

The regular monthly meeting of the Winchester-Frederick County Tourism Board was held Thursday, May 21, 2015. The meeting began at 8:00 a.m. and was held at the Winchester-Frederick County Visitors Center.

**Board Members Present:** Rebecca Ebert, Karen Helm, Bill Hottel, Priya Patel, Eric Campbell, Eddie Richard

**Board Members Absent:** Sharon Farinholt, Tootie Rinker

**Staff:** Amy Simmons, Renee Bayliss

**Non-Voting Board Members, Guests & Media:** Jennifer Bell, Winchester Downtown Manager; Jason Ransom, Frederick County Board of Supervisors; Dan Martin, Courtyard by Marriott; Norman Baker, Steve Resan, Alan Morrison, and Susan Emmart (French and Indian War Foundation)

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

**Roll Call:** Mrs. Renee Bayliss

### **Approval of Minutes**

The April 2015 minutes were approved on a motion by Bill Hottel, seconded by Eric Campbell.

### **Executive Director's Report – Amy Simmons**

Mrs. Simmons reported on two recent Tourism Tuesday shows that she hosted with representatives for the Shenandoah Apple Blossom Festival and Old Town Winchester. In addition, she signed a letter of support to Congresswoman Barbara Comstock to keep the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Affairs Security Training Center in Summit Point, WV, due to the impact its location has on the Winchester-Frederick County area. She noted that the Winchester-Frederick-Clarke Sesquicentennial Committee will receive a leadership award at the VA State Capitol on Memorial Day, and that the new tourism board members have now been appointed by City Council and the Frederick County Board of Supervisors.

Mrs. Simmons has also been meeting with several Shenandoah Valley DMOs to continue to market the region collectively. A new area of the Visitors Center will be made available to attractions to display marketing materials on a rotating basis, beginning with Old Town Winchester.

### **New Business:**

#### **Volunteers Needed for the Appalachian Trail Biennial Conference – Amy Simmons**

Mrs. Simmons noted that volunteers are needed to staff a booth at the ATC Conference in July. The Convention & Visitors Bureau will have a table in Shenandoah University's gymnasium to greet and

assist attendees visiting the area. The available time slots are July 17, 1-10pm, July 18, 9am-8pm, and July 19, 9am-Noon. Mrs. Jennifer Bell volunteered to assist on July 17.

#### **FY16 Marketing Plan – Amy Simmons**

Interim Director, Amy Simmons discussed the possibility of forming a marketing committee to review the marketing plan. Karen Helm noted that it had been discussed previously and she volunteered to be on the committee. Mr. Eddie Richard and Mrs. Jennifer Bell also volunteered. Mrs. Simmons stated that the plan seems to be the same as FY15, and would like to consider changes with input from the board.

#### **Old Business:**

#### **New Director Recruitment Update – Amy Simmons**

Mrs. Simmons informed the board that the Executive Director position will be included in a group of frozen positions that will be advertised in June. Mr. Eddie Richard asked about submitting applications, and Mrs. Simmons noted that applicants must apply online, through the City's NeoGov system.

#### **Presentation: French and Indian War Foundation – Norman Baker, Steve Resan, Alan Morrison**

Mr. Resan gave the board a background of the history of the French and Indian War, including the strategic positioning of frontier forts to defend territories. He discussed the location of the fort's imprint on Loudoun Street. The presenters also noted the importance of Fort Loudoun, which made Winchester a military depot. The location of the Fort resulted in George Washington spending time in Winchester, as it became his military and political training ground. The fort no longer remains, aside from the well, but stones from the fort can be found repurposed at locations across the city. The French & Indian War Foundation has a resource room at 419 N. Loudoun Street, a display case of artifacts at the Visitors Center, and a cell phone audio tour of the fort is also available. They produce a newsletter, offer memberships, and hold various events throughout the year. The Foundation's future plans are to create markers in the roadways to outline the fort's position.

#### **Public Comments**

Ms. Rebecca Ebert reminded the board of the Newtown Heritage Festival events this weekend. Mrs. Karen Helm informed the board that the Artisan Trail naming event has been moved from May 21 to May 28. Mrs. Jennifer Bell outlined upcoming events in Old Town Winchester, including the Loudoun Street Mile on Monday. Eric Campbell noted that the site director at Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP has taken another position and that June will be a busy month for events.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 am on a motion by Priya Patel, seconded by Karen Helm.

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