



Patrick County Tourism Advisory Council

Called meeting of February 16, 2023

Present: Bessie Weber, Chair; Kurt Bozenmayer, Co-Chair; Jeanie Clark, Secretary; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Brian Alley; Chris Prutting

Also Present: James Houchins, Tourism Coordinator; Grace Cooper, Assistant Tourism Coordinator

Absent: Denise Stirewalt; Mary Dellenback Hill

The Patrick County Tourism Advisory Council meeting was held on February 16, 2023 in the Community Room at P & H Community College.

MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting and the meeting agenda were sent via email and presented. On motion by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Kurt Bozenmayer and carried, the Council approved the February 16th agenda as well as the January 19th minutes.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Jeanie Clark; Kurt Bozenmayer; Brian Alley; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Chris Prutting

Voting No: None

Abstaining: None

Absent: Mary Dellenback Hill

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

FINANCE/TOURISM REPORT

James reported that Lori has been working on the budget. He stated that as of January 31, the total receipts were \$656,170.54, which was \$156,170.54 over the budgeted \$500,000 for TOT. James passed around the financial document, which did not include the income overages from previous years. Presently, we are over on some of the line items in the budget, but come next budget year, James will be able to keep a better grasp on what the rollover is versus what was actually taken in. The sub-committee is aware of the numbers that have been turned in. James will hopefully have an update next month on this process. The marketing line in the budget has been increased for next year.

The application sub-committee decided to keep the three different applications and put a cap of \$5,000 on some of the applications. James will be responsible for speaking with those applying and what they are interested in doing. There will be samples and materials to help those interested in filling out an application. There are discussions of capping the marketing process at \$60,000 per year. Marketing and small business grants will be for reimbursement only. The applicants will not receive the money until they have turned in their receipts. The nonprofit or for profit statements have been taken out of the applications. The sub-committee will filter the applications and then possibly go to the full council for a vote. The goal is to educate those applying for funds on what they need to do in order to receive funding.

The Dan River Basin Association is using the old county logo for its marketing. James has been working with David on concept designs that could potentially be used for branding Tourism. "Find Yourself Here." will be the motto for Patrick County Tourism, and they will consider whether to keep the same brand for the county or create a new one. James circulated samples that have been discussed. He will talk about this in the upcoming Tourism Summit.

Kurt would like for the sub-committee to meet with Lori again concerning the verbage "budget." His concern is that all of the rollovers happen a couple months before the end of the fiscal year. James stated that the county has had approximately \$650,000 in TOT. They are unsure why the financial report is presented in the format that it is currently. James hopes to clear that up and get a better understanding for the future budget.

The Lodging Association had a meeting in which 16 people attended. Richard Landis from the Flying Horse Farm was seeking information and looking for places in Patrick County so when people come to fly, they would have a place to stay. James was thankful that Jessica with the Health Department attended as she shared useful information about AirBnB's, Bed and Breakfast, and other items. The goal is to meet every three months.

The VA 250 has had 2 meetings so far. The first meeting had three people attend, and the second meeting had 7 people attend. Representatives from both the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution attended, along with those from the Historical Society, the Enterprise, and others. James will be attending a VA 250 meeting from March 10 - 12 in Williamsburg. The state wants to encourage localities to get involved in event planning and will provide funding opportunities to help with the cost of projects. This funding should open back up around the first of April or later. James mentioned the possibility of one of the schools putting on a presentation for the VA 250.

James met with BRPA focusing on social media and the role of DMOs. Grace and Sandra had worked diligently so that the Visitor Center could become a DMO. James is hoping to take a more active role in helping fulfill jobs in Patrick County that are related to the tourism industry. The annual bluegrass festival at Wayside Park will not be held this year; however, Chris, James, and Sammy Shelor are in the process of leasing the property to hold a festival in 2024. There are a few more things to iron out, but hopefully, this will work out for a future event and more to come.

The Moonshine Heritage project is going well, and they will be applying for a MLP grant through VTC. James spoke with a representative of VDOT in Richmond, who is very interested in this project.

The Tourism Summit will be held at Fairystone Park at the Fayerdale Hall. The cut off date to attend is March 1st. Once that date arrives, they will have an idea of how many people will be attending.

James met with a Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation representative. They have begun a new fundraising campaign to benefit the parkway's gateway communities. A meeting will be held March 28th to discuss. They will be making a corporate video to reach out to stakeholders. James will encourage the Meadows of Dan Community to be in attendance at this meeting.

The Tourism Office is beginning a new initiative, the "People, Places, and Performers of Patrick County." This will kick off with an interview with Olivia Jo on February 27th. The interviews will be shared on Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube. Grace has the equipment needed. The interviews will take place in the Visitors Center.

James stated that they will be attending various festivals around Patrick County, and he hopes to increase visibility in North Carolina. The Town of Stuart is working on purchasing the Star Theatre and would help work with Surry County and other surrounding areas to offer various events.

Grace reported that she has switched to using Youtube as TikTok is not presently an option. She will monitor to see how well posts there perform. She has been looking at various festivals to attend but is unsure if they will be able to secure a vendor space at FloydFest this year. She would like to get the wildflower garden at Angle Overlook underway. James would like to check on Google for nonprofits to help with pricing.

MARKETING REPORT

David was not present; however, James stated he will have the webpage complete before the Tourism Summit. David hopes to complete the banners that are owed soon. James has been working with David on finalizing more immediate items, like the magazine advertisements.

CHAMBER REPORT

Rebecca sent a Chamber Report by email as she was unable to attend the meeting. She and James have been working on the upcoming Tourism Summit.

NEW BUSINESS

James presented the new sponsorship applications.

On motion by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Jeanie Clark and carried, the Council voted to approve the new sponsorship applications.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Kurt Bozenmayer; Brian Alley; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Chris Prutting; Jeanie Clark
Voting No: None
Abstaining: None
Absent: Mary Dellenback Hill

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On motion by Kurt Bozenmayer, seconded by Chris Prutting and carried, the Council voted to go into Executive Session.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Kurt Bozenmayer; Brian Alley; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Chris Prutting; Jeanie Clark
Voting No: None
Abstaining: None
Absent: Mary Dellenback Hill

On motion by Chris Prutting, seconded by Kurt Bozenmayer and carried, the Council voted to come out of Executive Session.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Jeanie Clark; Kurt Bozenmayer; Brian Alley; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Chris Prutting
Voting No: None
Abstaining: None
Absent: Mary Dellenback Hill

On motion by Kurt Bozenmayer, seconded by Wayne Kirkpatrick and carried, the Council voted to approve a sponsorship for \$10,000 for Dominion Valley Events for marketing expenses for three events in 2023.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Kurt Bozenmayer; Brian Alley; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Chris Prutting
Voting No: None
Abstaining: Jeanie Clark
Absent: Mary Dellenback Hill

ADJOURNMENT

The Council agreed to adjourn until March 16, 2023 at 6:00 pm at the P & H Community room.

On motion by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Kurt Bozenmayer, the Tourism Advisory Council voted to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Chris Prutting; Jeanie Clark; Kurt Bozenmayer; Brian Alley; Wayne Kirkpatrick
Voting No: None
Abstaining: None
Absent: Mary Dellenback Hill