

Tourism Board Meeting Minutes

8:30 a.m. August 21, 2020

Meeting via Zoom due to COVID-19

In attendance: Craig Meadows, Randy Wingfield, Marc Verniel, Irene Kilmer, Lisa Bleakley

Craig Meadows calls the regular meeting of the tourism board to order at 8:30 a.m.

1. Consensus of Agenda

- a. Motion by Randy Wingfield to adopt the consent agenda. Marc Verniel seconds the motion. All say aye. The agenda is adopted.

2. Approval of Minutes from June 23, 2020 and August 19, 2020

- a. Marc Verniel makes a motion to approve the June 23, 2020 board minutes. Randy Wingfield seconds the motion. All say aye. Minutes approved.
- b. Randy Wingfield makes a motion to approve the August 19, 2020 board minutes. Marc Verniel seconds the motion. All say aye. Minutes approved.

3. Financial Report

- a. Updated June and July Financials
 - i. We will be unencumbering amount to move onto the new contract from last FY. \$37,093 has been taken off of the current year.
 - ii. Motion to accept as presented. Marc moved. Randy seconded. All say aye.
- b. Weekly STR reports for July
 - i. Now purchasing weekly reports instead of monthly. There was no change to the cost.
 - ii. STR report for week of August 9-15th presented.
 - iii. Hotels worried about the dip that will occur when Virginia Tech move-in ends.
 - iv. Lisa mentions that it has been brought to her attention that the hotels located close to the interstate are worried that the mindset of travelers is to avoid hotels near the interstate to avoid more out of state travelers. This idea is something to keep track of and the impact it might have.

4. Administrative

- a. MTDC roster updates
 - i. Lea Wall, Connie Hale, and Luke Brugh's MTDC terms are approaching or have reached their expiration dates.
 1. The board approves Lisa to reach out to see if they are interested in serving another term.
- b. Blacksburg office
 - i. The board agrees that we want to keep a presence in the Blacksburg office, but are not comfortable with Irene being the sole person in the building without a property manager present. Irene will continue to work from home and in the Christiansburg office. The board will reevaluate reopening the Blacksburg office at the first of the year or if someone is hired to sit up front.
 - ii. Check on invoicing. We will continue to occupy the space unless it becomes a financial issue.

5. Grants

- a. CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Funding Request
 - i. Lisa is connecting with Marty Holiday for statistics to add to the white paper in regards to the Cares funding request. Angie and Marty will review once complete. There are not exact number on jobs lost, but there is information on revenues lost for restaurants and hotels compared to last year. Lisa can reach out to Susan and Val in the finance offices for that

information. Craig will look over over the final document before forwarding to the County Cares Funds review committee. .

- ii. A decision will need to be made if the request is approved for how the Cares funds will be paid. Will the money come from the County or will both towns chip in some of their allocated Cares funds to cover the amount?
- b. WanderLove mini campaign- VTC grant-funded
 - i. We received a \$10,000 grant from the Virginia Tourism Corporation. We have purchased a package with WSLs to produce broadcast and digital marketing materials.
 - ii. Looking at targeting Charlotte, Piedmont-Triad, and Winston-Salem, North Carolina for the campaign.
 - iii. Marc mentions looking into targeting the Richmond, DC, Hampton Roads area with a Virginia Tech fan affinity. Potential to reach this market with the Facebook ads.
 - iv. *Be Committed, Be Well* will be tagged on at the end or integrated throughout the marketing materials . "Travel Safely" will be included at the end of the commercial.

6. Discussion

- a. Approval of reopening marketing contract
 - i. Once encumbered funds are available we can vote to approve the contract.
 - ii. Keep reserves for operating costs to keep doors open.
 - iii. Utilize Cares as much as we can.
 - iv. Form sent to Angie for telecommuting IT equipment.
- b. VT vs UVA rivalry healthy behavior challenge- social media campaign
 - i. Lisa spoke with Courtney, the director of the Charlottesville CVB about the ideas of a cheeky rivalry safety campaign. Marc thinks it's a great idea. Need to get the students to do it to get actual engagement. Make it a challenge for the students against UVA students. VT & UVA vs. the ACC to see who can stay open. Student leadership needs to be a part of this conversation. VT relay for life and VT union. Marc to talk with Chief Wilson about who should be contacted for ideas, etc.

7. Other

- a. Marc updates the board that the Town of Blacksburg is working on videos by students with talking points so they can talk to their peers. Trying to figure out how to challenge the students think of being the only ACC college to stay open. It's up to students to keep it open. Need to use the students to help change the behavior. Radford has been a great example on working their way through Covid tests and remaining open and safe.
- b. Double check with Amy that MP2 is ready for the MTDC meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Upcoming Meetings in 2020:

Tourism Board: September 18, October 16, November 20, December 18

MTDC: August 27, November 19

Tourism Partnership: September 16, November 19

Sport Advisory Group: August 27, November 19