

HAMILTON COUNTY VISITORS AND CONVENTION COMMISSION
37 E. Main Street, Carmel, Indiana
Minutes of the Meetings
February 16, 2017

Attending the Meeting: Paul O'Connor, Donna Prather, Brenda Tolson, Chris Renner, Bill Smythe, Jack Holforty, Lisa Hanni, Perry Williams, Robyn Paucker, Andrea Huisden, Casey Wilson and John Wechsler.

Also attending:

Brenda Myers, President/CEO; Karen Radcliff, Vice President/CSO; Sarah Buckner, Executive Assistant/Tourism Gives Coordinator; Christine Altman, Counsel. Betsy Ekelof, Director of Operations, attended a portion of the meeting as well.

Executive Session

Paul O'Connor opened the executive session at approximately 5:45 p.m. Brenda Myers presented information regarding potential real estate transactions to the commission. The meeting adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

I. Welcome

President Paul O'Connor opened the regular meeting at 6:43 p.m.

II. Minutes of the November 2016 Meeting

The minutes of the November 2016 minutes had been distributed electronically for review. Donna Prather moved to accept the minutes; Lisa Hanni seconded. Motion passed.

III. Metrics & Finances

Brenda Myers then presented 2016 year-end financial metrics. All target goals were met by staff, and it was a record year for hotel sales growth and revenue.

A. 2016 Tax Collections/2017 Y-T-D Tax Collections

- 2016 room revenue was up 12.3% for the year, with lodging tax revenue up 9%
- Overall tax collections through February 2017 deposit totals \$617,743.62, which is 10% over budget projections

B. 2016 Lodging Data/2017 Y-T-D Lodging Data

- 2016 room demand was up 5.5% with an inventory increase of 13.8%
- Room revenue was up 12.3% for the year to \$4,102,538
- 2017 demand year-to-date is up 11.5% and revenue is up 11.3%
- 2017 occupancy is 50.7%, which is down 2% from 2016 against inventory growth of 13.8%

C. 2017 Budget Amendments

- With just a few weeks into the new budget year, no 2017 budget update was available, however the HCT Board approved a budget amendment to carry over two projects from 2016 that were not completed and thus not expensed
- These include: \$75,000 for digital installations and another \$50,000 for marketing digital work, including completion of the web site
- It does not impact the Tourism Commission's contract

D. 2017 Commission Audit

- A. A financial review of the commission has already been completed by the auditor, with copies were available for review and provided to the Auditor's Office and State Board of Accounts

Brenda Tolson moved that the financials be accepted as presented; Perry Williams seconded. Motion passed.

IV. Old Business

- A. Kincaid House** – B. Myers reported that no updates were available on the Kincaid House. Discussion took place as to whether the house would eventually have to be torn down. She noted that this would be a last resort and other options should be available. The Nickel Plate Arts center and Hamilton County Tourism are waiting on the final purchase of the property south of the house to go through.
- B. Other Community Projects Updates** – B. Myers updated the Tourism Commission on the HCT's work on supporting continuation of rail operations on the northern part of the Hoosier Heritage Port Authority line, as well as the White River activation study and the agricultural life sciences project. All studies are in development.
- C. Election of Officers** – B. Myers then noted that the 2017 slate of officers had been presented, including: Paul O'Connor returning as president; Perry Williams as vice president; Brenda Tolson as secretary; and, Donna Prather as treasurer. Andrea Huisden moved that the slate of officers be accepted as presented; Bill Smythe seconded. Motion passed.

V. New Business

- A. Hospitality Certificate Program** – B. Myers updated everyone on an exciting new hospitality certificate program being piloted at Westfield High School in partnership with Ivy Tech Community College and IUPUI's Tourism Convention Event Management (TCEM) School. Students will be able to take classes at the high school, earn college credit and work toward a certificate program as well as apply for internships.
- B. List of Grants Awarded** – B. Myers presented a list of grants awarded through the Hamilton County Sports Authority to notify the Tourism Commission should they get any questions.
- C. Adoption of Executive Session** – The Tourism Commission approved the HCT's desire to move forward with a letter of intent for a possible new location based on a financial review that shows the HCT will not reduce services with this new expenditure. Christian Renner moved and P. Williams seconded. Motion passed.

VI. D. Prather moved that the meeting be adjourned at 7:30 p.m.; B. Tolson seconded. Motion passed.