

# Agenda

## Tourism Board Regular Meeting

5:30 PM May 5, 2025

Board Conference Room, Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



1. **Call to order**
2. **Agenda changes and approval**
3. **Minutes**
  - A. April 14, 2025
4. **Discussion/Action Items**
  - A. FY26 Grant Projects and Scoring
  - B. Contract Partner Responses/Budgets for FY26 (continued discussion/review, if needed)
  - C. Draft FY26 Budget (continued discussion/review)
5. **Monthly reports and Staff updates**
  - A. FY26 Budget Public Hearing- June 2, 2025 5:30pm
6. **Board comments and updates**
7. **Adjournment**

Interpreter services or special sound equipment for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act is available on request. If you are disabled and need assistance with reasonable accommodations, call the Town Clerk's Office at 919-296-9443 a minimum of one business day in advance of the meeting.

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

# Minutes

## TOURISM BOARD

### Regular meeting

5:30 p.m. April 14, 2025

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



Present: Chair Victoria Pace, Vice-Chair Megan Kimball, Rainbow Cabbage, Barney Caton, Meaghun Darab (arrived at 5:47 p.m.), Scott Czechlewski, and Smita Patel.

Absent: Eryk Pruitt

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 5:35 p.m. and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

#### 2. Agenda changes and approval

Shannan Campbell requested adding item 4d for reappointment of members Smita Patel, Scott Czechlewski, and Rainbow Cabbage.

Motion: Kimball moved to approve the agenda as amended. Czechlewski seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

Cabbage requested adding a discussion item about vultures under Board Comments as item 6b.

Motion: Cabbage moved to approve the agenda as amended. Czechlewski seconded.

Vote: 5-1. Kimball voted against, citing that this had already been discussed at length at the last meeting.

#### 3. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on March 3, 2023

Motion: Czechlewski moved to approve the minutes from March 3, 2025 as submitted. Patel seconded.

Vote: 5-1. Cabbage abstained because she was absent from the previous meeting.

#### 4. Discussion/Action Items

##### A. Request from FlushFest organizers to roll grant funds from FY25 to FY26

Campbell explained that FlushFest organizers received a grant last year for use between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025. Due to an organizer's illness, they want to postpone the event to fall 2025 and need board approval to roll the funds over to FY26.

Motion: Kimball moved to approve the rollover of funds to FY26. Cabbage seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

##### B. Contract Partner Responses/Budgets for FY26

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

### 1. Alliance for Historic Hillsborough (Visitors Center Operations/Services & Events)

Amanda Boyd presented the Alliance's budget request. Key points included:

- A request to build a 16x20 ft storage shed between the farm office and public restrooms, to be shared with tourism partners (Burwell, Chamber, Museum, Town, HAC). The estimated cost is \$15,000.
- A new transportation services request of \$9,500 to provide shuttle buses for 4 large events, TBD. This would use Carolina Livery's services.
- A cultural heritage tourism line item of \$10,000 to continue work started with the Occoneechee Village project.

Board members asked questions about shed ownership, transportation logistics, and budget increases. Amanda and Alliance board members provided additional context on fundraising efforts and organizational growth.

### 2. Burwell School Historic Site (Visitor Services)

Burwell School representatives presented their budget request, highlighting:

- No increase in funding requests, maintaining \$70,000 request.
- Plans for new programming including kids' camps and a community conversation series.
- New exhibits every 6 months.
- Recent successful fundraising gala.
- Organizational changes including new commissioners and future board recruitment.

### 3. Hillsborough Chamber of Commerce (Visitor Services & Events)

Czechlewski presented the Chamber's request, focusing on the Holiday Parade & Tree Lighting:

- No increase in funding requested.
- The parade had 90 entries and an estimated 11,000 attendees.
- Tree lighting planned to be a separate event again this year.
- Discussion about having more food vendors, with board members suggesting more local options.

### 4. Hillsborough Arts Council (Visitor Services & Events)

Heather Tatreau presented their request, including:

- Increase for Solstice Lantern Walk from \$10,000 to \$15,000 to expand to West Hillsborough.
- Increase for Last Fridays from \$23,500 to \$55,000 to cover staff time and expanded programming.
- Continuation of \$5,000 for the gallery/gift shop operations.
- Overview of organizational growth and transition to professional staffing.
- Discussion of fundraising efforts and plans for sustainability.

### 5. Orange County Historical Museum (Visitor Services)

Catie Atkinson presented the museum's request:

- 3.5% increase to \$58,000 for cost-of-living adjustments.
- Highlighted increased engagement, with visitors from 58 NC counties, 43 states, and 23 countries.
- New special exhibit on youth sports history.
- Upcoming program celebrating the America 250 events on the Third Provincial Congress.

## C. Draft FY26 Budget - first look

Campbell presented an initial draft of the FY26 budget, noting:

- Projected revenues are flat, only up about \$6,000 halfway through the current fiscal year.
- Conservative revenue projection of \$485,000 for FY26.
- Potential deficit based on partner funding requests.
- Healthy fund balance to potentially cover shortfalls for this year, but if revenues remain flat for FY26 the budget may not support the same budgets for tourism contracts again for next year.

Board members discussed the conservative revenue projections and potential strategies if revenues do not meet expectations for FY26 and beyond.

Darab left at 6:56pm.

**D. Reappointment of Members**

Shannan Campbell noted that Members Patel, Czechlewski, and Cabbage were up for reappointment. All three expressed a willingness to be reappointed.

**5. Monthly reports & Staff updates**

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

This item was not discussed separately as it was incorporated into the budget discussion.

**6. Board comments & updates**

**A. Reflections from VISITNC365 Conference**

Campbell and Cabbage shared insights from the conference, including:

- New marketing software tools that were shared, some free/low cost.
- Partnership opportunities with Visit NC for increased exposure.
- Presentation on Atlas Obscura and unique tourism experiences.
- Suggestion to participate in silent auction gift basket at future conferences to promote Hillsborough.

Patel left at 7:44pm.

**B. Vulture Discussion**

Board members discussed the vulture situation in Hillsborough:

- Some suggested potential tourism opportunities related to the vultures.
- Others expressed concerns about promoting an unnatural population increase.

The board generally agreed not to take an official position on the matter.

**7. Adjournment**

Motion: Kimball moved to adjourn at 7:52 p.m. Czechlewski seconded.

Vote: 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Dakotah Kimbrough  
Planning Technician  
Staff support to the Hillsborough Tourism Board

Approved: Month X, 202X

Grant Requests Summary 2025 (FY26)

	Organization	Project Name/General Description	Grant Request Amount	DRAFT SCORE
1	Alliance for Historic Hillsborough	Hillsborough Holiday Nights	\$10,000.00	
2	Paws4ever	The Hillsborough Thrift Crawl	\$5,000.00	
3	Indigenous Memories	Mars Hill Mural	\$10,000.00	
4	Orange Community Players	Summer Production: Suessical	\$7,025.00	
5	Wendy Olsen Arboretuem/Nature Park	Native Habitat Summit	\$8,604.00	
6				
7				
8				
Total Amount of Grant Funding Requested:			\$40,629.00	



**STAFF REPORT**  
Hillsborough Tourism Board  
May 5, 2025

**PRESENTER/INFORMATION CONTACT**

Tourism Program Manager, Shannan Campbell

**ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED**

**Subject:** FY 2026 Contract Scope Responses

**Attachments:**

1. Full contract documents in last months packet here:  
<https://mccmeetings.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/hillsbronc-pubu/MEET-Packet-f41f85df0a6f42a1b44f68cf8717570d.pdf>

**Background:**

The Tourism Program has contracted with local organizations since FY17 to provide visitor services, operations of historic sites, and to put on annual events. Going to contracted services was in lieu of having every regularly funded partner competing for grants every year.

**Summary, key points, and questions:**

- The Alliance is asking for \$285,726 in FY26, a \$35,050 increase over the FY25 contract amount of \$250,676. Budget Justification Forms are included explaining expanded needs in the following budget lines:
  - Personnel (cost of living adjustment) \$4,451
  - Marketing (increased cost and more ads for marketing) \$5,000
  - Capital Improvements (construction of a storage shed for event supplies) \$20,000 and (Transportation Services for large events/shuttle service) \$9,500
- Burwell school is asking for no increases over the previous fiscal year.
- Chamber of Commerce is asking for no increases over the previous fiscal year.
- HAC is asking for \$75,000 in FY26, a \$31,440 increase over the initial FY25 contract amount of \$43,500, but a \$11,500 increase over the amended contract amount in FY25 of \$63,500 (the HAC asked for a \$20,000 mid-year budget increase). Budget Justification Forms are included explaining expanded needs in the following budget lines:
  - Personnel (payroll, administration, overhead- LFAW) \$31,500
  - Personnel (payroll, administration) and Supplies (lantern kits, luminaries, etc) \$5,000 to support expanding the event into West Hillsborough with multiple entry/exit points on the route

- Orange County Historical Museum is asking for \$59,500 in FY26, a \$1,900 increase over the FY25 contract amount of \$57,600. A budget justification form is included explaining needs in the following budget lines:
  - Personnel (cost of living adjustment) \$1,900

**Staff recommendation and comments:**

None. Staff has simplified the requests for the purposes of summary in the staff report. The board should have any additional discussion before the budget public hearing in June.

# Hillsborough Tourism Board

## FY26 -Draft Budget Report

Fund Balace (FY23-24): \$438,079

### Tourism Board

		FY24 Budget	FY25 Budget	FY26 Draft Budget	FY27 Projections
Revenues	F&B TAX	425,000	485,000	485,000	500,000
Expenses	C.S./VISITORS CENTER (ALLIANCE)	229,170	250,676	285,726	235,000
Expenses	C.S./OTHER	179,600	185,700	219,100	175,000
	Burwell School Visitor Services \$40,574 (FY23) Burwell School Visitor Services \$85,000 (FY24)		70,000	70,000	
	OCHM Visitor Services \$46,100 (FY23) OCHM Visitor Services \$56,100 (FY24)		57,600	59,500	
	HAC Events & Visitor Services \$23,518 (FY23) HAC Events & Visitor Services \$28,500 (FY24)		43,500	75,000	
	Holiday Parade \$10,000(FY24)		10,000	10,000	
	Holiday Tree Lighting/Shop Small Saturday (new for FY25) \$4,600		4,600	4,600	
Expenses	C.S./TOWN OF HILLSBOROUGH	26,000	26,000	26,000	26,000
Expenses	6% TOWN TAX ADMIN FEE	25,500	29,100	29,100	32,000
Expenses	MISCELLANEOUS	3,000	3,000	3,000	5,000
Expenses	GRANTS EXPENSE	13,500	38,000	20,000	20,000
	Art on the Hills Arts Fest (Uproar) \$7,500 HAC Solstice Lantern Walk (\$10,000- FY24)				
	HAC Solstice Lantern Walk \$7,000 Historic Eagle Lodge (\$3,500- FY24)				
Expenses	SPECIAL PROJECTS/PARTNERSHIPS			20,000	25,000
	BioDock Project (FY20) \$3,500 Unassigned	0		5,000	
	Revolutionary War Interpretive Sign (2)	0	6,000	6,000	
	Kayak Rental Pilot Program	0	9,000	9,000	
	Parking Study Cost Share	0	2,500		
Expenses	AUDIT FEES	10,500	10,500	8,000	10,500
Expenses	DATA PROCESSING SERVICES	4,500	4,500	4,500	4,450
Expenses	TRAINING/CONF./CONV.	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500
Expenses	INSURANCE	980	1200	1,250	1250
Expenses	ATTORNEY FEES	300	200	200	300
Expenses	ADVERTISING	275	275	300	300
Total Expenses		495,825	569,151	619,676	
Revenues Less Expenses		(70,824.98)	(84,151.00)	(134,676.00)	