

Minutes
Page County Tourism Council
Regular Meeting
Jan. 11, 2023

Members Present

Helen Morton, Chair / Industrial Representative

Karen Riddle, Vice Chair / District 2

Seretha Judy, District 1

Randy Howan, District 3

Bart Price, District 4

Charlie Jenkins, District 5

J.D. Cave, At-Large

Staff Present

Nina Long, Economic Development and Tourism Director

Rebecca Armstrong, Communications and Marketing Coordinator

English Henry, Economic Development and Tourism Specialist

Others Present

Bill Huffman, Luray Caverns Corp. / Luray-Page County Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors

Gina Hilliard, Luray-Page County Chamber of Commerce President

Cathy Herbert, Luray resident

Call to Order

Chairwoman Helen Morton called to order the regular meeting of the Page County Tourism Council at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Jan. 11, 2023, in the Board of Supervisors' Room, located on the second floor of the Page County Government Center at 103 S. Court St. in Luray.

Adoption of Agenda

Councilman Cave moved that the Tourism Council adopt the agenda as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilman Jenkins and passed unanimously.

Action Matters

Approval of meeting minutes

A motion made by Councilwoman Judy and seconded by Councilman Price to approve the minutes of the Dec. 14, 2022 Page County Tourism Council meeting as presented passed unanimously.

Chairwoman Morton told council members that the Sept. 14, 2022 tourism council meeting did not meet quorum requirements and that no actions were taken during that gathering.

Old Business

Director of Economic Development and Tourism Nina Fox reported that she that morning met with Harrisonburg-based content vendor The Downtown Creative to talk about social media marketing initiatives and strategies. Fox told Council members that she would keep the them updated as efforts progressed.

New Business

Economic Development and Tourism Update: Nina Fox

Council members greeted Fox with applause in recognition of her return to the director of economic development and tourism role on Jan. 3. Fox reported that the department's chief focus would continue to be the new website pagevalley.org until the site's hard launch in mid-February. Other top projects include completing ARPA-approved projects, scheduling a community launch party for the new website, budget planning for the upcoming fiscal year and new and ongoing marketing projects. Fox noted that work in 2022 focused on identifying and understanding Page Valley's tourism market, while 2023 projects will prioritize launching brand and strategic marketing projects.

The Council discussed contracting services with Kathy Moore, a marketing, branding and public relations strategist based in Staunton at Moore Public Relations. Councilwoman Riddle made a motion to recommend that the County earmark \$100,000 in FY2023 Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) revenue for those services. The motion was seconded by Councilman Howan and passed unanimously. Fox noted that she was set to review a final proposal and that the Page County Board of Supervisors must approve all TOT allocations.

Council members discussed recent news media coverage and social media responses regarding Fox's return to the director position, after resigning in October. Council members voiced their support of Fox in the role. Chairwoman Morton encouraged fellow Council members to reach out to their respective Supervisor to express that support. Morton additionally touted a need for increased communications in the community about tourism marketing projects. Staff agreed to release a quarterly newsletter updating industry stakeholders by the end of January.

Open Public Comments

Page County resident Cathy Herbert noted that the Tourism Council's agendas and minutes prior to December 2022 were not posted online to the County's agenda center (pagecounty.virginia.gov/AgendaCenter). Fox said print-outs and digital copies of the agendas and minutes were available in the economic development and tourism office and by email, respectively; the information for all meetings moving forward would be posted to the County's agenda center; and that she would look into the possibility of posting information from previous meetings to the site.

Council Members' Time

Council members had no comments.

Adjourn

A motion made by Councilwoman Judy and seconded by Councilwoman Riddle to adjourn passed unanimously.