

Minutes

TOURISM BOARD

Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. March 4, 2024

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Victoria Pace, Rainbow Cabbage, Scott Czechlewski, Smita Patel, and Eryk Pruitt

Absent: Barney Caton, Meaghun Darab, Barry Hupp, and Vice-Chair Megan Kimball

Staff: Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell

1. Call to order

Chair Victoria Pace called the meeting to order at 5:31 p.m. Campbell confirmed quorum.

2. Agenda changes and approval

Campbell noted the board needed to discuss its April meeting under Monthly Reports.

Motion: Member Scott Czechlewski moved to approve the agenda as present. Member Eryk Pruitt seconded.

Vote: 5-0.

3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on February 5, 2024

Motion: Member Rainbow Cabbage moved to approve the minutes as submitted. Pruitt seconded.

Vote: 5-0.

4. Presentations

A. Contract partner quarterly reports

1. Alliance for Historic Hillsborough (Visitors Center) Q2 Report

Campbell explained that because an alliance staff member was out due to illness, she would present the alliance's quarterly report, which was also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. She described tours held by the alliance, including two organized for members of NC Preservation, and marketing efforts by the alliance to support its historic partners. She noted the alliance program director had recently resigned, creating a vacancy that they were in process of filling. Cabbage asked about the functionality of the Visit Hillsborough website, saying she had trouble zooming in on the map posted there. Campbell demonstrated how to zoom on the map and said that she would check with the website vendor on any known compatibility issues with certain phones.

2. Hillsborough Arts Council Events/Visitor Services Q2 Report

New Executive Director Heather Tatreau summarized the council's quarterly report, which was also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. She described programs held in the quarter, including those held in conjunction with the October Last Friday and Art Walk. She said numbers for gift shop sales and visitors were up. She reported that the Solstice Lantern Walk, partially funded by a tourism grant, had 4,500 attendees compared to 3,000 last year. Cabbage asked if the council had considered extending the route to the sidewalk at the West End. Tatreau said the council revisits the route each year but has to consider the best option of emergency ingress and egress. Programming and Marketing Director Iva Beveridge said the event will eventually outgrow the Riverwalk route, so expanding it has been under consideration by staff. Member Smita Patel suggested the council survey past participants for their thoughts on the route. Tatreau said organizers were also looking at creating more observation areas for non-participants. Czechlewski asked what percentage of yearly sales at the council gift shop and gallery did the second quarter sales represent. Beveridge said about 50 percent.

3. Burwell School Visitor Services Q2 Report

Matt Hughes, Chair of the Historical Hillsborough Commission, summarized the school's quarterly report, which was also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. He described programs held by the school and noted a record-breaking number of visits in the second quarter. He said the school hopes to expand its volunteer base and plans to hire a consultant to develop a strategic plan to diversify sources of revenue. Asked by Cabbage if the school was on track to having its staff funded without money from the Tourism Board, Hughes said he expected the school's request for the coming fiscal year would be less than last year's request.

4. Orange County Historical Museum Q2 Report

Site Manager Catie Atkinson summarized the museum's activities in the second quarter of FY23, which were also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. Highlights included additional programs on local collectors, a film screening, a historic cocktail tasting, and several field trips. She noted a 55% increase in the number of people engaged over the previous fiscal year, with an even higher increase in the percentage of visitors from out of state and of North Carolina visitors from outside Orange County. Cabbage asked how much square footage the museum needed to move to a better location. Atkinson said she didn't know the exact square footage of the current building, but that it was insufficient. She added that a great concern was the need for greater ADA accessibility to the building.

5. Monthly reports and comments

A. Tourism Staff Report, Visitors Center Updates, & OC Visitors Bureau Updates

Campbell said the board needed to reschedule its April 1st meeting to either April 9th or 15th. Members present discussed their availability for either date. Asked by Pace if April 10th was an option, Campbell said yes, but the board would have to use a smaller room on that date because of another meeting in the board meeting room. Pace suggested the board choose the 15th as its first option and the 10th as its second. Campbell said she would poll all board members about their availability before scheduling the April meeting.

Motion: Czechlewski moved to schedule the next board meeting at 5:30pm, April 15th, with April 10th as a backup date. Pruitt seconded.

Vote: 5-0.

B. Board comments and updates

There were none.

6. Adjournment

Pace adjourned the meeting at 6:28pm.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shannan Campbell', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Shannan Campbell
Planning and Economic Development Manager
Staff support to the Hillsborough Tourism Board

Approved: Month X, 202X