

# Minutes

## TOURISM BOARD

Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. December 4, 2023

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



Present: Chair Matt Hughes, Barney Caton, Barry Hupp, Victoria Pace, Smita Patel, Eryk Pruitt and Scott Czechlewski

Absent: Rainbow Cabbage, Megan Kimball

Staff: Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell

### 1. Call to order

Chair Matt Hughes called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m.

### 2. Agenda changes and approval

Campbell proposed adding item 5.B, reappointment of members Victoria Pace and Barney Caton and striking Item 6, Discussion Items.

Motion: Pace moved to approve the agenda as amended. Board member Hupp seconded.

Vote: 7-0

### 3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on November 6, 2023

Motion: Board member Eryk Pruitt moved minutes as submitted. Board member Scott Czechlewski seconded.

Vote: 7-0

### 4. Presentations

#### A. Contract partner quarterly reports

##### 1. Alliance for Historic Hillsborough (Visitors Center) Q1 Contracted Services Report

Amanda Boyd, executive director of the Alliance for Historic Hillsborough, summarized the alliance activities that took place in the first quarter of FY22. The presentation and report were included in the agenda packet. Boyd shared that the alliance served over 1300 people in the quarter. Alliance-sponsored walking tours, especially the Outlandish series, and field trips have drawn large numbers. The interpretive signs for Occaneechi Village are almost done. The Visitors Center was chosen by the Hillsborough Garden Club as a recipient for its first grant project and will be on the garden tour in 2025. Newsletter interest and web traffic continue to grow.

She shared two updates that require the alliance to make budget adjustments. The county will double the rent for the Dickson House, an increase the alliance can cover for February through June. \$1000 is needed to install a storm door to address a safety hazard; this money that will also come out of the Alliance's

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contingency fund. Asked by Hughes what the current rent for the building was, Boyd said \$260 a month. Campbell explained that currently the tourism program maintains the inside of the building and the county the outside, which is more expensive. She added that the county wants to divest itself of the building and is extending the lease and doubling the rent for now. There will need to be future discussions with the County on ownership and maintenance of the building long-term.

2. Burwell School Q1 Contracted Services Report

Emma Vadney, the school's new site coordinator, summarized the school activities in the first quarter of FY22, which were also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. She shared that the school had 700 visitors in the first quarter, a record high number. In addition to partnering with the Alliance to host virtual lunch and learn programs, the school hosted six events, all well-attended: a star party, a book reading by C. Georgina C., a fall festival, and two Last Friday programs, one on beekeeping and the other on the Presbyterian Church, slavery, and the Burwell School. The school is now fully staffed and has seen increased traffic on social media.

3. Hillsborough Arts Council Q1 Contracted Services Report

Iva Beveridge, Program and Marketing Director, and Chelsea Maier, council board member, summarized the council's activities in the first quarter of FY22, which were also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. Beveridge described the council's programs for each Last Friday and Art Walk held in the quarter. She shared that the gallery and gift shop saw 3224 visitors in the quarter and that 74% lived outside of Hillsborough and 61% outside of Orange County. The shop had over \$14,000 in sales.

Beveridge noted the challenges with parking as attendance at Last Fridays and other popular events has grown. Hughes mentioned the possibility of having Chapel Hill Transit or Orange County run shuttles for events. Campbell offered to provide Beveridge with contacts but noted the challenge of motivating attendees to use a shuttle. Asked about last year's Solstice Lantern Walk, Beveridge said 3100 people registered for the event and between \$12,000 and \$13,000 was collected by inviting registrants to make a \$5 donation. Hughes recommended a free fundraising platform, Zeffy, that the Orange County Historical Museum now uses.

4. Orange County Historical Museum Q1 Contracted Services Report

Catie Atkinson, site manager of the museum, summarized activities in the first quarter of FY22, which were also available in the agenda packet as a presentation. She reported that the museum had 750 on-site visitors, 447 attendees at programs and events, and 114 students and teachers attend field trips, for a total of 1,311 people served this quarter, an 80% increase over the first quarter last year. She described two especially well-attended programs: the screening of a documentary film on the closing of Central High and the Collecto-con 2-day celebration. She also shared that Courtney Smith, Exhibits and Program Coordinator at the school, gave several well-received talks in the community about the Declaration of independence.

**5. Action items**

A. 2024 Tourism Board Schedule

Discussion whether to hold meetings in January and July of 2024.

Motion: Pace moved to hold no meetings in January and July of 2024. Pruitt seconded.

Vote: 6-1 Nays: Caton

B. Reappointment of Pace and Caton for another term.

Motion: Pruitt moved to appoint Pace for another term. Hupp seconded.

Vote: 7-0

Motion: Pace moved to appoint Caton for another term. Pruitt seconded.  
Vote: 7-0

**6. Monthly reports and comments**

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

Campbell told board members they may be receiving a survey soon from the Orange County Visitors Bureau. It's intended to help determine what the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are for tourism in the county. She said food and beverage tax numbers for the first and second quarters in 2022 will be available in January and will be included in the packet for the February meeting.

**B. Board comments and updates**

Hughes praised Czechlewski for organizing a successful Christmas holiday parade. Czechlewski said he thought the parade had a record attendance this year. He added there were 87 entries in the parade, compared to 75 the previous year, over 1800 parade participants, and 650 runners in the race. He briefly described some of the logistical challenges to organizing the parade. Campbell noted that out-of-town observers had remarked on how well organized the event was.

**7. Adjournment**

Motion: Czechlewski moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:38 p.m. Hupp seconded.  
Vote: 7-0

Respectfully submitted,



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

Approved: Month X, 202X