

# Minutes

## TOURISM BOARD

### Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. March 3, 2025

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Victoria Pace, Vice-Chair Megan Kimball (arrived at 6:11 p.m.), Barney Caton, Meaghun Darab, Scott Czechlewski, Smita Patel, and Eryk Pruitt

Absent: Rainbow Cabbage

Staff: Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell, Planning Technician Dakotah Kimbrough

### 1. Call to order

Chair Victoria Pace called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. with six members present.

### 2. Agenda changes and approval

Shannan Campbell introduced Dakotah Kimbrough, a new planning technician who would be helping with notetaking and minutes. She asked everyone to introduce themselves and state who they represent. Scott Czechlewski introduced himself as representing the Chamber of Commerce. Eryk Pruitt introduced himself as co-owner of Yonder. Victoria Pace and Barney Caton introduced themselves as at-large members. Smita Patel introduced herself as co-owner of Nomad. Barney Caton also mentioned owning Haunted Hillsborough tours.

Motion: Chair Victoria Pace motioned to approve the agenda. Member Eryk Pruitt moved to approve. Member Scott Czechlewski seconded.

Vote: 6-0. Ayes: Members Pace, Pruitt, Czechlewski, Meaghun Darab, Barney Caton, Smita Patel

### 3. Discussion/Action Items

#### A. FY 2026 (Spring 2025) draft grant schedule

Shannan Campbell presented the draft grant schedule, noting it was similar to previous years but opening about a week later. She mentioned that the schedule was condensed to still allow for a five-week opening period. Campbell stated that there weren't many significant changes from the previous year and assumed the scoring rubric would remain the same. Board members confirmed.

Motion: Chair Pace motioned to adopt the FY2026 grant cycle schedule. Member Caton moved to adopt. Member Darab seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

#### B. Contract Scopes of Work for FY26

- Alliance (Visitor Center)

101 E. Orange St., PO Box 429, Hillsborough, NC 27278  
919-732-1270 | [www.hillsboroughnc.gov](http://www.hillsboroughnc.gov) | @HillsboroughGov  
[www.visithillsboroughnc.com](http://www.visithillsboroughnc.com) | @HillsboroughNC

Campbell mentioned that the Alliance and Burwell had no significant changes.

- Burwell School (Visitor Services) See above.
- Hillsborough Arts Council (Last Fridays, Hillsborough Parade, Solstice Lantern Walk)  
Campbell brought up the Arts Council's request for staffing and miscellaneous costs for the gallery and gift shop in past years. She asked if the board wanted to include this in the scope or wait for the Arts Council to request it again. The board agreed to wait for the Arts Council to request funding for the gallery and gift shop rather than including it in the scope. The board discussed whether to include the Solstice Lantern Walk in the Arts Council's contract. Campbell noted it had been funded for two grant cycles and was no longer eligible for grant funding and the tourism board wanted it to continue so it should be brought in as a contracted event.
- Chamber (Holiday Tree Lighting & Holiday Parade)  
Members agreed that splitting the parade and tree lighting into two events was a good idea. Czechlewski requested the removal of language about vendor space on the courthouse lawn for the holiday parade. He also suggested removing mentions of food and beverage options for the tree lighting event. Campbell noted that there was a desire amongst the attendees for some lighter options.
- Museum (Visitor Services)

#### **4. Monthly reports and Staff updates**

##### **A. FY25 F&B Report (in-progress)**

Campbell presented the updated Food and Beverage tax report. She noted that the formulas had been corrected from the previous version. Campbell mentioned that while they had budgeted to spend more than projected revenues, the fund balance was strong, and revenues were still coming in well.

The board discussed the November figures, which showed a 40% increase. They speculated on reasons for the increase, including warmer weather and a late Thanksgiving.

##### **B. Alexander Dickson House**

Campbell informed the board about ongoing discussions regarding the Alexander Dickson House, which currently houses the visitor center. She explained that Orange County, which owns the property, no longer wants to own and maintain it. Campbell mentioned potential options, including the town purchasing it or the Tourism Board taking ownership. She noted that maintenance costs were a significant concern, and that more information was being gathered about these costs.

##### **C. America 250 celebrations/events and potential partnerships with the Town Board**

Campbell discussed the upcoming America 250 celebrations, marking the 250th anniversary of the United States. She mentioned various local initiatives, including grants for each county, a play production by the Orange Historical Museum, and a Revolutionary War Living History Day at the visitor center. Campbell noted that the mayor was interested in potentially organizing a larger event around July 4, 2026. Ideas discussed included a picnic, fireworks or a drone light show, and a small walking parade. She mentioned the need for potential collaboration between the Town Board, Tourism Board, and TDA for funding and organization. The board discussed potential themes and ways to highlight Hillsborough's history as part of the celebrations. They also considered the need for additional support, such as hiring a part-time event coordinator to manage it all.

#### **5. Board comments and updates**

Kimball raised concerns about the recent news coverage of vultures in Hillsborough, suggesting it might negatively impact tourism. The board discussed various perspectives on the issue, with some members seeing it as a potential opportunity for tourism rather than a problem.

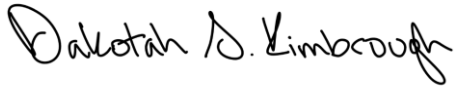
Campbell informed the board that they could take an official position on the matter if they wished, similar to past instances where the Tourism Board had advised the Town Board on various issues related to tourism. The discussion concluded without a formal decision being made regarding the vulture situation.

**6. Adjournment**

Motion: Chair Pace motioned to adjourn the meeting. Darab moved to adjourn at 6:29 p.m. Pruitt seconded.

Vote: 7-0.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dakotah D. Kimbrough". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dakotah Kimbrough  
Planning Technician  
Staff support to the Hillsborough Tourism Board

Approved: April 14, 2025