



Tourism Advisory Committee  
Wednesday, March 9th, 2022  
5:30 pm Meeting

Location: Economic Development and Tourism Office  
109 West Main Street, Orange, VA 22960

Present: Phil Audibert, Beate Casati, Charlotte Cole, Eric Hopwood, Bob Lookabill, Bruce Monroe, Tim Moubray, Dave Solomon, Bethany Sullivan, Marty Van Santvoord, Kenny White, and Julie Perry.

Others Present: Denise Benedetto, Rose Deal, and Ted Voorhees

1. **Call to Order, Welcome & member introductions:** Mr. Solomon, Vice-Chairman called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.
2. **Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman:** Mr. Solomon, Vice-Chairman called for nominations for Chairman. Mr. White nominated Mr. Solomon. Ms. Sullivan seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed, and Mr. Solomon was elected as Chairman.

Mr. Solomon, Chairman called for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Ms. Cole nominated Ms. Sullivan. Mr. Audibert seconded the nomination. There were no further nominations, and nominations were closed, and Ms. Sullivan was elected as Vice-Chairwoman.

3. **Approval of Minutes:** Chairman Solomon called for a motion to approve the minutes of the November 10, 2021 meeting.

Ms. Cole moved, seconded by Mr. Audibert and carried unanimously, to approve the November 10, 2021 minutes, as presented.

4. **Budget:** Ms. Perry reported that the current TAC budget for FY22 stands at \$5,000.00 available. Discussion ensued regarding uses for the funding and if the funding could be carry-forwarded into next year.
5. **Public Comment:** Ms. Perry introduced Ms. Benedetto as any interested party in joining the TAC. Ms. Benedetto provided a brief background on herself and overview of her professional experience.

6. **Report by the Tourism Manager- Julie Perry:**

- Media Placements
  - Virginia Living Gordonsville Partnership – March Print Edition Ad and Updated Online Content to reflect additional participation
  - Charlottesville Guide with Orange and Gordonsville Retailers
  - Submitted new editorial content (both print and digital) for Lake Anna Magazine
  - Approved Garden Day Ad for Dolley Madison Garden Club.
  - Boosting social media posts with new blog content to increase visitation to [www.VisitOrangeVA.com](http://www.VisitOrangeVA.com)
- Website
  - Created two new blog posts – one for Presidents Day and one for Coffee Lovers.
  - Addressed high bounce rate on [www.VisitOrange.com](http://www.VisitOrange.com) by fixing some content links.
  - Began a website audit with Charles Ryan & Associates

- Meetings/Introductions/Committees
  - Met with the Town of Orange – 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee
  - Met with Arts Center of Orange – new Mural Program
  - Montpelier – Christy Moriarty
  - Germanna Foundation – Tim Sutphin
  - Gordonsville Visitor Center - David Solomon – Chicken Festival
  - Orange County Chamber of Commerce – Wine Festival – Judi Cooper
  - 231 Initiative – Andre Xavier, Patch Brewing
  - Civil War Trails – Drew Gruber
  - James Madison Museum – Bethany Sullivan
  - Gordonsville Main Street Initiative – Beate Casati
  - Dolley Madison Garden Club – Marketing Garden Day 2022
  - Stephanie Lillard – Virginia Tourism Corporation, Destination Development Specialist
  - Sarah Hauser – Virginia Tourism Corporation, Photographer
  - OC Chamber Board Meeting and Business Coffee First at Paint it Orange.
  - Holliday House – Pat McAloon
  - Inn at Willow Grove Tour – Lori Landes-Carter and Matt Scibal
- Attended ground-breaking for the African American Commemorative Park
- Participated in an ARPA Training Session with Virginia Tourism Corporation
- Applied for Virginia Tourism Corporation DMO Marketing Leverage Grant for \$20,000. Grant Application was due on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022.
- Wayfinding/Entry Sign CIP PROJECT with LPDA and Wiley Wilson.
- Began coordinating with County Administrator on the ARPA Money Plan for new Orange County Tourism initiatives to be spent between 2022-2024.
- Organized a Volunteer Appreciation event with Regan McKay for the team at the Town Depot Visitor Center. March 22<sup>nd</sup> – 10 a.m.
- Began to more fully integrate new branding at the Visitor Center and in print materials and displays.

7. **Orange County Marketing Leverage Grant Application from Liberty Mills Farm:** Ms. Perry explained that the Application Review Working Group met to review an application from Liberty Mills Farm and has recommended approval.

Mr. Audibert moved, seconded by Mr. Solomon and carried unanimously, to authorize the funding of the marketing leverage grant application from Liberty Mills, as presented.

8. **Old Business:** Ms. Perry reviewed the previously discussed value proposition and provided a revised recommendation. Discussion ensued regarding edits, and where and how the statement would be used. The TAC suggested the revised value proposition:

*TAC represents and promotes Orange County as a premier travel destination in Virginia. We are proud of our sense of place, our rural roots, our agri-and viti-culture, as well as our Art, Music, genealogy, and rich History. We believe these assets are unique and worth visiting. We gather to advocate on behalf of the tourism community to encourage Orange County to retain its unique character, stay business friendly, promote inclusivity and strive to tell its stories to as many potential visitors as possible. We are passionate ambassadors for Orange County!*

Ms. Cole moved, seconded by Mr. Monroe and carried unanimously, to adopt the value proposition, as revised.

9. **New Business:** Ms. Perry provided an update on new and existing projects worked on by the department.
10. **Member News & Announcements:** Members shared upcoming news and events from their destinations.
11. **Adjournment:** There being no further business to discuss, Chairman Solomon called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. By consensus the meeting was adjourned at 6:38 p.m.