

Howard County Tourism Council, Inc.
Board Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2016

- 8:43 Meeting called to order
- Roll Call-Quorum achieved
- Thank you Pete, for breakfast
- Announcement of new website
- Pokemon
 - \$23 average purchase
 - \$4500 approximate impact
 - 250 shirts given away in 3 days
- Approve May meeting minutes
 - Motion approved
- Financials
 - Some confusion over what the bottom line should be \$75,000 or \$25,000-Treasurer is looking into what the closeout number should be. Confirmed target was \$25,000.00
 - Final financials are in the works for the end of FY16. Will be voted on pending completion of audit. Next meeting-financials will be voted on-Vote officially skipped this meeting.
 - We are waiting on the MD state grant (not unusual)--we're expecting \$100,000
 - The Board needs to provide guidance to ED for target savings budgeted
 - Contingency fund has some questions around it,
 - Does the County have stipulations on how we spend/if we can save \$\$
 - What of our money can actually be put away to carry over years?
 - New accounting firm-Taurus CPAs
 - We'll be able to streamline the accounting process from here on out
 - If we're budgeting based on last year's numbers, Hotel booking need to be looked at, some have not performed to last years numbers--will impact the Hotel Tax return we'll get next year.
 - How much does the board want the Savings to be?
 - 6 months bare bones operations-\$250,000-\$300,000
 - How long will it take to get to that number?
 - 2-3 years
 - Target confirmed get to six months management budget for Savings
 - Discussion needs to happen for what we will spend Savings on--special projects, emergency fund, etc.
- New Board Member Nomination Process
 - Streamline the process
 - leaving--Vinnie Regge, Tim Kelley, Beth Dittman (resigned)
 - 16 voting members of the Board currently
 - New language for FY17 Board Member Ballots
 - Moved to approve
 - Unanimous approval
- FY 17 Business & Marketing Plan
 - Overarching goals
 - No questions
 - Administration & Relations
 - No questions
 - Marketing

- Collaborative goals: Patapsco Heritage Greenway wants to work with MD state grant \$\$ to market with us the Greenway, and Ellicott City
- Public Relations
 - Weirick Communications is rolling with our story--she's got a plan based around the Marketing Calendar that we provided with her
 - Matt Baker: Annapolis promotes themed events/packages/ itineraries to push out through PR--HoCo could benefit from specialized pushes
- Development
 - We need to look to the future: what will bring people in the future, and what will bring people back?
 - Is it more events, attractions?
 - MC Cochran: look forward to events like B&O 250th anniversary in 2026
 - State just put together a team to study funding for small museums--will forward questionnaire to give us a chance to participate
 - Studies can be done to research what the destination can handle (look at Asheville, NC)
 - M Baker-We should be scouring for media/travel trends-
 - Everyone want an "experience"- so we have to find ways to build them
 - MCC-Patapsco Trails Fest (September)-First ever event
- Trade Shows/Sales
 - How will you engage people around the sports market--what tactics will be used to go "one more day"
 - What are we doing to extend the spend to the sports groups
 - Sports & Merriweather are the weekends, how are we maximizing these opportunities?
 - Can we be more methodical about scheduling events--making sure that we're not saturating the market only a few times a year
 - Sally-lots of these things can be addressed with the planners/coordinators of these big events.
 - DOS member of: ASAE, MPI, DMAI, NASC, ABA
 - Make sure the money is spent where it should be, and not just because it's a show to go to. DOS wants to grow the County
 - M. Baker-This board has struggled in the past: Why are people coming here? Emphasis had been on regional marketing in the past? What can you do to change this view?
 - Sales missions in the region, Richmond, Philadelphia
 - B. Mangus--Blossoms of Hope-Cherrybration- there has been a relationship in the past-BoH was at the Japanese Embassy, and will be working next year to expand the Cherrybration days for 2017. Future goals, expand to the BWI area (they have an art exhibit area) to do a Cherry themed exhibit
 - DDC could be a great partner/example on reaching out to planners/tour operators to tie things in with the Cherry Blossom Festival
 - Research: Longwoods will be coming back to us in July 2017 with good hard data on who is staying here, how long, and how they got here
 - C. Chandler-Howard County is a cost effective base for all major events, such as Baltimore's Fleet Week
 - MCC: Patapsco Heritage Greenway is part of a Greenway association, and will be sharing all the updates/ news/ events from the Greenways
- Visitor Services & Operations
 - No Questions
- FY17 Membership Rate and Benefits

- M. Baker--are we a membership organization?
 - Benefits get you on our website/VG
 - If we have the opportunity to sell a non-member to a PR story or the like, we will include any attraction/restaurant
 - This structure will also keep member expectations realistic
 - Will there be other opportunities to showcase a business
 - HCTP will not monetize every opportunity that we offer, but HCTP needs to be able to sell every aspect of HoCo
 - HCTP will make some opportunities available for buy in: website prime listing, advertising, trade shows, etc.
- D. Balderson- Do we want the out of county Hotels to pay \$750 or \$1000?
 - HCTP recommends \$750
 - C. Chandler-because of the amount of money the in county hotels pay in tax revenue, charge the out of county hotels \$1000
 - SEO-google searches pull Anne Arundel hotels for "Columbia, MD"
 - P. Mangione- Wants to keep the out of county hotels, but to charge \$750
 - Budget impact: \$50,000 or so will be lost in Partnership revenue, how are we going to make up this money?
 - HCTP estimates about \$10,000 net from the new membership model - Treasurer wants to see that move higher
 - M. Libber- The Greene Turtle has just moved the corporate headquarters to Columbia
 - Treasurer goal: 250-300 partners this year
 - Group recommends \$1,000-Vote passed
- FY17 Budget (vote)
 - Bottom line: we do need to make sure that \$25,000 will be left at the end, so if there is a loss, the expenses have to be cut
 - HCTP: What can we do to increase weekday traffic in hotels?
 - Strategic plan should give us a good guideline for the next few years
 - Planning session at November meeting
- 10:20 Meeting Adjourned

Attendance

Term Ends EOFY		First	Last	Present
	ex-officio	Parker	Jean	
	ex-officio	Bates	Gail	
	ex-officio	Cochran	Mary Catherine	x
	ex-officio	Guzzone	Guy	
	ex-officio	Harden	Al	x
	ex-officio	Hasseltine	Terry	x
	ex-officio	Wilson	Diane	x
	ex-officio	Johnson	Kathy	x
	ex-officio	Richardson	Donna	
2018	voting	Nicklas	Barbara	

2016	voting	Tim	Kelley	
2016	voting	Barnard	Valerie	x
2016	voting	Kilby	Ellen	
2016	voting	Yetso	Brock	
2017	Executive	Libber	Mike	x
2017	Executive	Mangione	Pete	x
2017	Executive	Mangus	Becky	x
2017	voting	Mattis	Julia	
2017	voting	Rochard	Erik	
2018	voting	Karen	Besson	
2018	Executive	Balderson	David	x
2018	voting	Baker	Matt	x
2018	voting	Chandler	Chuck	x
2018	Executive	Clark	Martha	x
2018	voting	Kelehan	Kevin	x
2018	voting	Buscher	Tori	x
2018	voting	Winer	Jay	x