

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, May 22, 2014. The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

Board Members Present: Rebecca Ebert, Dan Martin, Bill Hottel, Sue Robinson, Tootie Rinker, Rainee Simpson, Sharon Farinholt, John Marker, Eric Campbell

Board Members Absent:

Staff: Sally Coates, Renee Bayliss

Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media: Jennifer Bell, Downtown Manager; Jennifer Justice, Winchester Parks & Recreation

Call To Order: Ms. Rebecca Ebert, Chairman, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: Mrs. Renee Bayliss

Approval of Minutes

The April 2014 minutes were approved on a motion by Rainee Simpson, seconded by Dan Martin.

Executive Director's Report – Sally Coates

Mrs. Coates informed the board that May is National Historic Preservation Month, and activities in the Winchester area included a presentation she attended at Handley Library by representatives of Belle Grove, Glen Burnie, and Long Branch Plantation. The speakers noted that a new trend in historic house museums includes providing access to museums in a way that is experiential. Mrs. Coates also attended a special preview event for the re-opening of the Shenandoah Valley Discovery Museum.

The Civil War Sesquicentennial Committee met at the Visitors Center this month, and Mrs. Coates reported that two new Civil War Trails signs will be erected in Winchester, including one for the newly renovated Taylor Hotel. Another commemorative event has been added for October 25, 2014 to include Sheridan's Field Hospital.

Mrs. Coates updated the board on several publications that have recently featured Winchester-Frederick County, including the Montreal Journal and the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. Visitors from Pittsburgh have already stopped in the Visitors Center with the newspaper article in hand. Mrs. Coates has also increased Winchester-Frederick County's presence in the New York Bus Association Directory, upgrading to a half page advertisement.

Mrs. Coates also reminded the board of the Visitors Center's two new exhibits for the French and Indian War Foundation and the Handley Library. Next month, the CVB will host a Shenandoah Valley Travel Association meeting at the Museum of the Shenandoah Valley. In addition, the Visitors Center's new, professionally produced video of the area will be premiered.

Old Business:

Election to Nominate and Recommend Board Members to replace outgoing Board Members John Marker, Sue Robinson, and Dan Martin

Mr. Dan Martin announced the recommendations to appoint Theresa Gaines, James “Eddie” Richard, and Karen Helm to the tourism board. The new members would represent the hotel industry, the agriculture industry, and the non-profit Celebrating Patsy Cline, Inc. Ms. Sharon Farinholt made a motion to approve the nominations, seconded by John Marker. All nominees were approved.

New Business:

Appointment of Tourism Board Vice-Chairman

Ms. Sharon Farinholt made a motion to appoint Mr. Eric Campbell as Tourism Board Vice-Chairman, seconded by Tootie Rinker. Mr. Campbell agreed to fill the position vacated by Mr. Dan Martin.

Ms. Rainee Simpson was presented with a framed certificate for her service on the tourism board. She informed the board that she will be moving out of the area.

Upcoming City of Winchester Sports & Tourism-related events – Jennifer Justice, Winchester Parks & Recreation

Ms. Jennifer Justice informed the board of two large sporting events that will take place in Winchester. The Mixed Double Virginia District Tennis Tournament will be held June 6-8, and will include approximately 250 participants per day. The Hilton Garden Inn is the host hotel for this event.

She also announced that Winchester will once again host the Cal Ripken 10-Year-Old World Series. This national tournament brings teams from all over the country for 11 days. 540 players, coaches, and their families will be staying in Winchester, with attendance at games averaging 10,000-15,000. Nine teams will reserve an average of 17 hotel rooms during the tournament, or 1,683 room nights. It is estimated that the tournament brought in almost \$175,000 in economic impact to the community when it was hosted previously in 2011.

Public Comments

Ms. Tootie Rinker announced plans for the Newtown Heritage Festival this Memorial Day weekend. Ms. Sue Robinson informed the board of Shenandoah Summer Music Theatre’s productions for this year. Mr. Dan Martin noted that the Rotary Rummage Sale will be June 7. Mr. Eric Campbell reminded the board that the On This Day Anniversary programs start June 5. Mr. John Marker announced that Marker-Miller Farm Market opens June 2.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 am on a motion by Dan Martin, seconded by John Marker.

Respectfully Submitted by Renee Bayliss, Visitor & Community Relations Specialist, City of Winchester