

**CLAYTON COUNTY TOURISM AUTHORITY  
BOARD MEETING  
THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2022**

**MINUTES**

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Damon T. Williams called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. Beth Bailey conducted the roll call.

**II. ROLL CALL:**

<b>Attendee Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Status</b>
Damon T. Williams	Chairman	Present
Miyoshi Bourget	Board Member	Absent
Lynda Browning	Vice Chair	Absent
Myla Chapman	Board Member	Present via Zoom
Tonya Clarke	Board Member	Present
Gabe Johnson	Board Member	Present via Zoom
Bud Smith	Board Member	Present

Staff: Tamara Patridge, Executive Director; Beth Bailey, Special Projects Manager/Interim Finance Manager

Board Attorney not present: No legal matters for board discussion

**III. ADOPTION OF AGENDA/CONSENT AGENDA**

Original agenda removed from consent agenda packet to approve separately. Action was made to accommodate request to add an item for discussion from Member Tonya Clarke. Motion to approve revised agenda, Myla Chapman; second, Gabe Johnson. Unanimous approval.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**MINUTES**

1. February 2022

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

1. January 2022
  - a. Tourism Authority
  - b. Convention & Visitors Bureau

**END OF CONSENT AGENDA**

Motion to approve, Gabe Johnson; second, Myla Chapman. Unanimous approval.

#### **IV. NEW BUSINESS**

1. County Revised Financials August/September 2021
  - a. Ms. Patridge reported that the previous financials from County Finance for August and September 2021 did not include income collections from short-term rental platforms. Motion to approve revised financials as presented, Myla Chapman; second, Bud Smith. Unanimous approval.
2. Museum Design & Fabrication Company
  - a. Ms. Patridge reported that staff researched companies to bid on adding interactive exhibits and a possible NFT project to the existing museum. Priority was placed on identifying minority-owned companies that specialize in museum fabrication, curation, etc. but none had been found. Ms. Patridge asked board members to refer any companies that they were familiar with who were interested in presenting a proposal. Two Atlanta-based companies have been contacted one of which, Building 4 Fabrication, has met with Ms. Patridge. This company will begin to process ideas and develop a budget for the project for board consideration. A-R-T and Associates will evaluate the project to determine if it is a good fit. A-R-T has worked with other clients in researching unique ways to integrate NFTs into our existing exhibit space.
3. Support of Clayton County Public Schools Math Trail
  - a. Ms. Clarke described to the Board that the purpose of the Math Trail—a project of Clayton County Public Schools—is to engage students to improve mathematical and language skills. While STEM education offers much to students and the community it lacks the funding that other subjects can secure. The Math Trail, as part of the Math Talk program, will create opportunities in the community to connect math activities and locations with augmented reality. At this time, locations for the activities have been secured at Lee Street Park, Lee Street Elementary, Lovejoy Park, Clayton County International Park, Northcutt Elementary/Middle School, and Starr Park. The Math Trail leaders are working with other school systems in the Metro Atlanta area. This is the first math trail in the State of Georgia and the fourth in the country.
  - b. Ms. Clarke asked the Tourism Authority to consider supporting the Math Trail. Some suggestions on how they could support included sponsorship of a location along the trail, help in identifying and facilitating contact with local celebrities that would be willing to attend events to draw attention to their events, offering tours of the Road To Tara Museum for student tours and assistance marketing the trail. Member Smith suggested that the project leadership reach out to Atlanta's WSB-TV and request inclusion in their Saturday morning program which would provide free marketing. Chairman Williams asked the amount of projected costs of sponsorship for the program. Ms. Clarke reported that funding had already been secured for the first six locations which totaled \$160,000.00. Chairman Williams inquired about the project's advertising strategy. Ms. Clarke explained that securing the first locations was the priority and the locations were chosen based upon the reach of the most people. Chairman Williams asked the age of the target

audience, and Ms. Clarke responded that the trail was aimed at fifth grade and under with an emphasis on pre-kindergarten and under. Mr. Smith suggested a competition-based event would be a great way to attract more children and parents to the various locations. Mr. Smith inquired if there are any sites set to be in minority neighborhoods. Ms. Clarke responded that there was great consideration into the initial decision-making process on locations including socioeconomic and racial makeup as well as concentration of population near sites. Member Johnson asked Ms. Patridge for clarification on allowable use of tourism funds with respect to state law regarding the use of hotel/motel tax for this project. Ms. Patridge reported that in her initial judgement, the Authority may be able to offer support of some type as this project is described by Ms. Clarke as the first of its kind in the state of Georgia and would have the potential to attract visitors outside of Clayton County. Ms. Patridge remarked that this project would generate events and experiences at each of the various locations that would be of interest to the adults accompanying the children who would be likely to make a return visit. Ms. Patridge asked Ms. Clarke to clarify her ask from the Authority so that the Board members could begin thinking of ways to help. Ms. Clarke replied that she wanted to make the Tourism Authority aware of the Math Trail and its purpose. As the project moves forward she will identify areas in which the Tourism Authority may be able to assist and ask for a commitment of some type of support, both financial and in-kind. Mr. Smith suggested that Heritage Bank in Jonesboro may possibly be a good site for a project because of the large parking lot. Ms. Clarke mentioned that the Fig Tree Café agreed to be a location soon. Mr. Smith suggested that the trail leadership look to events such as the Spring Art Show in Lovejoy to promote the trail by hosting a booth and showcasing the augmented reality technology. Ms. Patridge said that she would keep top-of-mind potential partners who may be a good fit for this project within her entertainment industry community.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

### **1. Tourism Authority Grant FY 2022**

- a. Ms. Patridge called upon board members for any final edits to the Tourism Grant application or guidelines before the proposed April 1, 2022 launch. Member Chapman asked for clarification on cash vs. in-kind match. Ms. Patridge explained a cash match is a cash amount pledged that is matched dollar for dollar, and an in-kind match is a non-cash donation of a tangible item or service. A dollar value would be assigned per Internal Revenue Service guidelines to determine the amount of the match to this type of donation. Ms. Chapman requested an explanation of MSAs. Ms. Patridge said that stands for Metropolitan Statistical Areas which is a way to identify nearby visitor markets that would be of benefit for advertising our destination. Mr. Smith asked if we would consider other cities such as Charleston. Ms. Patridge replied that Charleston was out of our MSA, but she would research the addition of other MSAs as they become relevant to Clayton County. Ms. Chapman asked for an explanation of the requested sponsorship/benefits package. Ms. Patridge

explained that grant recipients were required to advertise their grant awards so that the community is aware of the Tourism Authority's interest in and involvement in the Clayton County community. Mr. Johnson suggested that we include the explanations given to provide applicants with clarification on each step of the process. Ms. Patridge reported that a press release was being prepared to release prior to the launch of the current grant cycle. The release will include previous year's grant recipients along with a brief overview of their programs. Ms. Clarke asked about the outlets where the press release will be sent. Ms. Patridge reported that it will be sent to the Clayton News Daily as it is the local media outlet with a Clayton County reach. Discussion was held regarding setting a maximum limit to the amount any organization could request. Ms. Patridge reported that informing applicants that there is a cap will allow organizations to identify projects that fit the funding amount, allowing grant writers to efficiently use their time and limited resources. Mr. Johnson recommended the amount be set to the total available. Ms. Chapman requested that it is made clear that entities may receive only part of their requested amount. Ms. Patridge reminded the board that on both the application and guidelines there is specific language that any grant is not guaranteed, and grant awards and amounts are at the full discretion of the board. Mr. Smith asked if categories would be a good idea to bring in new applicants and to keep the same organizations from receiving funding year after year. Ms. Patridge reported that we currently have two categories—marketing and product development—and that awards to any organizations, even repeat applications, were solely the decision of the board. Motion to approve the application and guidelines with modifications, Myla Chapman; second Tonya Clarke. Unanimous approval.

## **VI. PUBLIC COMMENT AND GENERAL DISCUSSION**

1. Ms. Patridge gave an update on Member Miyoshi Bourget.

## **VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

No matters of real estate, legal, or personnel for discussion.

## **VIII. MOTION TO ADJOURN**

1. Motion Gabe Johnson; second Myla Chapman; unanimous approval
2. Meeting ended at 5:11 p.m.