



Noble County Convention & Visitors Bureau, Inc.

401 E. Diamond St, Suite 112, Kendallville, IN 46755

www.visitnoblecounty.org | 260-636-3602 | info@visitnoblecounty.com

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Monday, March 17, 2025 CLC Assembly Room, Kendallville, IN

Board Members present: Andi Barrand, Matt Dice, Kate Emmert (V), Darcy Fish, Pattie Gatman (V), Tiffanie Gudakunst (V), Kristen Johnson (V), Tiffany Parker, Katie Schaller, Cyndi Schlemmer (V), Heather Steele (Virtual attendance is denoted by (V))

Staff: Grace Caswell

President Heather Steele called the meeting to order at 5:01 pm.

Approval of Consent Board Minutes: Tiffany Parker made a motion to approve the January minutes, Kristen Johnson seconded, and the motion carried.

Approval of Financials: Grace explained that just under \$7K could be moved from the building improvement and branding funds to the money market account to earn some interest. Our goal is to have at least one half of our annual operating budget in reserve. Kristen made a motion to move these funds, Katie Schaller seconded, and the motion carried. Kate Emmert made a motion to approve the financial report from Butler CPA, Matt Dice seconded, and the motion carried.

Committee Reports

- **HR/Governance:** Annual performance evaluations have been completed. Heather, Matt and Cyndi met with Grace to discuss her written review. The committee either agreed with or rated her higher than her self-evaluation. Alexis met with Grace for her performance review. We will not have a budget line item for an intern this year.
- **Program Purpose:** Andi Barrand, Tiffany P., Cyndi Schlemmer and Grace met February 10 in the office for a committee meeting. We intend to use \$5000 for spring grants. We will have to wait to see if CIT collections are high enough to offer fall grants. Some smaller \$250 sponsorships will also be available. Grace outlined some partnerships that have been formed in order to help them get grants from the Indiana Arts Commission. If we help them get a larger grant, we will not feel obligated to grant to them from our funds. We decided to give \$500 to the Chain O'Lakes Festival which will be funded as a \$250 sponsorship plus \$250 from marketing so that we will get the larger advertisement. We talked about a planned Gene Stratton-Porter film festival that was being planned for May (but has been moved to Aug/Sept.) Taste of Noble Co. is scheduled for June 19 & 20. We set a deadline of May 15 for vendor applications. Some have already been received. Destination Noble 2.0 banners are being produced and we also talked about contacts in parks for banners. Grace and Lori Gagen are working together on the Accessibility project. By email, we decided to require that grant applications be submitted on our Google form or at least be typed. No handwritten applications or reports will be accepted. The grant application will open by March 31 and will be due at the end of April. Grants approved by the committee will be presented to the board at the May meeting.
- **Finance:** We are going to focus on growing our investment in ourselves with our money market account, so moving the \$7K will go towards that goal. The next meeting with the CPA will be in July or August.

CEO Report: Grace briefly touched on several points in her report, including her evaluation (in the shared drive), visitor numbers, marketing projects, CIT collection, tour at Augusta Hills, coworking space update, fundraising progress, recent and upcoming events, ITA conference (both staff and several board members attended), good feedback on Noblepalooza, the Building Bridges survey, new hotel progress, restaurant updates, and activities of related boards/committees. Grace asked all board members to participate in the Building Bridges survey. The survey will be open until at least April 1. (Please see the CEO Report for details.)

Operations and Data Intelligence Director Update: Alexis submitted a report on office and website performance, including analytics and demographics for January and February. (Please see the Performance Data report for details.)

Good of the Corporation: We are making updates on documents as part of our Strategic Plan: Grace presented the updated Online Communication Policy. A few minor changes were proposed. Darcy made a motion to accept the Online Communication Policy as amended, Andi seconded, and motion carried.

Andi pointed out a functional problem on our website. Grace will make sure it is resolved.

The Gene Stratton-Porter site will be hiring a new interpreter as full time/seasonal. Schaller Greenhouse opens April 25th and will be partnering with Noble House Ministries. Restore Avilla has some new members. The Avilla Community Market will be held the 3rd Saturday of every month from May thru October. The Ligonier Visitor Center opens May 1, and Visit Noble County staff will hold a popup event there on Friday, May 2.

The next board meeting will be held at the Ligonier Visitor Center on Monday, May 19.

Adjournment: Andi made a motion to adjourn, Tiffany P. seconded, motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm.

Submitted by Cyndi Schlemmer, Secretary
April 1, 2025

Where Nature Rejuvenates You, IN Indiana