

PENNSYLVANIA DISTILLED SPIRITS INDUSTRY PROMOTION PROGRAM

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture

2301 North Cameron St.

Harrisburg, PA 17110

Minutes of the April 15, 2026 Board Meeting

Public notice of the **April 15, 2026** Pennsylvania Distilled Spirits Industry Promotion Program Special Board Meeting was given as stipulated by the Sunshine Law.

CALL TO ORDER

Russell Fletcher, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Board members in attendance along with Chair Fletcher included, Vice Chair Terri Gillespie; Co-Treasurer Ellen Hough; Co-Treasurer Alex Moser; and Gregg Feaster.

Also Present: Adam Morris, Esquire, Assistant Counsel; Mark O'Neill, Food Sciences Division Chief; Frenchie Cline, Administrative Assistant; Author Etchells, Pennsylvania Distillers Guild and Ron Mattocks, Owner, Bull Moose Marketing.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-06 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by: Terri Gillespie

Second: Gregg Feaster

Passed: Unanimously

To approve January 22, 2026 meeting Minutes.

NEW BUSINESS

Presentation from Bull Moose Marketing / Q&A with Bull Moose Marketing

Ron Mattocks, Owner, Bull Moose Marketing, provided the Board with updates on the statewide marketing campaign.

He first stated that contracts had been received for both programs were currently being reviewed; these would be signed before the end of the month, along with their preparation for an official announcement of same. Subsequent to this they will be engaged in additional stakeholder coordination to push the content out into the public. He believed that a lot of energy and work had gone into the rural and regional tourism framework.

Mr. Mattocks then informed the Board that he had the opportunity to meet with Ann Ryan, (PA Deputy Secretary of Tourism) and Katie Berger, (Executive Director of PA Tourism Office), and they were very receptive to the entire program. He made a point of stating to the Board that the program fits within their three pillars of brand strategy while helping them bring more people from out-of-state into the Pennsylvania region. They did advise Mr. Mattocks to keep them apprised on the status of the grant paperwork, its officiality and then they could plan on joining the monthly calls with the tourism bureaus.

He then addressed their status with the America250 program, (The Pennsylvania Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial), by stating that the Commission had already committed to the yearly events for 2026; however, they did suggest that they could work on a more regional, localized level. As a result, Mr. Mattocks had been connecting with more regional distillers to help be a part of the story-telling process behind Pennsylvania's distillery industry.

Other contacts referenced by Mr. Mattocks included the PA Wilds, the PA Great Lakes, the Go Laurel Highlands, Rivers of Steel National Road and P Route 6; however, no major events seemed obtainable at this time for their own statewide marketing program. He added that he would be meeting with GK Visual in Harrisburg, PA, within the first week of May.

Behind the scenes, he commented, they developed a brand intent document for the stakeholders that help with the understanding of the appropriate parameters in place befitting the brand intent marketing program. They have also outlined the tactical marketing plan that will be shared amongst the different partners involved with the tactical execution of same.

Mr. Mattocks informed the Board that he had also given a presentation, primarily to the rye distillers of PA, suggesting a marketing fit for them with the spirits of the PA brand. He would be looking for an opportunity to do the same for the Fuller Guild members in the near future.

They have also created a directory of PA distillers and growers that they have mapped out by tourism regions. A match could now be made between the best fitting distillers for specific regional tourism entities.

He mentioned that they would be traveling around Pennsylvania in order to create the assets they needed for the marketing. They had also drafted an RFP but the status remains uncertain on that. They have begun launching a bi-monthly Tourism Distilling newsletter that digests the headlines of cross industry knowledge, from the inside of the tourism industry to the inside of the distilling industry. They are working on a concept letter as well as a logo.

Mr. Mattocks advised that they wanted to make an official announcement and had already drafted a general press release. But they first wanted to receive comments from the Board or the Department of Agriculture. They do have a list of news outlets to send the announcement to, and he noted an easy way to obtain awareness from the public through the free earned media exposure.

He reiterated the importance of having the brand intent document, a foundational document that would keep many people moving in the right direction.

He asked the Board for feedback on their grant application as he wanted to be certain that their partners were very clear on what they were requesting. Ms. Hough suggested it would be good to know how many people were looking at their actual website. Mr. Mattocks advised that they could do this and would. Ms. Hough furthered her advice by suggesting that the question be asked of whether or not this works with the money that has been spent.

Chair Fletcher commented to Mr. Mattocks that they needed to get together from a Board standpoint and put some of the information together. He believed that one of the key data points, not just from a regional standpoint, would be to have the reporting capability and possibly a dashboard as well, to touch on those data points.

Once everything was pared down, they could know in what direction they, had as a group, were going. He believed that then they would be able to assist with the RFPs.

Mr. Mattocks agreed and stated that taking an economic impact study would help and that this was where he thought there would be some questions looking into the future. He asked if this might be the right time to re-do the economic study that Gil was able to produce the last time.

He offered that this was where they could get much targeted on the advertising and that he had a meeting later in the week with an advertising platform that they really liked. He mentioned a three-to-five-year strategic plan and looking at how the plan would mesh with the tourism side of things.

He also commented that they were creating an initial dashboard that showed how economic development and tourism and planning impact each other from normal KPIs (key performance indicator). Adding to this, he noted that they could then create a comprehensive dashboard that anybody can take, log into and follow along with the data.

Mr. Mattocks then addressed alternative funding sources and informed the Board that VisitPA may have an appetite for a major Pennsylvania Distiller event right now. He stated that it had been talked about by people that write Whiskey Committee and were doing something in the east and the west.

In talking to VisitPA, there would be an opportunity for them to apply for a tourism grant to help supplement an event like this. He noted that our local state senator would support that.

Chair Fletcher stated that it seemed like they were making some gains. He noted that he did try to have a conversation with PA250, (America250 Program), but he got the same pushback from them and from a regional standpoint. But he also believed that they could connect and kind of nudge them a little bit now because they were going to be a part of a lot of that.

Mr. O'Neill commented that he loved the direction that this was going in. He felt it was a good use of the dollars that had been granted to Mr. Mattocks and he believed that Mr. Mattocks was on the right track.

Chair Fletcher asked if anyone had any questions for Mr. Mattocks. Hearing none, he thanked Mr. Mattocks for the presentation and stated that he would love to see the follow-up. He also advised that the Board would address the issue of what Mr. Mattocks might need as far as the data points.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. O'Neill stated to the Board that the first part of the concept papers was due in by Friday, April 17th. He added that, when they received the papers, they would evaluate them and send them to the Board for further review and scoring.

The next meeting would be one of discussions and proposals on same. Mr. O'Neill suggested that he would be requesting how many applications the Board received and how they actually reviewed and scored the applications.

Ms. Gillespie asked if any applications had been received yet. Mr. O'Neill did not know but that typically, they waited until the actual due date of the papers before knowing how many they received.

He noted too that all of the processing of the grant proposals, from their end, would need to get to the stage of contracting before being sent to the awardees. There is the procedure where they have to be reviewed by several other agencies for final approval before they are executed. Hopefully, he concluded, this process will move forward in a timely manner.

PUBLIC COMMENT - NONE

Chair Fletcher announced that their next meeting was a virtual meeting on May 13th at 10:00am; he asked if anyone had a conflict with the date. Ms. Gillespie noted that she may not be able to attend the meeting, but did not know yet.

Chair Fletcher asked if anyone from the Department of Agriculture had anything to add to the meeting. Mr. O'Neill asked Chair Fletcher and the Board if there was anything they wanted to add to the agenda for the next meeting. He also noted that if the DOA had anything they wanted to add to the agenda that they would let the Board know.

Chair Fletcher asked for a motion to adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

RESOLUTION NO. 2026-07 - MOTION TO ADJOURN

Motion by: Terri Gillespie

Second: Gregg Feaster

Passed: Unanimously

There being no further business, the PA Distilled Spirits Industry Promotion Program Meeting adjourned at 11:01 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Derek Richmond", is written over a horizontal line.

Derek Richmond

April 15, 2026