

CUMBERLAND COUNTY TOURISM ADVISORY COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes Notes

A meeting of the Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council (CCTAC) was held on Tuesday, September 14, 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
Lisa Jester
Jamie Warner

Lynn Timberman
Marianne Lods

Commissioner Barber

Guests: Omarey Williams, Shared Services Coordinator
Amy Colaneri, Upper Deerfield Township
Bob Campbell, Downe Township

Approval of Minutes

Lynn Timberman requested a motion to approve the August 10, 2021 meeting minutes. A motion was made by Donna Longo, seconded by Marianne Lods, and passed unanimously by the remainder of the Tourism Advisory Council (T.A.C.)

Explore Cumberland Website, Social Media & Story Maps

Matt Pisarski shared his screen to show the Monmouth County Calendar of Events, which was his favorite from neighboring Counties. Mr. Pisarski was looking for feedback from the Council members as to whether this would work for their purposes. Lisa Jester, Ms. Longo, and Ms. Timberman agreed they liked Monmouth's calendar. Ms. Lods suggested a darker font color be used. Jamie Warner asked if they would still use the function for people to submit their own events. Mr. Pisarski said, yes, that feature would be retained, but would receive staff review prior to publishing to the calendar. Mr. Pisarski said he would reach out to Michael "Mike" Lacy and ask him to get started with the idea being to stop printing Calendar of Events pamphlets and direct people to the website instead.

Agricultural Marketing Campaign

Sharing his screen once more, Mr. Pisarski said he was working with several people from the Board of Agriculture (B.O.A.) to finish up two ad campaigns: one concerning aquaculture and the other based around agriculture. Mr. Pisarski explained this would be the initial promotion without being anything too specific. If agreed upon by both the Council & Board, these designs would be printed on 8.5 x 11" glossy paper to be distributed to the public. Mr. Pisarski explained a short billboard plan with Mike Lacy was planned, as well. Mr. Pisarski mentioned a Specialty Crop Grant he planned to work on in conjunction with this effort. Mr. Pisarski explained, a new staff person, Wanda Riviera, would be brought on next week to help assist he and Mr. Williams with Tourism/Recreation-related work.

Wayfinding Signage - Manufacturing

Mr. Pisarski stated these were the final versions of the two Wayfinding Sign designs for the All-Sports Museum & Hall of Fame and the Cumberland County Historical Society. He explained there were a total of four signs for each institution, which had been signed off on and were currently being produced. Mr. Pisarski had confirmed the location of each sign with each organization and once installed by Public Works, would be photographed and shared.

Events Scheduled for Tourism Presence

Mr. Pisarski explained staff were at the Millville Wheels & Wings Air Show both days, as well as Artists' Day in Mauricetown and the Prince Hall Community Day in Bridgeton the following weekend. He mentioned all three of the events were very successful and well-attended. The upcoming weekend would be Mexican Independence Day in Bridgeton, which would have a Tourism booth. Mr. Pisarski said upcoming events would include the Greenwich Craft Fair, WheatonArts' Festival of Fine Craft, Commercial Township Community Day, the Plein Air Competition in Millville, Downe Home Day, the Hiring & Business Expo at Rowan College (South Jersey Campus,) and other additional events. Commissioner Barber suggested Mr. Pisarski speak with Paige Desiere in Human Resources about job openings to take to the Expo.

Departmental Updates

Mr. Pisarski mentioned changes in the Departmental staffing with Wanda now joining the team; Omarey Williams would be the Tourism frontperson with additional duties relating to Recreation and Cultural & Heritage. These three Boards would now work in collaboration whenever possible and the social media pages would soon be consolidated into ExploreCumberlandNJ.com. Mr. Pisarski reiterated Wanda Riviera would be starting the following week, who would act as the back-up for all things Tourism, Recreation, and Cultural & Heritage. Ms. Riviera would be introduced at next month's Tourism meeting.

Mr. Pisarski said, at last month's meeting, the Council decided not to proceed with the social media consultant, Costano Publishing, and handle it internally. People Reached on the Explore Cumberland Facebook page were up 2,700%, Post Engagements were up 3,800% within the last 28 days, and Page Likes were up almost 300%. Mr. Pisarski would soon be sending an email out to County staff, as well as the Council members, on how to Like this

and the County Facebook page with a simple step-by-step .PDF attachment to help bump the numbers up even further.

County Commissioner Updates

Commissioner Barber stated she was so proud of Mr. Pisarski and his staff for a fabulous job well-done in recent weeks, as seen by the growth in numbers. Commissioner Barber said every event she had been to lately had been extremely well-attended by both local and out-of-State attendees. Commissioner Barber suggested if any of the Commissioners or Council members were needed to staff booths, they would be more than happy to assist.

Tourism Advisory Council Members Updates

Ms. Jester shared close to 20,000 people attended both days of the Air Show with slightly heavier attendance on Sunday. Ms. Jester would not have final Profit & Loss numbers for at least another 30 days, but was hopeful the number would be great. Ms. Jester said she would be holding an Air Show Wrap-up Meeting the following day with both local and State officials. Next, would be their 10th annual golf event at the Centerton Country Club, annual Veteran's Day Appreciation event, and ongoing Movie Nights.

Ms. Timberman said the Zoo was still trying to get their iconic waterwheel working again and most of the new signs were now up at the animal enclosures. Ms. Timberman said, other than that, there was not a whole lot more going on at the Zoo. She mentioned, if anyone had any spider plants or ferns they would like to get rid of, they could be` donated to the Zoo to be put inside the animal enclosures for the winter. Commissioner Barber asked if there was any way to measure the number of people attending the Zoo. Ms. Timberman said she was unsure if the old counter was still in place, but would ask at the next Zoo Officers meeting. Mr. Pisarski said the Zoo brochures were very popular at the recent Prince Hall event.

Ms. Lods explained September 25th was the RRCA's Plein Air art competition and their last Farmers Market of the season. They would be offering small pumpkins and apples, in addition to the regular fare, to be seasonally appropriate. Ms. Lods said they were looking forward to their October 16th concert, which would be held from 2-6:00p.m. on the Riverfront. There was still room for more craft or artisan-type vendors, if the Council members knew of anyone who may be interested. It would be a free event for both vendors and attendees. Ms. Lods explained they were starting to prepare for holiday festivities, including Small Business Saturday, which would be held on the Saturday after Thanksgiving. Ms. Lods said that upcoming Friday was Third Friday and there were three major exhibits that were all tied together across three venues.

Ms. Warner stated the residents of Downe Township were participating in the International Waterways Clean-up event that upcoming weekend across a number of beaches, creeks, and other areas in need of cleaning. They were still in need of volunteers and the event would run from about 8:30-12 noon. Ms. Warner explained on that same day was the first Live at Union Hall concert event featuring The Snake Brothers at 7:00p.m. Ms. Warner added there would be another Live at Union Hall concert event on October 16th with Swing That Cat. Ms.

Warner explained that same day, Downe Home Day would be held, as well, to help bring the community together and share the history of Downe Township from 10-3:00p.m.

Ms. Longo said Spirit Halloween was now open at the Cumberland Mall and both Home Goods and Cleopatra Jewelers were still under-construction. Ms. Longo wanted to congratulate Messrs. Pisarski & Williams on the direction in which they were now taking the Department and the Council. Ms. Lods mentioned Council member Leslie Ficcaglia was now back in the States and was looking to attain her long-term stay visa in France. Mr. Pisarski agreed they should reach out to Ms. Ficcaglia to see if she may want to resign and be replaced with another active member to fill her seat. Mr. Pisarski mentioned he was open to suggestions to help fill Joe DeLuca's seat, as well.

Municipal Representative Updates

Mr. Pisarski explained, next month, he planned to have a new directory for the Council cataloging all of the municipal representatives for each municipality. He opened the floor to any municipal representatives on the call who may want to share updates. Amy Colaneri spoke, on behalf of Roy Spoltore from Upper Deerfield Township. Ms. Colaneri mentioned they were preparing for two events: one, a Veterans' Day event planned for November and two, the 100th anniversary of Upper Deerfield to be held in April 2022. Mr. Pisarski added the Department/Council would be happy to help however they could with these events. Mr. Pisarski read off the representatives he had on file for each municipality, who receive each monthly meeting invite and corresponding packet.

Adjourn

Ms. Timberman explained the next T.A.C. meeting was scheduled for October 12, 2021. A motion was made to adjourn the September 14, 2021 Cumberland County Tourism Advisory Council meeting by Ms. Longo. It was seconded by Ms. Jester and passed unanimously by the Council.