

CUMBERLAND COUNTY TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

March 14, 2023
Meeting Minutes Notes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council (C.C.T.A.C.) was held on Tuesday, March 14, 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 Notes – February 14, 2023

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

Sponsorship Request: Millville Development Corporation

Mr. Williams said contained within the meeting packet was a sponsorship request for the Southern Shore Region Destination Marketing Organization (S.S.R.D.M.O.) Mr. Williams explained it was submitted by the Millville Development Corporation. They were requesting the maximum amount of \$1,500.00 and would potentially use the money to help promote and

advertise holiday events within the Glasstown Arts District in Downtown Millville. Ms. Lods briefly added there would be an approximately 100% match from donors, which combined, would go a long way. A motion to approve the Millville Development Corporation's S.S.R.D.M.O. marketing grant request of \$1,500.00 was made by Ms. Patterson Tidy. It was seconded by Ms. Jester and passed unanimously by the Council. Ms. Lods abstained from the vote and thanked her fellow Commission members on behalf of the Millville Development Corporation.

Discussion of Website: ExploreCumberlandNJ.com

Mr. Williams pulled up and shared the new website, ExploreCumberlandNJ.com, on-screen. He thanked the Council for allowing staff to be able to go out to have the website re-designed and effectively re-launched. Mr. Williams said it had transitioned from former webmaster/vendor Mike Lacy to George Joyce at Joyce Media, a local vendor located in Bridgeton. Mr. Joyce had done the County Clerk's website, as well as other additional municipal websites. Mr. Williams asked for any feedback, changes, comments, etc. He added this would be the last board to review the site, as the Recreation Commission and Cultural & Heritage Commission had already provided their own feedback.

Mr. Williams would give the boards' feedback to Mr. Joyce and hoped to have the new website launched by April 1, 2023. He explained some of the previous comments had included the main page's pictures being too bucolic, pages being too wordy/busy, wanting the pages to be more graphic-based, correcting various mistakes, updating photos for sites across the County, etc. Multiple Council members said they would send new images of their corresponding sites and organizations.

Mr. Williams showed multiple display options and styles for the Calendar of Events, which had been updated and integrated onto the new website. Mr. Williams said there would be separate pages for each of the boards, councils, and commissions. Mr. Williams said he would get Mr. Joyce the changes from various board members, they would be fixed and corrected as soon as possible, and the new webpage would go live on April 1st. He explained there was money in the budget set aside for social media boosting and newspaper ads. The Council members suggested using multiple identifying markers to clearly indicate it was in fact the website for "Cumberland County, New Jersey." Mr. Williams suggested the Council members send him any additional comments as soon as possible via email.

Update On Specialty Crop Grant

Mr. Pisarski explained staff were currently working on the leasing agreement with the Cumberland Mall to host the Farmers' Market there starting in early May. Mr. Pisarski said he would have next information regarding the progress of the Farmers' Market at next month's meeting. He added everything was moving along nicely, so far.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Pisarski spoke about conceptual mapping for the proposed County Fairgrounds re-design and update, which was both emailed out and included within the meeting packet. He indicated Clarke, Caton & Hintz was working on a Comprehensive Plan for the Fairgrounds, which would inform a Comprehensive Plan and a recreational update for the County as a whole. Mr. Pisarski said it had already been provided to the Recreation Commission and the County Commissioners, who had both provided comments. He went through Concepts 1, 2, and 3, which would feature various enhancements and updates to the Fairgrounds and nearby County-owned properties, as well as similarly-sized possibilities to scale. Mr. Pisarski said the Recreation Commission had suggested a splash park within the play area. He added there would be Draft Concept sketches for Sites B & C, as well as a public hearing.

Ms. Longo suggested some sort of tram or shuttle service from the parking lot(s) to the main and primary facilities. Fencing and public restrooms would remain but would remain open from dawn to dusk for various public uses. Mr. Pisarski mentioned turf fields were suggested and the consultants were tasked with researching options. Ms. Patterson Tidy & Lods suggested having electrical, water sources, and other necessary amenities for potential vendors at events, such as food truck festivals. Ms. Longo suggested facilities and amenities for security staff, as well. Messrs. Pisarski & Williams asked the Council to send any additional suggestions or comments to them directly, via email.

County Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Pearson said she would defer her update to Messrs. Williams & Pisarski. She felt as though they had already presented everything that was relevant, including the Fairgrounds Comprehensive Plan.

Tourism Advisory Council Member Updates

Ms. Lods mentioned she was helping get everything ready for the Teen Arts Festival, which would be held on April 4, 2023. She said they were expecting upwards of 800 young adults to be there that day taking part in the festivities in Downtown Millville. Ms. Lods said outdoor live music would be starting in May and they were currently planning many events to be held from May through the end of 2023. Ms. Lods asked how Eagle Fest went and Mr. Pisarski said it was a good turnout; certainly not their largest showing, but as the first time back in a few years, he was very happy with the results.

Ms. Patterson Tidy said she and staff at East Point Lighthouse were currently battling with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection (DEP.) She said they hit both the Maurice River Historical Society that runs it and the Lighthouse with what could very well be the “final blow.” Ms. Patterson Tidy said a lease for the Lighthouse was being offered to the general public. Fellow Council members made various suggestions to Ms. Patterson Tidy in an effort to help save the East Point Lighthouse.

Ms. Patterson Tidy explained when the DEP finally allowed the Society to get involved and begin to restore the building, it was a completely empty shell with no roof, no copula, and no

light. She said it was an empty burned out shell and over the years, had been passionately transformed to its current fully rehabilitated and restored state.

Ms. Longo said The Easter Bunny was scheduled to arrive at The Cumberland Mall the following week. Another upcoming event would include Brunch with The Bunny and 4-H staff would be bringing their bunnies to participate, as well as, do agility training and various events, including petting for children and a crafting booth. Ms. Longo added a coinless arcade called Game Star would be opening very soon at the Mall. Ms. Longo said the Italian Cultural Foundation of South Jersey would be hosting Designer Bag Bingo on April 28, 2023. They would also be doing their scholarship presentation for local students at the Mall on April 18, 2023 and the application submission deadline would close on March 31st.

Ms. Jester said the Millville Army Air Field Museum would be having a World War II Tuskegee Airmen coming in from Philly as their quarterly Movie Night speaker. Ms. Jester explained his name was Dr. Eugene Richardson, who flew both the P-40 and P-47 aircraft. Ms. Jester stated the P-40 started at their base and it was known as “The Home of The P-47 Thunderbolt.” The Museum would be hosting a movie premiere provided through a grant awarded by the New Jersey Historical Commission for a video designed to appeal directly to high school students. Ms. Jester added they were, unfortunately, no longer going to host a 35th anniversary celebration, as previously planned. She said the 2024 Millville Wheels & Wings Airshow had tentatively been scheduled for July 20-21, 2024.

Adjournment

Mr. Williams said the Council’s next meeting was to be held on April 11, 2023 at 3:00pm. A motion to adjourn the March 14, 2023 Tourism Advisory Council was made by Ms. Lods, seconded by Ms. Patterson Tidy, and passed unanimously by the Council. Mr. Williams thanked everyone for their continued attendance and participation.