



Tourism Development Advisory Board

Audio recordings of the Tourism Development Board meetings can be found at <https://www.kentcounty.com/committees/tourism> click on the ‘Recorded Meetings Tab’.

May 18, 2021

The meeting was held virtually on TEAMS.

Board Members Present: Sandy Scott (Chair), Suzanne Einstein, Dolores Jones, and Chikki Shajwani.

Board Members Absent: Casey Carroll and Ingrid Hanson.

Also in Attendance: Jana Carter, Tourism Manager; Jamie Williams, Director; and Katie Wright, Economic Development Manager, Economic & Tourism Development; and Dawn Jacobs, Mayor, Town of Rock Hall.

Ms. Scott called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. Ms. Scott requested a motion to approve the minutes from the April 20, 2021, meeting. On motion by Ms. Jones and seconded by Mr. Shajwani, the Board unanimously approved the minutes.

Ms. Williams presented the Kent County Datastory, highlighting the features in the story to be used for business attraction and a promotional tool for Kent County. Ms. Williams stated that the Datastory is constantly evolving to include more information related to arts and culture, restaurants and lodging, recreational activities, and festivals. She stated that the data will change periodically based on information obtained from ESRI.

Ms. Williams provided an updated on the Comprehensive Rezoning Task Force. It would be good to review the code as it relates to Tourism; signage for visitors has been a past topic of discussion that may warrant further review.

Ms. Williams reported this is the final meeting of the Tourism Development Advisory Board. The TDAB will be transitioning into the Economic and Tourism Development Commission (ETDC). The new Commission will meet on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. Members are being surveyed to establish the best meeting time.

Ms. Williams reported that the Administrative Assistant position has been filled and the new Administrative Assistant will start on May 24, 2021.

Ms. Carter provided an update on the Visitor Guide. She is coordinating delivery of the visitor’s guides and other tourism-related materials with both Chestertown and Rock Hall visitor centers. The visitor’s guides, as well as the table-top displays, will be made available to

businesses throughout Kent County. The table-top displays provide virtual access to the Visitor Guide from the QR code included on the display. Mr. Shajwani recommended magnets and/or window clings for businesses that may not have room for the table tents.

Ms. Carter provided a brief update on tourism advertising for the remainder of FY2021. The transit marketing campaign started on May 15th and will continue for three months. Plan your escape at www.kentcounty.com/go is the “call to action” link created to track the campaign. Ms. Carter reported that MIX106.5 morning personality, Jess Dutra, will be visiting Kent County on May 28 – 30, 2021 to promote Kent County and offer listeners an opportunity to win the same Kent County experiences that she will highlight.

Ms. Carter reported that Pride II will be making three visits to Kent County. The first visit will be June 25 – 27 to Chestertown. The National Park Service is partnering with Pride II to promote the Star-Spangled Banner Trail. Subsequent visits will be to Georgetown in the Fall and Chestertown during Downrigging Weekend.

Ms. Carter reported that Andover Media is producing five videos highlighting each of the incorporated towns. The videos will be included on the county website, YouTube Channel, social media platforms and made available to each town for inclusion on their social media outlets and websites. These videos will be used as a promotional tool and part of the advertising strategy for FY2022 and beyond.

Ms. Wright provided the Board with an update on Economic Development projects. The Kent County Photo Contest is open and will conclude on June 30. Ms. Wright stated that once the state of emergency has been lifted, options are being explored to host a job fair in partnership with the Kent County Chamber of Commerce.

Ms. Wright reported that she has submitted print advertising for Cooperative Living magazine for Tourism and Economic Development as well as ads for business facilitation and expansion solutions that will include editorial about Kent County’s business climate.

Ms. Wright provided an update on grants. The Department received twenty-one applications for the Restaurant Grant, nine applications for the Lodging Grant, and one application for the Online Sales Grant. The Nonprofit Grant will open on May 24, 2021, at 8:00 a.m. and awards are based on need.

Ms. Einstein stated that Rock Hall is considering developing an App to promote the town. Ms. Williams stated that the County is still considering a county App and may revisit in FY2022. Ms. Einstein reported that the next Greater Rock Hall Business Association meeting will be held in person, and they are considering a hybrid format. Ms. Williams offered county assistance with facilitating the hybrid format via Teams.

Ms. Jacobs stated that Rock Hall is exploring options for year-round heritage tourism and has applied for grant funding through Maryland Heritage Areas Authority.

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There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Einstein, seconded by Mr. Shajwani, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 10:08 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jana Carter, Tourism Manager