



Prince William County Office of Tourism
Advisory Board Meeting
Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Tourism
Wednesday, January 26, 2022
(9:00 am- 10:00 am)

Board Members Present

Maureen Brennan
Jennifer Decker
Michelle DeWitt
Bryan Dolieslager
Jim Larkin
Cathy Madigan
Anastasia Podorski
Bethany Webb

Board Members Absent

Gwenn Adams
Asad Chaudhry

DPRT/Tourism Staff Present

Dan Cook
Mark Kowalewski
Susan Plattner
Michael Rojas
Mike Stoupa
Nicole Warner
Seth Hendler-Voss

I. Call to Order – Tourism Advisory Board Chair, Jennifer Decker called the meeting to order at 9:16 am.

II. Acceptance of January 26, 2022 Agenda

VOTE: By unanimous consent, the Tourism Advisory Board members present accepted the meeting agenda for January 26, 2022.

Ayes: Brennan, Decker, DeWitt, Dolieslager, Larkin, Madigan, Podorski, Webb

Nays: None

Abstain from Vote: None

Absent from Vote: None

Absent from Meeting: Adams, Chaudhry

III. Citizen’s Time

None present

IV. Acceptance of October 27, 2021 Tourism Advisory Board Minutes

VOTE: By unanimous consent, the Tourism Advisory Board members present accepted the October 27, 2021 Tourism Advisory Board meeting minutes.

Ayes: Brennan, Decker, DeWitt, Dolieslager, Larkin, Madigan, Podorski, Webb

Nays: None

Abstain from Vote: None

Absent from Vote: None

Absent from Meeting: Adams, Chaudhry

V. Board Chair Time

A. VTC VA-1 Conference Recap

Members of the Office of Tourism and Advisory Board Chair, Jennifer Decker attended the VA-1 Conference in Leesburg held in November 2021. There were opportunities to meet and network with others in the tourism industry, attend classes on topics such as the Tourism Improvement District and enjoy the presentation by new Governor of Virginia, Glenn Youngkin.

B. 2022 Advisory Board Retreat & Tourism Master Plan Summit Discussion

Recently the county did an audit across all county boards. The end result of the audit is for staff to further engage its Boards and Commissions by working with them to create concrete goals and programs that keep the board engrained in advancing the County.

The Board was verbally polled on their availability to attend a Board retreat to discuss these topics and to develop a plan of attack. After discussion, it was determined that the tourism staff will send a survey to the board via email on their availability and preferences on month and date, time, length of meeting, location and if it should be held after a scheduled Tourism Advisory Board meeting. The program is earmarked for July 2022.

C. Tourism Advisory Board Members Update

Due to the resignation of Eileen Kennedy there is currently an open board seat for a culture/history industry representative. The Office of Tourism has received a recommendation from a member of the BOCS but is also asking the Advisory Board to submit any recommendations that they think would be a good representative of the culture/history industry.

VI. Tourism Director Update

A. PWC Weddings & Events

a. Presentation on Brentsville Hall Wedding Venue

Guests: Marcus Silva, President and CEO of the Villagio Hospitality Group
Hellen Bark, Special Events Coordinator

Brentsville Hall broke ground in September 2021 and is expected to open May 2022. It is a 2-story, 9,000 sq. ft. heavy timber structure designed to host weddings, receptions, and special events. It features a reception area, mezzanine, bridal suite, outdoor patio, rooftop, full -service catering, on-site accommodations and much more. It has a capacity for 150-200 people. A groom's cottage is expected to be completed on the property in mid-late summer. Starting on Dec 31, 2022 they will kick off a New Year's Eve Bash transitioning Brentsville Hall into a paid music venue with regional and national shows through end of March 2023.

b. Staff Presentation – PWC Weddings and Events

Presenters: Nicole Warner and Mike Stoupa (handout)

Nicole and Mike presented an overview of the Office of Tourism's marketing and sales campaign strategy to bring weddings into Prince William County. The county can offer the target audience of newly engaged couples with over 65 unique wedding venues. The Office of Tourism can assist with booking hotel room blocks, connect hosts to businesses that can assist with event needs, create welcome bags for guests offering information on what to do in PWC and help to generate sales leads for Tourism Industry partners. It is an opportunity to drive economic impact to the county through hotel room bookings and promotion of local businesses.

B. County Per Diem Update - The per diem rate is allocated by the General Services Administration (GSA) of the Federal Government. The Office of Tourism worked with the county legislative officer to request the per diem rate issue be placed on the legislative agenda put before the Board of County Supervisors, but the issue was not advanced by the BOCS Chair. For the issue to advance – the hotel industry may consider taking on the issue independently or until enough government business is turned away to request it be considered by the GSA.

C. Update on Tourism Director Vacancy (Seth Hendler-Voss)

Seth provided the Board with an update on the search for a new Tourism Director listing the skills and qualities in the potential candidate. The position is scheduled to be advertised by the end of January and it may take 60-90 days to fill.

D. PWC Branding Update

PWC Dept. of Economic Development and the Office of Tourism have been working together with the agency, Streetsense to identify a new brand- not just a new logo or word mark but a form of recognition to better identify Prince William County. Central branding would include multiple kiosks and way-finding signage that is not currently utilized. The next step would be a presentation to the County Executive Office and then to the BOCS for next steps.

E. Marine Corps Marathon 17.75K Sponsorship

The Marine Corps Marathon is bringing back the 1775K, a pre-qualifier for the Marine Corps Marathon. They will be applying for a sports tourism grant program and the event is going to be sponsored by the Office of Tourism. It will be held at Prince William Forest Park on March 26, 2022.

F. Restore Retail and Lift Up Lodging Grant Update

The Office of Tourism took the lead on the Lift Up Lodging Grant which was a great success with over 90% of hotels either applying for or receiving funds. Economic Development who is leading the Restore Retail Grant reports that over 200 businesses have applied which involves upwards of \$20,000 of additional funding. Questions can be directed to the tourism team.

G. Annual Report Data is being compiled for the annual report and should be available at the end of February. This report is a recap of 2021.

H. Recognition of Staff and Advisory Board

Parks Executive Director, Seth Hendler-Voss thanked Dan Cook for his leadership and stepping into the role of Acting Tourism Director. Dan Cook recognized the hard work of the tourism staff and thanked the Advisory Board for their continued support. Plaques were presented to outgoing Board Chair, Jennifer Decker and Vice Chair, Michelle DeWitt for their dedication and leadership in their officer positions.

VII. Nominations and Election of Officers for 2022

Due to term limits of Officers, Jennifer Decker and Michelle DeWitt will be stepping down as Chair and Vic Chair respectively of the Tourism Advisory Board.

Michelle DeWitt would like to be considered for the 2022 Tourism Advisory Board Chair position and with hearing no other nominations from the floor a vote was taken.

VOTE: By unanimous consent, the Tourism Advisory Board members present accepted the nomination and appointment of Michelle DeWitt as the 2022 Tourism Advisory Board Chair.

Ayes: Brennan, Decker, DeWitt, Dolieslager, Larkin, Madigan, Podorski, Webb

Nays: None

Abstain from Vote: None

Absent from Vote: None

Absent from Meeting: Adams, Chaudhry

New Board Chair, Michelle DeWitt called for nominations to fill the 2022 Vice Chair position. Bryan Dolieslager nominated Jim Larkin. Hearing no other nominations from the floor a vote was taken.

VOTE: By unanimous consent, the Tourism Advisory Board members present accepted the nomination and appointment of Jim Larkin as the 2022 Tourism Advisory Board Vice Chair.

Ayes: Brennan, Decker, DeWitt, Dolieslager, Larkin, Madigan, Podorski, Webb

Nays: None

Abstain from Vote: None

Absent from Vote: None

Absent from Meeting: Adams, Chaudhry

VIII. Tourism Sales, Sports Tourism and Marketing Updates

The tourism staff presented updates for Q2 FY2022 (October -December 2021). For the detailed report please refer to the handout provided in the board packets.

IX. Advisory Board Member Time

Board members shared updates and concerns within their industries.

X. Adjournment

VOTE: By unanimous consent, the Tourism Advisory Board members present adjourned the board meeting at 10:18 a.m.

Ayes: Brennan, Decker, DeWitt, Dolieslager, Larkin, Madigan, Podorski, Webb

Nays: None

Abstain from Vote: None

Absent from Vote: None

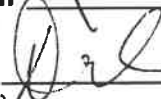
Absent from Meeting: Adams, Chaudhry

The next Tourism Advisory Board Meeting will be held Wednesday April 27, 2022
Location TBD

Michelle DeWitt , Advisory Board Chair



Dan Cook, Acting Director of Tourism



Susan Plattner, Recording Clerk



For ongoing updates, please remember to read our Monthly Partner E-Newsletter or look for us on Facebook @ "PWC Tourism News"