

Talbot County Tourism Board
Meeting Minutes
January 11, 2023

I. Call to Order

The Tourism Board met via Zoom videoconference. Chairman Judy Bixler called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Members Present: Jessica Bellis, Judy Bixler, Ron Engle, Ian Fleming, Kristen Greenaway, Keasha Haythe, Mary Kellogg, Harold Klinger, Mark Salter, Cassandra Vanhooser

Members Absent: Angela Eade, Michael Hoffmann, Amy Kreiner, Jeff Schneider

Staff Present: Krista Boothby

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2022

Ms. Bixler presented the minutes from the October 12, 2022, meeting. Ms. Kellogg made a motion to approve the minutes with Ms. Bellis seconding the motion. Minutes were approved unanimously.

III. Director's Reports

Welcome Keasha Haythe: Ms. Vanhooser welcomed Ms. Haythe, who is serving as the new County Council liaison to the Tourism Board, and had everyone introduce themselves.

2022 Year in Review: Ms. Vanhooser gave her annual presentation about the work of the department and reviewed the successes of 2022. Successes included: 1) Received award for best digital marketing campaign from the Maryland Travel and Tourism Summit; 2) Worked with both a Girl Scout and a Boy Scout on their milestone projects; and 3) Completed the tourism deliverables for the Frederick Douglass Mural in Easton, including fence repairs and the installation of benches and an interpretive panel.

Priorities for 2023: 1) Launch new TourTalbot.org website, 2) Continue to refine Digital First strategy for economic development and tourism, 3) Complete Visitors Center Feasibility Study, which has been funded by the Maryland Rural

Economic Development Fund, and 4) Pursue accommodations tax increase of 2%.

Complete presentation is attached.

IV. Manager's Report

Preview of New TourTalbot.org Web Design: Ms. Boothby showed screenshots of the new website. The new design capitalizes on the department's content strategy, and it will feature robust content about things to see and do in Talbot County. Changes include the elimination of individual business pages, the addition of a submission process for events, and a link to request a business listing. The site is set to launch in January 2023. Ms. Bellis noted that the department should engage Tourism Board members and other partners to help expand the reach of the site.

V. Town Representatives and Board Members

Representatives from each of the towns reported on news and events taking place in their jurisdictions. Other Board members shared insights on happenings in their businesses, nonprofits, or industries.

VI. Upcoming Meetings

- Tourism Board Meeting, February 8
- Tourism Board Meeting, March 8
- Tourism Board Meeting, April 12
- Tourism Board Meeting, May 10
- National Travel and Tourism Week, May 7-13

VII. Adjournment

Ms. Bixler called for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Bellis made the motion to adjourn, and Ms. Greenaway seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.