



**HAMILTON COUNTY TOURISM BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
**37 E. Main Street, Carmel, Indiana**  
**Minutes of the Meetings**  
**February 3, 2017**

**2017 ANNUAL MEETING**

**Attending the Meeting:** Amy Ahlersmeyer, Emily Lovison, Melody Jones, Bob DuBois, John Hughey, Alaina Shonkwiler, Andrew Newport and Jeremy Geisendorf. Newly Elected Board Members: Jimia Smith and Al Patterson. Not attending: Jeffrey Brown, Gary Miller and Jay Gladden.

**Also attending:**

Brenda Myers, President/CEO; Karen Radcliff, Vice President/CSO; Betsy Ekelof, Operations Director; Ashley Ledford, Director of Marketing & Promotions; Laura Kelner, Director of Sales; Sarah Billman, Visitor Experience Manager; Rachel Henton, Sports Coordinator; Tina Rodgers, Assistant Director of Resources; Sarah Buckner, Executive Assistant/Tourism Gives Coordinator; Christine Altman, Counsel. Also attending was Bill Smythe, new Hamilton County Tourism Commissioner.

**I. Welcome**

President John Hughey opened the meeting at 8:33 a.m. The minutes of the 2016 Annual Meeting had been approved in March 2016.

**II. 2016 KPIs & Year-In Review**

Brenda Myers provided a summary of the 2016 year through key performance indicators. All target goals were met by staff, and it was a record year for hotel sales growth and revenue. Room demand was up 5.5% with an inventory increase of 13.8%. Room revenue was up 12.3% for the year, with lodging tax revenue up 9%. She also noted that HCT met most of its revenue goals (under by about \$5,559) and under spent by a considerable amount – approximately \$355,000 in actual cash, leaving a healthy cash balance on hand for operating reserve and other projects. She did note that during the regular meeting, as announced in November, a budget amendment to “carry over” \$125,000 in projects from 2016 would be proposed.

**III. Election of Board Members & Officers**

J. Hughey reviewed the proposed slate of new board members and a replacement officer for Paul Munoz, who left the board after changing jobs. New proposed board members are Allen Patterson, Hamilton County Parks Department; Jimia Smith, Pedcor Group/Carmel City Center; and, Jay Gladden, IUPUI. Emily Lovison has agreed to serve a one-year term, replacing Paul. John asked for any additional nominations from the floor. There being none, he asked for approval of the slate of new board members and officers as presented. Alaina Shonkwiler moved; Melody Jones seconded. Motion passed. The new board members were welcomed.

**IV.** Jimia Smith moved that the annual meeting be adjourned; Andrew Newport seconded. Motion passed. Annual meeting adjourned at 8:54 a.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**HAMILTON COUNTY TOURISM, INC.**  
37 E MAIN STREET  
CARMEL, INDIANA 46032  
P 317 848 3181 / 800 776 8687  
W VISITHAMILTONCOUNTY.COM

Counselor Christine Altman then asked that the Board amend the agenda to move the executive session to before the meeting, thus allowing any items discussed in executive session to be ratified in the board meeting. Alaina Shonkwiler moved that the agenda be amended as proposed; A. Newport seconded. Motion passed and the meeting then went into executive session.

## **REGULAR SESSION**

### **I. Welcome**

John Hughey then welcomed the Board back into regular session at 9:58 a.m. for the February meeting.

### **II. Review of the Minutes of the November 2016 Meeting**

J Hughey asked for approval of the November 2016 Board Meeting minutes.

A. Shonkwiler moved to accept the minutes; A. Ahlersmeyer seconded. Motion passed.

### **III. Metrics & Finances**

Brenda Myers then presented current financial metrics:

#### **A. Tax Collections Reports**

- Overall tax collections through February's deposit totals \$617,743.62, which is 10% over budget projections

#### **B. Occupancy & Forecast Reports Through January 28 (based on the weekly STR reports)**

- Demand up 11.5% and revenue up 11.3%
- Occupancy is 50.7%, which is down 2% from 2015 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 staff requested 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

There were no questions about the request, as it had been previously noted at the November 2016 meeting.

A. Newport moved that the budget be amended as requested; M. Jones seconded. Motion passed.

A. Ahlersmeyer moved that the financial report be accepted as presented; Emily Lovison seconded. Motion passed.

### **IV. Old Business**

- **Nickel Plate Arts Lease/Funding Agreements** – B. Myers presented a revised copy of the lease proposal with Nickel Plate Arts, Inc. for use of the Judge Stone and Stephenson Houses at the Nickel Plate Campus in Noblesville. Cost is an annual \$10/year, plus HCT will take care of any non-normal maintenance facility expenses up to \$5,000 and negotiate other issues as they arise. The other change requested at the November meeting was to provide a three-year lease agreement. HCT had requested a one-year agreement and the Nickel Plate a five-year agreement. The two groups met in the middle with a three-year agreement. No other discussion was needed, and M. Jones moved that the lease be accepted with changes; A. Newport seconded. Motion passed.
- **Financial Policy Revisions** – B. Myers noted that the board had asked staff to bring back financial policy revisions for review, but given the length of the agenda it was determined to table that review until the March 2017 meeting.

### **V. New Business**

- **Tourism Gives & Sports Operating Grants** – Rachel Henton and Sarah Buckner presented the Tourism Gives and Sports Gives operating grants for 2017. R. Henton noted that the Sports Gives program has been changed to mirror the Tourism Gives grant guidelines. S. Buckner reviewed the allocation of grants by community and noted that most grants had remained the same. Several recusals were noted as their organizations would be grant recipients. These organizations recused themselves from their line item and included: Amy Ahlersmeyer for the Conner Prairie grant; Emily

Lovison for the Center for the Performing Arts grant; John Hughey for the Fishers Arts Council Grant; Melody Jones for the Westfield Parks Department grants; and Al Patterson for the Hamilton County Bluegrass Festival. B. Myers noted that Al Patterson was not receiving a traditional grant in 2017 as HCT would be working on a marketing cooperative promotion with Strawtown Koteewi Park for \$25,000. A. Newport moved that the grants be approved, with recusals, as presented. Jeremy Geisendorf seconded; motion passed.

- **Executive Session Actions** – Bob Dubois proposed the HCT Executive Committee along with Legal Counsel and the HCT leadership team be approved to sign a letter of intent with the chosen developer on creation of a new Grow Hamilton County Center/office space, setting the parameters of the LOI as defined in executive session. A. Newport moved that the proposal be considered. J. Smith seconded. Motion passed.

#### **VI. Area Reports**

Given time considerations, no area reports were presented at this meeting.

**VII.** M. Jones moved that the meeting be adjourned at 10:20 a.m.; J. Geisendorf seconded. Motion passed.