

CUMBERLAND COUNTY TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

April 11, 2023
Meeting Minutes Notes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council (C.C.T.A.C.) was held on Tuesday, April 11, 2023 in a hybrid format with availability both in-person and virtually.

MISSION STATEMENT

To coordinate, educate, and promote tourism activities and destinations in Cumberland County and the surrounding Southern New Jersey region, in order to foster cultural, historical, and recreational activities and appreciation for the area and a better quality of life.

Present: Lynn Timberman (May 2023)
Donna Longo * (May 2023)
Lisa Jester * (February 2024)
Brad Scott / Justin Kamm (May 2025)
Marianne Lods * (February 2024)
Jamie Warner * (March 2024)
Nancy Patterson Tidy (May 2023)

Commissioner Doug Albrecht, Director
Commissioner Donna Pearson

Guests: Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator *
Matt Pisarski, Planning Department Director/Head
Wanda Riviera, Confidential Assistant *
Matt Horowitz, Recording Secretary *

Note: Asterisk () indicates members present at the aforementioned meeting.*

Approval of Minutes – March 14, 2023

Ms. Timberman thanked everyone for their attendance and asked for a motion to approve the March 14, 2023 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Ms. Longo, seconded by Ms. Lods, and passed unanimously by the Council to approve the March 14, 2023 Tourism Advisory Council (T.A.C.) meeting minutes.

Southern Shore Regional Destination Marketing Organization (S.S.R.D.M.O.) Marketing Grant Requests

Mr. Williams said contained within the meeting packet were three sponsorship requests for the Southern Shore Regional Destination Marketing Organization (S.S.R.D.M.O.) Mr. Williams explained the first one was submitted by the Millville Army Air Field Museum,

Inc. (M.A.A.F.M.) was asking for a \$1,500.00 request to help with their brochures. Secondly, was a request from the Cohanzick Zoological Society (The Zoo) requesting \$1,500.00 for website upkeep and marketing materials. Lastly, Mr. Williams said was a request from the Boys & Girls Club of Cumberland County of \$1,500.00 for marketing and advertising materials. Ms. Lods made a motion to approve all three requests of \$1,500.00 each from the Millville Arm Air Field Museum, the Cohanzick Zoological Society, and the Boys & Girls Club of Cumberland County. It was seconded by Ms. Longo and passed unanimously by the Council. Mses. Jester and Timberman abstained themselves from the vote.

Update On Specialty Crop Grant

Mr. Williams said he included both an introductory letter and floorplan layout that was being sent out to all of the farmers for the upcoming Cumberland County Farmers' Market. Mr. Williams explained there were 20 spots, including four of the premiere kiosks. 16 spots were priced at \$250.00 for the entire season from May 6 through October 29, 2023. He added the additional four spots were \$400.00 for the premiere kiosks. Mr. Williams said the Farmers' Market would be open Saturdays and Sundays from 11-5:00pm at the Cumberland Mall.

Mr. Williams thanked Ms. Longo & The Mall for giving the Council such a great rate to do the Farmers' Market for both the community and local farmers. The Council members and staff briefly discussed particulars of the upcoming Farmers' Market to be held at The Mall. Mr. Williams further explained the welcome packet had been sent out to the County Commissioners and a small list of local farmers and would soon be sent out to 200+ farms within the Farmland Preservation program. Mr. Williams said he would add to the farming families and Ms. Longo suggested contacting Will Gruccio at Renati Solutions.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Williams said, in Mr. Pisarski's absence, his big update would likely be that this would be the last T.A.C. meeting to be held at the County Administration Building; moving forward. The Council would meet at the 4-H Extension Center/Agriculture Services Building located at 291 Morton Avenue in Millville, NJ. Mr. Williams added renovations were currently taking place and staff planned to be moved into the building by April 24, 2023. Mr. Williams stated the Council meeting in May would be the first to be held at the new facility.

County Commissioner Updates

Mr. Williams explained there were no County Commissioners present on the call virtually or in-person at the Administration Building at the physical meeting space.

Tourism Advisory Council Member Updates

Ms. Jester said the M.A.A.F.M. had their very first Museum Open House, which was a great success. It had included generous donations Terra Nonno Winery, Glasstown Brewery, and Verna's Flight Line Restaurant. 26 new members were captured to the M.A.A.F.M.'s growing database at the free event. Ms. Jester added upcoming events would include

Veterans Appreciation Day, Quarterly Movie Nights, and an Air Show to tentatively be scheduled for July 20-21, 2024. Ms. Jester said seven new interpretive signs had been recently installed thanks to funding from the Cultural & Heritage Commission.

Ms. Timberman said the Cohanzick Zoo had a new Parks & Recreation Director, John Medica, who came from the Philadelphia Parks & Recreation Department. Ms. Timberman explained the Zoo had a fairly new Assistant Director, who was named Jen Sotto and there were new Zoo Board members with only one opening currently. Kids Fest would be held on May 6, 2023 from 11-2:00pm and Zoo Camp would be running from July 10-August 4, 2023. Ms. Timberman said new signs were currently being made for all of the animals.

She added the walkway(s) throughout the Zoo was being repaired with new pavers funded by both the Society and the City of Bridgeton. Ms. Timberman said the website was being re-designed, the old domain name would be re-acquired, they were signing up for Square Credit Card Payments, the bridge completion would help finally fix the Waterwheel, the Beautification Committee was working on acquiring plants and having landscaping done, the Amazon Wishlist was up for the animals, and there was a recent City Park clean-up held. Ms. Timberman said a Zoo meeting would be held the following night and would have updates for the next meeting.

Ms. Longo said she wanted to clear up some misconceptions that had been going around on Facebook about the Cumberland Mall. She stated the Mall was not sold again, nor was it closing and HomeGoods had not caught fire. Ms. Longo expressed that these sort of rumors online were very damaging. Ms. Longo said the Bunny Brunch had been cancelled, but the Easter Bunny's visit(s) to the Mall had been a great success. Game Star Arcade had opened within the Mall, Ms. Longo explained, and laser tag might be coming soon, as well. Ms. Longo thought there should be some sort of grand opening ceremony facilitated by the Tourism Council for the Farmers' Market at the Mall.

Ms. Lods said following the T.A.C. meeting she would be attending a joint meeting held between the Glasstown Arts District and the Riverfront Renaissance Center for The Arts (R.R.C.A.) She said on April 21, 2023 (3rd Friday) the Village On High would be hosting a painted and/or decorated chair competition. They would be hosting their first Plein Air event of the year on Sunday May 21, 2023 from 7:30-6:00pm on the Maurice River. Ms. Lods said a free Jazz concert would be held on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 from 7-8:30pm at the R.R.C.A. She asked that interested parties, please, contact her, as seating was reserved. Ms. Lods said everyone she spoke with at Teen Arts had a fantastic time throughout the day.

Ms. Warner said there were many events happening and being scheduled within Downe Township. She explained the Downe Township Green Team was gearing up for their Horseshoe Crab Festival to be held on May 13, 2023. Ms. Warner said Departmental staff were welcome to attend and she would send out flyers for the events. She said there was recently a wildlife rehabilitation talk held with Vicki Schmidt (Funny Farm Rescue,) as well as a walk through the woods with Tony Klock to see some 300-400-year-old trees. Ms. Warner directed anyone interested in upcoming events towards the Downe Township Green Team Facebook page.

Old Business/New Business

Mr. Williams stated a reception for students who participated within Teen Arts moving on to the State competition would be held at The Levoy Theatre on April 19, 2023.

Mr. Williams said the ExploreCumberlandNJ site was now live, but still in-process. He hoped it would be done by the end of the month and when ready, would do a launch blitz across the Department's social media pages, as well as newspaper advertisements. Mr. Williams explained staff were currently working on a calendar of events ad for the Vacationer Magazine and asked the Council members to send over their events to be held from May through October/November 2023 as soon as possible.

Ms. Longo expressed concern that the annual Vacation Magazines seemed to be being pressed and coming out later and later every year. Mr. Pisarski suggested Mr. Williams communicate with Mike Lacy for a specific release date and that the Council expressed it seemed to be running behind schedule.

Ms. Jester said the County Clerk's Office had done a great job by producing their 2023 calendar, which featured World War II veterans from Cumberland County featured along with each month's page. She thanked Ms. Riley on behalf of the Millville Army Air Field Museum and urged everyone on the Council to try to attain a copy.

Ms. Longo asked for an update on the social media proposal from Renati Solutions. Mr. Williams said he would have to follow-up with Will Gruccio and report back to the Council at the following month's meeting. Ms. Longo suggested Mr. Williams give Mr. Gruccio a specific timeframe to deliver the finalized proposal.

Adjournment

Ms. Timberman said the Council's next meeting was to be held on May 9, 2023 at 3:00pm at the 4-H Extension Center facility in Millville. A motion to adjourn the April 11, 2023 Tourism Advisory Council was made by Ms. Jester, seconded by Ms. Warner, and passed unanimously by the Council. Mr. Williams thanked everyone for their continued attendance and participation.