

King George County Tourism Advisory Committee Regular Meeting Minutes
10459 Courthouse Dr., Ste 200, King George, VA 22485
Revercomb Board Room
January 25, 2023

1. Call to Order:
Bob Baird, Vice-chairman, called the meeting to order.
Present by roll call- Dee Strauss, Bob Baird, Becky Stewart, and Warren Veazey.
Absent- Jeron Hayes, Dave Hall.
Also present: Kim Cook, Economic Development Specialist, Roan Grapes, Administrative Assistant, and Nick Minor, Director of Economic Development & Tourism.

2. Public Comment:
None

3. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair:
Motion made by Dee Strauss to continue with the current officers, Jeron Hayes as Chair and Bob Baird as Vice-Chair.
Seconded by Warren Veazey.
As Ms. Hayes was not present the motion was amended by Becky Stewart this be contingent on discussion with Ms. Hayes at the next meeting.
Amendment seconded by Warren Veazey.
Ayes: 4, Nays: 0
Vote for original motion with amendment.
Ayes: 4, Nays: 0, Motion carried with amendment.

4. Approval of minutes:
Warren Veazey asked about the tulips planted.
Chris Clarke from KG Parks & Recreation gave update on numbers and locations of plantings.
One correction was needed, Ms. Stewart's name was misspelled. Corrected.
Becky Stewart made motion to accept the minutes as corrected.
Warren Veazey seconded the motion.
Ayes: 4, Nays: 0. Motion carried.

5. Member Reports:
Becky Stewart – Music at the wineries continue. Machodoc Creek Cafe Valentine Dinner is sold out but will also be having dinner on the 11th. Looking forward to a good 2023. She and husband are at Stratford Hall and there is a special event on February 25th for Black History Month. She is still working on a concert featuring the Big Band.

Warren Veazey – Highmark brewery is having a soft opening this weekend. Dahlgren Heritage Trail Half Marathon is sold out at 250 runners. Sheetz to Sheetz also sold out at 350 runners. King George county is updating zoning rules. The trail is a non by right use, still considered a special exception use

required, which requires a per acre fee, there are 240 acres that comes to \$15,000 to do any type of improvement like benches or parking lots.

Question from Bob Baird regarding the trail as part of the Caledon Park?

Warren Veazey informed the group that study was done by DCR last August and it is recommended that the trail be part of the state park. If a bill is introduced to state legislature to purchase trail, that would take care of zoning issue.

Bob Baird states that trail is an asset to tourism in the county. Would it be appropriate for us to ask for dispensation to waive the \$15,000 fee. Kim Cook will pass along to Nick Minor.

Dee Strauss – The Little Prince is the play at the high school. Winter sports are underway including track, swimming, wrestling and basketball. Conditioning for spring sports has started. NJROTC shooting team will be going to Utah in February for competition. February is Career Tech Education month and DECA advocacy month, will have joint meeting to kick off the month and American Heart Challenge.

Bob Baird – Historical Society, has had two meetings, the Christmas dinner in December and regular meeting last week, thanks Sherriff's Department for the use of the meeting room. Society is doing well. We have completed the first stage of audit is done. Ryan Portner is lead curator and inventory continues. Volunteerism is up. Open Thursdays and Saturdays. We started regular speaker series at the meetings. Last week topic was history of the society with video presentation.

Northern Neck has been designated by Congress a National Heritage Area. This makes other grants available. Met with the director of Fish and Wildlife regarding Wilmont Landing. She was surprised at what a nice area it is will put more money in the budget to improve parking and will work closely with the county. Backporch- this week, wild game, wine pairings and Denson's.

Family Day – May 6, 2023, 2pm -7pm at Sealston.

Chris Clarke, Director of Parks & Recreation, gave update on partnering with the VFW should make this a great event. For vendors contact Jonathan Franklin at Social Services. Hoping this will be a strong spring event.

Christmas tree has been seen and found to be diseased. Needs to be removed but will be replaced.

Has put money in his budget for Independence Day celebration and a portable stage that can be used for events. Also put in budget for events manager, someone who can actually help with the special events and be part of the Fall Festival Committee and add additional events. Maybe have second Sundays at Sealston as a tourist draw. Fireworks vendor is committed.

6. Director's Report:

Nick Minor gave update on Chick-Fil-A, it is a VDOT issue with ingress and egress. The biggest issue is timeline.

Virginia Black Business Directory is starting a regional Black Tourism Initiative. they will be looking to tourism committee for support. Good initiative for the county given the African-American assets in the county and developing new ones. Fredericksburg EDA and tourism department gave them about \$20,000. The request to us will be less, this is similar to the Northern Neck , which we gave \$7500.

They are working on presentation to bring.

Historic Garden Week coming together well , brochure has been released.

Erma and her crew are doing a great job. Think it will be very successful tour. We are advertising in the large Historic Garden Club Magazine.

Highmark soft open this Friday, got Service Authority fee to \$5000.00.

County recently joined Fish Virginia First. State website run by southwest Chamber; we will be the only county in the Northern Neck.

Native American Trail , waiting for funding.

The Northern Neck will get \$10 million over 10 years to boost tourism and do economic development and tourism asset development. Trying to think of ways to leverage for King George. Believe there are opportunities in outdoor recreation that the county can leverage moving forward. Roan and I are working on presentation for Outdoor Recreation curriculum, not ready to present yet. Southwest Community College does and think we should look into. Looking for potential retailers and locations.

Discussion regarding Wayside Park and link to Barnesfield, gravel pit on route 3, Chipotle, and former Pizza Hut building.

7. Adjournment:

There being no further business,

Becky Stewart made motion to adjourn to February meeting.

Dee Strauss seconded.

Ayes: 4, Nays: 0 Motion carried.

Minutes submitted by: Roan Grapes, Administrative Assistant

Minutes approved: _____2-22-23_____