



Minutes
Tourism Board Meeting
August 8, 2019

Present: Lynda Blades, Anthony Casey, Tara Coursey-Hill, Phil Liske, Don Mulrine, John Phillips, Cathy Schwab, Debi Sewell, Tracey Snyder

Staff: Ceres Bainbridge

Guest: Debbie Bowden

Mr. Liske called the meeting to order at 8:05 AM.

Mr. Mulrine made a motion to approve the minutes from July. Mr. Phillips seconded it. They were approved by a unanimous vote.

Ms. Bainbridge showed the board the financial update which is tight. She explained that they were looking forward to the cash infusion in the amount of \$21,056 from the State Marketing Grant reimbursement in the next couple of weeks.

Debbie Bowden gave the Board a brief explanation of the Open Meetings Act and their responsibility to publicize our meetings and to make minutes available on our website. **ACTION ITEM:** Ms. Bainbridge will follow up with Christina to get a link on the VisitCaroline website.

Ms. Bainbridge delivered her report to the Board. She said the budget priorities for FY 20 would be to update the visitor guide and to produce the agricultural guide, possibly as an app. These items are not reimbursable from the State, so it will take some belt tightening and maybe a grant to get them done.

The State Office of Tourism will deliver 2,000 more copies of the Tubman Byway guide to our office, in anticipation of a flood of interest as the feature film, HARRIET, is released in November. There are several other movies and TV shows about Tubman in the pipeline as well. As a result, Governor Hogan will announce in September that Maryland is the premier place for an Underground Railroad experience. Ms. Bainbridge will be participating in a meeting conducted by Maureen Curry for the Tubman Byway community on August 26.

Federalsburg received \$16,583 in an MHAA grant to restore their little cabin. The other Caroline applicant was the Historical Society for the Medford House, but they did not receive their grant.

Ms. Bainbridge is working with Talbot County and Civil War Trails to update the historic sign at Hillsboro boat landing so that it focuses more on Frederick Douglass' wife, Anna Murray Douglass. She is also working with Dorchester Tourism to get the last Tubman Byway sign produced.

The WBOC Summer Guide campaign is just finishing up after a month of website, radio, and social media ads, as well as a giveaway from Chesapeake Gourmet. The ads reached more than 40,000 people and 1,214 so far have gone to our website. This is an amazing return on investment. Next week, Ms. Bainbridge will be heading to MACO. She will be taking brownies and cookies from Chesapeake Gourmet for the Taste of Maryland event. After returning from MACO,

There was considerable discussion about the upcoming meeting with the commissioners on August 13. Ms. Bainbridge is preparing an end of fiscal year 19 report to the commissioners and will attempt to persuade them that their investment in Tourism pays off. Mr. Liske will present to the commissioners the names of the new board members for them to approve and he will announce that Tourism will move into the Legion Road office

of the Chamber of Commerce. This will provide opportunities for the Chamber and Economic Development to collaborate on some things.

The John Phillips made a motion to accept the newest slate members of the Tourism Board: Jamie Beechey (Recreation and Parks), Debbie Bowden (Economic Development), Jennifer Hodge (Arts Council), and Tracey Snyder (Chamber of Commerce seat). Don Mulrine seconded it. And the slate was approved by unanimous vote. This maximizes the number of members the board will have.

Lynda Blades made **a motion to adjourn**. Mr. Phillips **seconded** it. It was **approved by unanimous vote** at 9:10.