

CUMBERLAND COUNTY TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

February 14, 2023
Meeting Minutes Notes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council (C.C.T.A.C.) was held on Tuesday, February 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 – January 10, 2023

Ms. Timberman thanked everyone for their attendance and asked for an inaugural motion to approve the January 10, 2023 meeting minutes notes. A motion was made by Ms. Longo, seconded by Ms. Timberman, and passed unanimously by the Council to approve the January 10, 2023 Tourism Advisory Council (T.A.C.) meeting minutes notes.

Discussion of Cumberland County Farmers' Market

Mr. Pisarski explained within the meeting packet were two items of note: a location map of the Cumberland Mall with a highlighted location of the where the Farmers' Market storefront would be going. Mr. Pisarski said he wanted to thank both Ms. Longo and the Mall for exceptional treatment throughout this process. Additionally, included within the packet, was a floorplan detailing 20 individual vendor spaces would fit within the storefront. Mr. Pisarski

said this included 10x10-foot spaces, as well as four rental merchandising units (RMU's) or canopied carts within the Mall's midways. He said pricing would be \$250.00 for the spaces along the wall for the entire season. It was agreed the pricing was very competitive for other similar farmers' markets across New Jersey and the season at the Mall would be longer.

Mr. Pisarski said there would be some sort of premium price for the four cart locations between roughly \$350-400.00. Adding that this pricing would help cover the rent, utilities, and some money left over to do take-away items or branded items to potentially be sold, as well. He would send an email to the T.A.C. members with the proposed pricing and detail the calendar: Saturdays and Sundays every weekend from the middle of May until the end of October. Vendors would have to commit to every Saturday and Sunday for the season and would be self-selected by staff initially. It would be open to commercial farm operations or businesses with commercial licensing and a Business Registration Certificate (BRC) from the general public afterwards on a first come, first served basis. The Department would do marketing itself, as well as the City of Vineland and the Mall. Mr. Williams suggested the application could be created in Survey 123, as well as with a QR code, which would both go back to Departmental staff and/or the County website.

Mr. Pisarski mentioned setting aside money for a sign at the farmers' market storefront's entrance, as well. Ms. Longo mentioned the owners did not charge the T.A.C. market rent and mentioned the time would have to be 11-5:00pm on both Saturdays and Sundays due to the hours of operation of the Mall. Mr. Pisarski said Marianne Lods had recently announced at a Cultural & Heritage meeting that they would not be hosting the farmers' market in Millville anymore as she felt they could not compete with the upcoming efforts at the Mall. Mr. Pisarski said the license agreement would need to be approved and executed by the County Commissioners and would be on the meeting agenda for March. Mr. Pisarski added the Department would still need to figure out who would be there to help open and close. Ms. Longo said security could help open and close the storefront, but someone would have to do the trash, recycling, etc. at each day's farmers' market closing time.

Discussion of Digital Marketing Plan Draft (Renati Solutions)

Mr. Williams explained Renati Solutions had provided a draft of their Digital Marketing Plan, which included examples of where they were going. He pointed out a handful of key examples for the Council to look over and provide him with feedback. Mr. Williams said he would provide any feedback directly to Will Gruccio. Mr. Williams made reference to GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE PLAN on Page 2, TARGET AUDIENCES and GOALS AND OBJECTIVES on Page 4, Social Media (Initial Audit Completed of Active Pages) on Page 6 with actionable steps to potentially take, and Print & Digital Marketing/Advertising avenues on Page 8 for both review and input from the Council.

Mr. Williams asked for comments, suggestions, etc. from the Council by the following Wednesday. The Council discussed trying out new platforms, such as TikTok, BeReal, or Snapchat. Mr. Williams added \$5,00.00 was set aside for implementation for said Plan Draft. An overall timeframe for implementation was to be discussed at the May T.A.C. meeting. Mr. Pisarski added that the Cultural & Heritage Commission already had its own YouTube

channel, which could easily be converted into ExploreCumberland for such purposes. Mr. Kamm provided his feedback on behalf of the New Jersey Motorsports Park (NJMP) on their experience with TikTok, but said they favored LinkedIn as more engaging from a user/public engagement standard. Both Mr. Kamm & Ms. Patterson Tidy said their organizations yielded the most engagements from Facebook & Instagram.

Discussion of South Jersey Film Office Commission

Mr. Williams explained staff had reached out to the New Jersey State Film Commission (NJSFC,) who told them there was a South Jersey Film Office Cooperative (SJFOC.) Mr. Williams reached out directly to the latter and spoke to a Kerry Richards, who provided the packet of information he included within the meeting packet. Mr. Williams said the cost required to join the SJFOC would total \$13,000.00/year with registrations being accepted quarterly. Mr. Williams said this would grant the Council access to their film website and allow them one voting member of the SJFOC's board. Messrs. Williams & Pisarski did not think it would be worth the money the SJFOC were asking.

Commissioner Director Albrecht suggesting hiring a person and starting up their own Cumberland County Film Office. Mr. Pisarski added staff had already been working with staff at the NJSFC, as well. Ms. Longo suggested seeing if Debbie & Dianne from Cape May County had joined the SJFOC and if so, the Council could get information through them directly on behalf of the Southern Shore Regional Destination Marketing Organization (SSRDMO.) Even without joining the SJFOC, Mr. Pisarski surmised film scouts going to the NJSFC would still end up in Cumberland due to the Council's pre-existing relationship with Joe Marra and staff there, who seemed to be actively marketing Cumberland County.

Commissioner Albrecht suggested speaking with Ray Mamrak at The Landis Theatre. Mr. Pisarski mentioned Robert Dragotta, who was already working with filmmakers, producers, etc. filming in Cumberland County. Mr. Pisarski said he would put in a call to Diane and/or Debbie in Cape May from the SSRDMO. It was agreed that such an opportunity could be very beneficial to the Council/County at the right price and under specific circumstances and conditions. Ms. Longo suggested hiring an intern from Scarpa Technical High School to help input photography and information into the Reel-Scout program on behalf of Cumberland. Commissioner Albrecht suggested the upcoming intern program for the summer to help with this project.

Discussion of Advertising Opportunity (NJ Family)

Mr. Williams said NJ Family was an online-only advertising opportunity, which he would also be providing to Mr. Guccio at Renati Solutions to have him look at it, as well. Mr. Williams added he had reached out to NJ Family's account executive, Cathy Grote, and when he received additional information, he would provide it to the Council. Mr. Williams wanted to see if Renati Solutions would want to include this sort of website within their strategy. Ms. Longo said she believed NJ Family started out as South Jersey Moms run by new moms. Ms. Longo and the Council agreed with Mr. Williams that this would be something good for Mr. Guccio at Renati Solutions to further examine and report back with his findings.

Discussion of 2023 Vacationer Magazine

Mr. Williams had included the 2023 Rate Card for the Vacationer Magazine. He also reminded the Council, as they had previously decided in January, they would just be doing two full-page ads this year (rather than three.) Mr. Williams said this would be included within the Council's annual commitment to the Vacationer and the SSRDMO. Mr. Williams added as soon as the Vacationers were published and received, staff would be out to deliver them to members of the Council, as well as various establishments throughout the County. Mr. Pisarski asked for a list from Mr. Williams of who else within the County had committed to advertisements within the Vacationer.

Update On Specialty Crop Grant

Mr. Pisarski explained this item had already been discussed within the discussion of Cumberland County Farmers' Market agenda item, but briefly reiterated the pertinent information for Commissioner Director Albrecht. Mr. Pisarski added the County Commissioners would see it at their March meeting due to the license agreement that would have to be signed within the Mall, which had been heavily subsidized. Mr. Pisarski said this cost had been covered by the vendor fees and, additionally, the marketing fees had been covered by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) grant funding.

Commissioner Albrecht mentioned the Value Added Producers Grant, which could help individuals, such as Jamie Warner, who would need to hire additional help to work events like the Cumberland County Farmers' Market. Commissioner Albrecht gave some information on said grant to Messrs. Pisarski & Williams to pass along to Ms. Warner and/or other vendors, producers, farmers, etc. that may be in her position. Mr. Pisarski thanked Commissioner Albrecht for the information and said he would reach out to Ms. Warner.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Pisarski stated there was a large New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (NJDEP) grant for an all-inclusive playground within the County. It would cover 75% of all the costs associated with the playground's construction. From several locations presented, Mr. Pisarski said the spot the Commissioners picked was in front of the County Library facility. Mr. Pisarski said the grant deadline was on March 1, 2023 and the Commissioners would be having a public hearing at their upcoming February 28th meeting. Commissioner Albrecht added it was called the Jake's Place Grant and would be a specialty park.

Mr. Pisarski said it would be all-inclusive for children and adults with both physical and sensory disabilities. The City of Vineland was building their own playground of this sort at Romano Park, who graciously shared their design plan and project budget. Mr. Pisarski added that the County's playground project budget could range from \$750,000.00 to \$1 million. Commissioner Albrecht said the County Fairgrounds, Shiloh, and Maurice River wanted similar parks, but the location selected was the best location to start.

Mr. Pisarski added the planned remodeling of the Fairgrounds were still in-progress. His next step would be to have a meeting with the new County Administrator, Harold Johnson, and Deputy Administrator, Luz Vasquez, and Clarke Caton Hintz to get them up to speed. Mr. Pisarski said once the Comprehensive Plan had been reviewed and finalized, the Trail Development Grant was sitting and ready to go.

Commissioner Albrecht said another potential idea would be to tie in the Cohansey River area from Mary Elmer Lake all the way down to Fairton into a greenway for walkers, bikers, joggers, etc. Mr. Pisarski said a South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization (SJTPO) consulting grant study was looking at the Southeast Gateway neighborhood, as well as trail development along the River. Ms. Timberman added she had heard people in the community would love a pickleball court worked into the Fairgrounds redesign, if at all possible.

County Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Albrecht said the city of Millville was interested in extending Nabb Avenue/Buckshutem Road up to the Millville Executive Airport, so trucks could travel to the Airport, as well. Commissioner Albrecht also mentioned a project involving the existing rail lines sand mines, and OmniTRAX. He mentioned this may involve getting sewer and water into Commercial Township, which would add tremendous value to local properties. He added a flight school may be coming to the Airport to help teach people how to fix and repair planes. Ms. Longo suggested Cumberland County should emphasize the positives, rather than touting the negatives. Commissioner Albrecht shared he and Mr. Williams would soon be launching a new video interview series to be filmed in various municipalities highlighting important people, places, and positive things happening across the County. Commissioner Albrecht mentioned they would be rotating the locations of the Commissioner meetings, on a quarterly basis, hosting meetings at different places throughout the County.

Tourism Advisory Council Member Updates

Ms. Longo said the Cumberland Mall was actively working on deals. She said the Mall had Brunch with The Bunny planned for March 25, 2023, but were told by 4-H they could not bring any bunnies because of a previous commitment. Mr. Pisarski said he would reach out to 4-H and find some sort of solution for the Mall's event. Ms. Longo said the Chick-Fila-A within the Mall complex was still planning to expand with a second drive-thru lane.

Ms. Patterson Tidy said East Point Lighthouse was currently battling with the State and NJDEP. She said Eagle Festival had been an awesome event with a great turn-out and lost count keeping track of attendees past 120 people. Ms. Patterson Tidy said 4-H was great to have in attendance with crafting activities for both kids and adults, as well as volunteers from the Maurice River Township Heritage Society.

Ms. Timberman stated she currently had no update on behalf of the Cohanzick Zoo, but hoped to be able to provide more information next month following an impending meeting with their newly-appointed Zoo Director.

Adjournment

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