

# Patrick County Tourism Advisory Council

Called meeting of May 21st, 2020 @ 6:00 pm

Video Conference via Zoom

Present: Joanne Spangler, Chair; Bessie Weber, Vice-Chair; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Patty Hazelwood; Wayne Kirkpatrick

Also Present: Sandra Belcher, Director of Tourism; Sarah Sheppard, Assistant Director of Tourism; Jane Fulk, Board of Supervisor Liaison; Rebecca Adcock, Director of the Chamber of Commerce; David Stanley with SilverLining Designs

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The Patrick County Tourism Advisory Council meeting was held on Thursday, May 21st at 6:00 PM via a Zoom video conference.

## **AGENDA**

Joanne Spangler called the meeting to order. The agenda was presented for approval. A motion to approve the agenda was made by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Debbie Spencer and carried. The Tourism Advisory Council approved the agenda.

Voting Yes: Joanne Spangler; Bessie Weber; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Patty Hazelwood; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Jane Fulk  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting were sent via email and presented. On a motion made by Bessie Weber, seconded by Wayne Kirkpatrick and carried, the Council approved the March 19th, 2020 minutes.

Voting Yes: Joanne Spangler; Bessie Weber; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Patty Hazelwood; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Jane Fulk  
Voting No: N/A  
Abstaining: N/A  
Absent: N/A

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

Joanne Spangler opened the public comment period.  
With no one to speak, Joanne Spangler closed public comment.

## **MARKETING REPORT**

David Stanley reported reduced marketing efforts due to the recommendations of the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) and the Covid-19 crisis. The current marketing strategy will focus on outdoor recreation and wide-open, green spaces. David created two free digital banner ads for the Martinsville Bulletin. David also designed *directional* signage to be attached to the Fred Clifton Park sign that states “More Views.” David has also designed additional *visitpatrick.county.org* signage to be attached to the entryway signs. The signs have not been constructed due to reduced marketing funds. David created a half-page ad in July’s Blue Ridge Outdoors magazine, partnering with Blue Ridge Parkway Association for cost savings, and also an ad for the Blue Ridge Motorcycle magazine. Updates to the Patrick County Tourism logo, was presented featuring a sleeker design that will help the logo stand out among other logos. The logos were also presented in new color pallets that can be used when necessary.

## **CHAMBER REPORT**

Rebecca Adcock reported the Metacomp/Physical Therapy office has permanently closed. The Cash-To-Payday business has also closed. Rebecca noted the entryway sign in Spencer has been damaged. The Meadows Mercantile building in Meadows of Dan has been sold and will be offering rental space. Rebecca stated Mount Airy, NC is creating a Barn Quilt Mural and noted their inspiration was from the LOVEworks barn quilt design on the Uptown Suites building. Rebecca has been working with the Paycheck Protection Program and the Consumer Confidence Survey alongside COVID-19 Taskforce. Also reported the Healthy Patrick County organization is creating a resource booklet (both physical and online). There will be an upcoming survey released to designate Downtown Stuart as a Historic Zone, as this would be a great opportunity for possible tax incentives. A survey was completed twenty years ago, but the town fell short of qualifying. Hill Studio, a Community Planner from Roanoke will be working on the project on the Town’s behalf.

## **FINANCE REPORT**

Sandra Belcher reported the balance of the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) fund to be \$170,860.72. With a list of expected expenses, the TOT will total roughly \$86,000 by the end of June 2020. The \$60k promised to EDA for the Broadband Initiative grant will be moved into a separate Broadband account.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

The Wayside Bluegrass Festival has been officially canceled due to the Covid-19 crisis. Roger Gammons, organizer of the Kibler Valley River Run is still happening, but a final decision will be made on June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. Primland Resort and Dominion Valley Park are now accepting reservations. Fairy Stone State Park will be opening in June. The Covered Bridge 5k Race has been rescheduled to occur during the annual Woolwine October Festival.

It was noted, after communications with Across the Way Productions, Floyd Fest organizers will hold partnership funds for next year's festival with no additional costs.

The Council then discussed whether or not a tourism sponsored canceled/rescheduled event should reapply for future sponsorship. Council members agreed if the event had not already received funding, there would be a reapplication process for sponsorship due to the future inconsistencies in transient occupancy tax funds brought on by COVID-19.

Sarah Sheppard reported on the continuation of efforts towards the new tourism website build, which also features events and blogs. Also she is updating out-of-date county tourism related directory listings on the virginia.org tourism site.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

Sarah Sheppard created tourism Facebook content for the annual National Travel & Tourism Week, named the "Spirit of Travel" in the wake of Covid-19.

VTC has hosted weekly industry Zoom meetings the tourism department has attended.

The Blue Ridge Parkway Association meeting will be next week. Patrick County has been asked to be on the Association board.

Sandra has updated Patrick County's presence on the Fish Virginia First website.

VTC is offering a Covid-19 recovery grant which the tourism department will be applying for.

Sandra is communicating with a video company to create promotional videos with the theme "We'll be waiting for you," per VTC guidance, for \$1,200 total.

Bessie Weber mentioned the Patrick County Leadership Class has started a project to fund picnic tables to Patrick County restaurants/businesses to help increase their outdoor seating capacity and social distancing measures during the Covid-19 crowd restrictions.

Sandra states there are two sponsorship applications waiting for review by the Council. However, until the TOTax has increased, the applications are on hold.

Wayne Kirkpatrick suggested the Council waive the 90-day timeline requirement on sponsorship applications in the wake of the Covid-19 crisis and the council agreed.

On a motion made by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Bessie Weber and carried, the Council voted to go into Executive session to discuss:

Personal Matters 2.2-3711 (A) (1),  
Legal Matters 2.2-3711 (A) (7),  
Contract Matters 2.2-3711 (A) (30), &  
Real Estate 2.2-3711 (A).

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Patty Hazelwood; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Joanne Spangler; Jane Fulk

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: N/A

On a motion made by Roger Gammons, seconded by Wayne Kirkpatrick and carried, the Tourism Council voted to come out of executive session.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Joanne Spangler; Jane Fulk

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: Patty Hazelwood

On a motion made by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Debbie Spencer and carried, the Tourism Council voted to continue the sponsorship of WHEO Radio.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Joanne Spangler; Jane Fulk

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: Patty Hazelwood

The Tourism Council agreed the next meeting will be held on Thursday, June 18th at 6:00 PM. The location will be determined closer to the meeting date due to the ever-changing conditions of the Covid-19 crisis.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

On a motion made by Wayne Kirkpatrick, seconded by Debbie Spencer and carried, the Tourism Council voted to adjourn.

Voting Yes: Bessie Weber; Debbie Spencer; Ingrid Caldwell; Roger Gammons; Wayne Kirkpatrick; Joanne Spangler; Jane Fulk

Voting No: N/A

Abstaining: N/A

Absent: Patty Hazelwood