

TOURISM COMMITTEE

230 S Sporting Hill Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050

CHAIRWOMAN LUTRICIA EBERLY, MARK BODENHORN, DUSTIN LEBLANC, ALLEN DIETERICH-WARD, AMY BRICKNER, KATIE PERKOWSKI, SARA WISE

MEETING AGENDA
August 26, 2026 – 9:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87660186557?pwd=Nq9X5t130FhUGfJaK3usQzGeAQbpdf.1>

Meeting ID: 876 6018 6557

Passcode: 340812

1. **CALL THE MEETING TO ORDER** – Lutricia Eberly
2. **MINUTES** – Lutricia Eberly
 - A. Approve the July 29, 2026 meeting minutes
3. **UPDATES** – various
 - A. Updated grant timeline (Ashley Kurtz)
 - B. World Downhill Skateboarding Championship (Patrick/Laura)
 - C. Outdoor Towns Sub-committee (Allen Dieterich-Ward)
 - D. Destination Sales Sub-committee (Katie Perkowski)
4. **DISCUSSION TOPICS** – Lutricia Eberly
 - A. Tourism Committee Themes
5. **ADJOURNMENT** – Lutricia Eberly

UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE

Added: September 30, 9:00-9:30am – **grant recommendations consent agenda only**

October 28, 9:00-10:00am

UPCOMING EVENTS

Beer Trail Launch event – Hungry Run Distillery, September 17 from 3:00 to 5:00 pm

The next meeting of the Tourism Committee will be held on September 30, 9:00-9:30am.

DISCUSSION TOPICS

DISCUSSION TOPIC A

Over the last several months, we have had rich and engaging conversations with the goal of surfacing the themes that we collectively believe should guide the Tourism Committee's next chapter. After distilling your feedback and combining it with staff perspective, below are the proposed directives for your consideration.

1. Storytelling as Strategy: Telling Tourism's Full Value Story

Tourism's economic impact on Cumberland Valley extends well beyond hotel tax collections and overnight visits. It touches restaurants, retail, real estate, talent attraction, and quality of life. Yet that full story rarely gets told in a way that resonates with residents, businesses, and community stakeholders. Before meaningful community engagement can happen, the story itself needs to be clear, compelling, and consistent; an explicit, repeatable, and credible connection between visitor impact and community vitality. The committee's directive is to define and refine that narrative to ensure it reflects tourism's full value, so that it becomes the foundation of everything that follows.

- Determine what residents, local businesses, and frontline hospitality workers most need to understand and believe for the story to take hold
- Identify the key messages that constitute tourism's "full value" story and pressure-test them with outside business perspective
- Ensure the narrative reflects Cumberland Valley's full visitor economy and distinctive identity, not a narrow definition of tourism built around overnight stays
- Determine the most effective channels and messengers for reaching residents, local businesses, and community stakeholders

2. Market Positioning and Product Strategy

Cumberland Valley has real, distinctive assets, including its geographic position, independent business culture, agritourism, outdoor recreation, and vibrant downtowns. But the challenge is that it has not yet undergone a formal process to define how those assets should be positioned in the marketplace. As we approach that work, leaning into the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau as the primary tourism brand will be an important part of ensuring that positioning is clear and recognizable to the public. It is worth noting that this process is not intended to include a consumer perception study. A facilitated market positioning and product strategy process would give CVVB a clear, evidence-based foundation for every marketing, grant, and destination sales decision going forward. The committee's directive is to advise on whether and how to pursue that process, and to help surface the organizational and stakeholder conditions needed for it to succeed.

- Assess the case for a formal positioning process and identify what successful outcomes would look like
- Surface barriers to getting started, like funding, buy-in, timing, and advise on how to address them
- Ensure the positioning process, if pursued, reflects the full visitor economy rather than a narrow definition of tourism
- Connect positioning strategy to the committee's broader work on storytelling and resident engagement

3. Community Pride, Resident Engagement, and Downtown Vitality

With a clear and compelling tourism story at its foundation, the next challenge is getting that story into the hands and hearts of the people who live and work here. A thriving tourism destination requires residents who understand, value, and advocate for what makes their community worth visiting. In Cumberland Valley, that foundation is strong but not universal, indicated by a "close the door" mentality among some residents, and a disconnect between tourism activity and resident awareness of its benefits, which represent real barriers to long-term growth.

Nowhere is tourism's impact more tangible than in downtowns where residents and visitors intersect visibly, making downtown vitality both a tourism asset and a community pride indicator. The committee's directive is to advise on strategies that build local ownership of Cumberland Valley's tourism identity.

- Advise on resident-facing engagement strategies that connect community members to tourism's direct benefits
- Advise on how CAEDC's grants, programs, and partnerships can be most effectively directed to support downtown businesses as both tourism assets and community anchors
- Explore programming ideas like school field trips, community events, and local ambassador programs that build awareness and pride in Cumberland Valley's tourism assets
- Help identify how downtown vitality can be better positioned as a competitive tourism differentiator, not just an economic development outcome
- Ensure resident engagement efforts complement and reinforce the broader storytelling directive

For the August 26 meeting, please come prepared to discuss these proposed directives, their potential impact, and your recommended prioritization. Please consider the following questions:

- Which of these three will be hardest for us to execute well, and why?
- If we're successful, what does each directive actually accomplish? How would we measure it?
- Where do you see the biggest risk if we get the narrative (Directive 1) wrong?
- Looking at Directive 3—community engagement—what's one thing you'd want the committee to advise on as that work develops?

Our goal is to leave that meeting with a clear direction that staff and Lutricia can bring to Janet, and then further to the Board in October.

Thank you!