

CUMBERLAND COUNTY TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes Notes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council (CCTAC) was held on Tuesday, August 10, 2021, via Microsoft Teams and/or teleconference call.

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: Donna Longo
Marianne Lods

Lynn Timberman
Jamie Warner

Commissioner Barber

Guests: Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator
Megan Sheppard, County Health Department
Bob Campbell, Downe Township
Gabriel Scarpa, Office of Emergency Management
Kim Wood, County Administrator
Regina Burke, City of Millville
Gerry Seneski, Treasurers Office
Jerry Velazquez, The Authority
Nadine Lockley, Downe Township
Paul Ritter, Hopewell Township Mayor

Approval of Minutes

Lynn Timberman indicated the Approval of Minutes agenda item would be skipped, as there was not a quorum of the Tourism Advisory Council (TAC) met. However, later in the meeting, with Marianne Lods appearing in attendance, with a quorum now met, it was decided the minutes could be approved. A motion to approve the July 13, 2021 TAC minutes was made by Donna Longo, seconded by Ms. Lods, and approved by the Council.

Introduction & Discussion with Municipal Representatives

Matt Pisarski explained at a recent Mayor's call with County Administration, representatives from each municipality had been invited to attend monthly TAC meetings. Mr. Pisarski invited the attendees from the various municipalities to introduce themselves; Bob Campbell introduced himself on behalf of Downe, as well as Regina Burke on behalf of the City of Millville. Mr. Pisarski added he had seen the municipalities doing great things on Facebook,

especially, Deerfield Township, promotion-wise. He wanted to create an opportunity for the municipalities to connect with TAC. Mr. Pisarski opened the meeting space to the municipality representatives for ideas, areas to be focused on, etc. Mr. Campbell suggested each municipality should have a representative on these monthly TAC teleconference calls.

County Outreach Bus - Completed

Commissioner Barber mentioned the retired CATS bus, which had been converted for use as the Census bus had been re-wrapped to feature all sorts of great different areas highlighting Cumberland County. She explained it was intended to be used at events at which anyone requested its attendance. Commissioner Barber stated the Commissioners wanted a fluid County calendar and the easiest way to maintain this was representation from each municipality. Mr. Pisarski added they had worked to re-wrap the Census bus as a general County Outreach vehicle. It now features various iconic images of Cumberland County. Mr. Pisarski said this vehicle was now available to be used at events, as well as either a 10x10' tent or a 10x20' tent. Mr. Pisarski urged the attendees to reach out to himself or Omarey Williams, if anyone wanted a TAC booth present at their upcoming events. Mr. Pisarski thanked the Council for their input.

Explore Cumberland Website, Social Media & Story Maps – Discussion

Mr. Pisarski reiterated there was centralized website for everything Tourism-related within the County, ExploreCumberlandNJ.com, as well as Instagram and Facebook pages. It had been discussed internally how this website could be revamped and encompass everything for Tourism, Recreation, or events-related programming. Mr. Pisarski explained the Cultural & Heritage Commission had a separate website and separate social media. It was stated the department wanted to coalesce all of the County-related events into the Explore Cumberland website. Michael Lacey was working to add an online Calendar of Events that would be comprehensive and maintained by staff, along with story maps. The Explore Cumberland site would be updated with information on the three Departmental Boards.

Mr. Pisarski mentioned a proposal from Castano Publicity (contained within the TAC meeting packet) who, in the past, had done the social media updating for ExploreCumberlandNJ.com. His question to the Council was: did they want to re-contract with Castano for 12 more months or take a break and see if, internally, staff could update the social media pages without needing to do the contract. Ms. Longo agreed upon combining the websites/social media and agreed with the staff doing updates. Mses. Timberman & Lods both agreed with Ms. Longo. Commissioner Barber & Mr. Pisarski both agreed he and staff could handle updating the social media components, as did the majority of the Council. Mr. Pisarski asked the municipal representatives to, please, send their event information, as well.

Wayfinding Signage – Manufacturing

Mr. Pisarski explained at the previous month's meeting, it was discussed with The Historical Society & The All-sports Museum about installing a few wayfinding signs around Bridgeton. Since that time, both entities had agreed upon the green/tan color scheme and had zeroed in

on the specific locations for those signs. Mr. Pisarski said the final design had been forwarded to the County's Public Works Department, which will manufacture the signs and, hopefully, install them by next month's meeting. Once installed, staff would go out and take photos to be presented at the next TAC meeting. Ms. Timberman mentioned she saw the Hall of Fame building was currently being worked on, as well.

Events Scheduled for Tourism Presence – Discussion

Mr. Pisarski quickly read through a list of events Departmental staff had committed to within the next several weeks: Cohansey Plein Air on Saturday, August 28th, the Millville Army Wheels & Wings Airshow on Saturday & Sunday, September 4-5th, Mexican Independence Day in Bridgeton on Saturday, September 18th, Mauricetown Artist Day & the Prince Hall Celebration both on September 11th, The Hiring & Business Expo on Wednesday, September 22nd, and Saturday & Sunday, October 2-3rd for WheatonArts' Festival of Fine Craft.

Ms. Lods mentioned September 25th for the Plein Air in the Millville Arts District and requested a banner or some sort of staff presence. Ms. Lods mentioned she would send Messrs. Pisarski & Williams a revised advertisement form. Mr. Pisarski inquired, regarding the upcoming concert at the Riverfront Park on October 16th, was staff presence requested, to which Ms. Lods said, yes, staff presence would be greatly appreciated. Mr. Pisarski invited the municipal representatives to send any additional event info, flyers, etc., as well.

Departmental Updates – Matt Pisarski

Mr. Pisarski mentioned the Department was looking at adding to the staffing and had released the position announcement for a Tourism Representative. Mr. Pisarski indicated the department had conducted interviews, but were still looking at their options, and, hopefully, would have some formal announcements by the next TAC meeting.

County Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Barber stated she just wanted to once more, welcome the municipal representatives in attendance. Commissioner Barber indicated to Mr. Pisarski that they reach out to each of the mayors, along with their calendar, so they can forward it to a person and invite them to the Council's next meeting again. Commissioner Barber indicated it was going to be good next couple of months for Tourism events. Commissioner Barber said she would pass along the dates of the upcoming events to her fellow Commissioners, in hopes they would be able to attend, as well.

Tourism Advisory Council Members Updates

Ms. Timberman explained The Zoo was still going through some changes. They were trying to get some new, prominent, and cohesive signs made up for the animals. Ms. Timberman stated the waterwheel was still not working and they were actively trying to figure out how to fix it. Ms. Timberman said there were new trek benches, as well as memorial benches with commemorative plaques for those interested. She added the director of Parks & Recreation

had made a banner for the Zoo to be put on display at the Airshow. The Zoo's 30+-year-old great horned owl had recently passed away, as well.

Ms. Lods explained the Riverfront Renaissance Center for The Arts (RRCA) was planning some events, as previously mentioned. Their Summer Art Camp ended with a terrific final event and Ms. Lods was proud of everyone who attended. Ms. Lods added there was a new mural because of the Summer Art Camp located in the old horse and carriage tunnel across from the RRCA. It was created by the teen group, along with an artist from Atlantic City. Ms. Lods indicated they were going to have some new murals created this fiscal year.

Jamie Warner explained the Bounty of The Bay fundraiser event would be held that upcoming weekend featuring crabs and spaghetti, with red or white sauce, meatballs (produced in Hopewell) and spaghetti, or just plain crabs. It was \$20.00/platter with tickets available prior to the event, via email, or day-of the event. Ms. Warner said on October 16th, they were planning to bring back an event called Downe Home Day (previously Back Home Day,) which was simply a way for both current and former Downe Township residents to get together and tell their stories. Union Hall & The Downe Historical Society were hosting a series of musical events in September, October, November, and December. Ms. Warner shared the Downe Township Green Team was doing a clean-up on September 18th in tandem with The Authority's annual waterways clean-up.

Mr. Pisarski inquired if Ms. Warner would want the Tourism booth to be present at Downe Home Day. Ms. Warner explained she would like to, first, speak with the rest of her team, but couldn't imagine anyone would say "no." Mr. Pisarski stated he would reach back out to Ms. Warner, via email, to follow-up to confirm. Ms. Longo explained Cleopatra Jewelers was currently under construction and Home Goods had started construction, as well.

Adjourn

Ms. Timberman explained the next TAC meeting was scheduled for September 14, 2021. A motion was made to adjourn the August 10, 2021 Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council meeting by Ms. Timberman. It was seconded by Ms. Lods and passed unanimously by the Council.