' visitors can enjoy in Orange County, from Hillsborough street festivals and puppet parades to Indian food, galleries and grocery shopping. He also noted that new media partners, USA Gay Pages, Carolina Alumni Review and Public Art Review were added to the media mix. Stephanie Perri, the Bureau's account representative from Clean Design added that they are involved in other areas of promoting Orange County with the Goodnight Carolina map, Hillsborough historic piece, agritourism insert, LGBT ads and event specific ads to support community partners.

Budget/Finance

Commissioner Penny Rich reported that last year's occupancy revenue came in approximately \$27,000 over what the Town of Chapel Hill budgeted. Per the 2012-2013 performance agreement with the town, 50% of the actual overage would be given to the Bureau. The town will send the Bureau the additional \$13,682.53 in this fiscal year along with the 2013-2014 agreed amount of \$175,000. Commissioner Rich commented on the art grant awards given last night at the BOCC meeting. She turned to Martha Shannon to congratulate and elaborate. Ms. Shannon explained that for the fiscal year 2012-2013, the NC State Arts Council allotted \$30,762 in grant money to Orange County for schools and non-profit organizations that apply for grants to help fund art related projects. Ms. Shannon explained that these grant checks are handed out annually by the commissioners during their regular board meeting. Continuing with the finance report, Rich stated that revenue and expenditures are on target so far for this budget year. Concluding her report, Commissioner Rich commented that she felt the \$51,000 charged to the Bureau for administrative fees was a little high and she would like to speak to the other commissioners about the possibility of lowering that amount.

Executive Director Report

Laurie Paolicelli reported that in accordance with the relocation committee's request, she is preparing a presentation on recommendations for the future location and scope of a walk-in Visitors Center and she would be presenting this recommendation in October. Additionally Paolicelli deferred a marketing presentation to the agency and noted that staff's work in communications, administration and sales were strong, on-target and impressive.

Sales Report

Linda Ekeland reported that July was strong in several group markets. She also reported that she is getting leads for bookings as far out as 2018. Furthermore, she is working with the Sheraton Hotel on a bid to bring in a national conference for 2016 & 2017. Ekeland continued her report, informing board members that SkyLink Shuttle will join the October 4th RDU Road Show. With regard to the AENC Tradeshow in December, Ms. Ekeland explained that she and the other DOS's are having a hard time coming up with booth ideas noting that last year's theme will be hard to beat. Concluding her report, Ms. Ekeland stated she is seeing a new trend in holiday bust tours; she is currently working with hotels and other venues for two tours coming in December.

Hillsborough

Jim Parker invited board members to the upcoming Fresh Roots Festival, on September 28. Yep Rock is hosting the afternoon music entertainment from 2-6 pm; Downtown merchants will be open.

Downtown

Meg McGurk announced this year's Festifall would be interactive with a digital library, poetry fox, and art of the move presented by the Ackland Art Museum. The festival is October 6th from 12-6pm. Ms. McGurk also announced that DTP is working with Colleen Minton on an event called 'Small Plate Crawl' as an extension of TerraVITA- participating restaurants must offer 100% locally sourced food; eight restaurants on board so far. McGurk reported that Chapel Hill has been selected as a destination for the Pink Heals Tour, a fundraiser for cancer patients; the Chapel Hill Fire Dept. and Orange County first responders will join volunteer firefighters and police officers driving Pink fire trucks and police cruisers on Friday September 20 at the UNC Cancer Hospital and U-Mall. Lastly, McGurk reported that UNC vs. Miami Football tickets would be sold at 50% off for Thursdays October 17 game.

Carrboro

Annette Stone announced the Carrboro Farmer's Market is having its second annual harvest potluck fundraiser on September 26. Proceeds will be used for physical improvements to the Town Commons Space. Stone also announced Carrboro Music Festival is September 28 and 29 this year.

With no other business to discuss, Chairman Carey adjourned the meeting at 9:30 AM.

Minutes reviewed by: Laurie Paolicelli,
Executive Director

Date

Minutes accepted by: Anthony Carey,
Chairman

Date