

Minutes

TOURISM BOARD

Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. August 5, 2024

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



Present: Chair Victoria Pace, Vice-Chair Megan Kimball, Meaghun Darab, Rainbow Cabbage, Barney Caton, Scott Czechlewski, Smita Patel, Barry Hupp, and Eryk Pruitt

Absent: None

Staff: Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell

1. Call to order

Chair Victoria Pace called the meeting to order at 5:33 p.m. Planning and Economic Development Manager Shannan Campbell called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

2. Agenda changes and approval

Campbell noted that section 4 was mislabeled as 'Monthly Reports and Comments' but it should be 'Discussed/Action Items' and then section 5 should be 'Monthly Reports and Comments' and section 6 should be 'Adjournment'. She apologized, citing that the town is using new software to put together agendas and agenda items and there are still some things to figure out.

Motion: Scott Czechlewski moved to approve the modified agenda. Member Barry Hupp seconded.

Vote: 9-0.

3. Presentations

A. Alliance (Visitors Center) Q3 & Q4 Reports

Amanda Boyd from the Alliance for Historic Hillsborough reported that there had been approximately 4,937 persons to see the Visitor's Center in FY24. She said the highlights for Q3 & Q4 included hiring and on-boarding Kelly Arnold to be the new Program and Events Coordinator, new signage installed at the Occoneechee replica village, repairs/paint at the Alexander Dickson House, Revolutionary War Day expansion with OBSN, the kick-off of 'Telling the Full Story' a program highlighting Indigenous and African American history in Hillsborough. She also discussed Hillsborough Excursion Day, a relatively new event that is not catching on as planned. She explained that the contract partners are working together to figure out how to make that event more successful in the future.

B. Burwell School Q3 & Q4 Reports

Emma Vadney presented to the board that the Derby Day auction was very successful, raising double the planned goal to support Burwell. She said they would continue to hold and grow that fundraiser. She said that events surrounding black history in February were very popular and that over 300 people visited Burwell during Revolutionary War History Day this year. She said Burwell is pursuing smaller fundraising efforts outside of just their annual gala. She said that it may be worth the tourism program pursuing more small

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conferences. She noted that there was recently a meeting of the Melungeon Heritage Association in Hillsborough and they were discussion having larger conferences in North Carolina, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

C. Hillsborough Arts Council Q3 & Q4 Reports

Heather Tatreau reported that sales were up in the gallery and gift shop and Last Fridays continued to be successful with elements like roaming street performers. She said the Handmade Parade was going to be moved to Fall 2025 due to competing interests in the spring. She said that there continues to be a hard time getting volunteers, and she thinks that all of the contract partners are having a hard time recruiting volunteers so if the Tourism Board has any ideas on how to get more people involved she would be grateful.

D. OC Historical Museum Q3 & Q4 Reports

Catie Atkinson reported that the museum had more than 1,000 visitors in Q3 & Q4. She attributed this to the popularity of the current 'working for a living' exhibit that explores Orange County trades through time. She said this exhibit would be up through December when they would transition to the new 'Youth Sports' exhibit.

4. Discussion/Action Items

A. Contract partner report frequency

Campbell asked the board what their preference would be for reporting. She said there had previously been some appetite for going to twice annual reporting instead of quarterly. She said she was working on contracts for FY25 when she had thought about it but didn't want to shift reporting without board feedback.

The board discussed and decided to only receive presentation highlights at a meeting each quarter and then get a fuller, longer report on Q1/Q2 and Q3/4 in writing twice a year. They said they would revisit this again for FY26 to make sure the reporting made sense and so that the board and contract partners all know what each other are working on.

5. Monthly Reports and Comments

Campbell said she had none for this month.

Member Rainbow Cabbage noted that the Alliance had used influencers for marketing and asked what the costs were and what that included.

Boyd indicated that they had used a few and that it was usually \$2-3K, which included content generation like photos, captions, short videos, and reels for social media marketing. She said that influencers with a strong following had proven to be a good investment so far.

Pace asked the board for any suggestions or ideas on how to connect more with the community vs. visitors to help get volunteers for contract partners to help with events, special projects, etc.

Contract partners asked if a button could be placed on the town or tourism website to garner volunteer sign ups. The Alliance was asked if they could be a 'clearinghouse' for volunteers- essentially having one solicitation for volunteers vs. every organization making an ask. There was discussion that some want to volunteer just for one event and others are looking for on-going volunteer opportunities so the interest form would need to ask that question. Campbell and Boyd said they would explore options for adding a button or ask on the Visit Hillsborough site.

6. Adjournment

Motion: Pace moved to adjourn at 7:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannan Campbell
Tourism Program Manager
Staff support to the Hillsborough Tourism Board

Approved: August 4, 2025