



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors
BureauDBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors
Meeting Tuesday
May 18, 2021, Zoom
Virtual
12pm**

The meeting was called to order at 12:01pm by T.R. McGrath, Board Chair

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE: Pamela Baldwin, Karen Binder, Elizabeth Buckley, Geremie Callaghan, Jennifer Chapin, Keith Chouinard, Rocky Kempenaar, T.R. McGrath, Tom McNiff, Andrew Moore, Sean O'Connor, Bob Rulli, Dennis Turano, Missy Varao, Nancy Parker Wilson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Charlie Holder, Christine Klase, Brad Read

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED WERE:

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Evan Smith, Kathryn Farrington, Tim Walsh, Anna Duffy, Alyson Adkins

MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC: Jeanne Perrotti

PUBLIC COMMENT: None given

I. CALL TO ORDER: by Chairman T.R. McGrath at 12:01pm

II. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for March 2021 were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Rocky Kempenaar and seconded by Jennifer Chapin. The motion passed unanimously.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The treasurer's report for April was presented by Geremie Callaghan:

- For February bed taxes, the City of Newport was up +8% as compared to budget, Newport County(excluding City of Newport) was up +31% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up +18% as compared to to budget. Total private revenue for the month of April was up 74% as compared to budget, with total revenue up +19% as compared to budget. Total expenses were up +6% as compared to budget. A motion to approve the treasurers report was made by Bob Rulli and seconded by Keith Chouinard. The motion passed unanimously.

- The Finance Committee made a recommendation to contribute ~ \$177,000 to the staff retirement fund for FY2021. As Discover Newport has a discretionary plan, it was noted that this contribution was to cover for two years, as a contribution was not made for FY2020. It was the recommendation of the auditors not to reissue FY2020 financial statements. It was also noted that PPP funds would be used to cover the contribution. Several questions were raised, and discussion followed. A motion to contribute \$177,625 to the discretionary retirement plan was made by Bob Rulli and seconded by Rocky Kempenaar. The motion passed unanimously.
- Geremie thanked the Finance Committee and Discover Newport staff for their hard work drafting the new FY budget which begins on July 1st. Alyson will be sending a copy of the draft budget to the board for review. Alyson gave a brief overview of the new budget. She reminded the Board that they would have the next 30 days to review the draft and to send any questions to her, Evan, Geremie, or TR. There will be a vote taken at our June meeting to approve the new budget.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT Evan updated the Board on the following:

- Evan brought the board members up to date on HB #6297 pertaining to the breakdown of tax funds collected. The 5 % of lodging taxes collected by *all* regions in the state goes directly to the Providence Warwick Convention and Visitors Center. We compete with PWCVB for business/conferences/small meetings. We have always worked collaboratively with all our regions. This is not a new conversation. We would like a level playing field for all regions in RI with the same formula for all. Discussion followed.
- Evan discussed the summer forecast. Consumer confidence is up, and the booking rate is very high.

V. STAFF/REGIONAL UPDATE:

- Kathryn Farrington, VP of Marketing, updated the Board as follows:
 - The new website revamp will be completed by the end of June or July.
 - New 2021 Discover Newport *Visitor Guides* are printed and delivered.
 - The pop-up visitor's information center at 22 Long Wharf Mall opened on May 1st. We are expecting to hire staff as the summer approaches, and we increase our hours of operation.
- Tim Walsh, VP of Sales, updated the Board as follows:
 - Updated the board on upcoming events and news in the Sales Department.
 - We have been receiving requests for proposals and have four trade show contracts signed.
 - We will be hosting a virtual client event in March where we will be making chowder.
- Dennis Turano, Middletown:
 - Telephone poles on Indian Ave and Third Beach are coming down.
- Nancy Parker Wilson, Portsmouth:
 - Green Animals Topiary Garden is now open for the season. Nancy offered to host the June meeting at Greenvale Vineyards in Portsmouth.

VII. ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Keith Chouinard and seconded by Nancy Parker Wilson. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 1pm.

**The next Board Meeting will
be held:**

**Tuesday, June 15th
Greenvale Vineyards
582 Wapping Road
Portsmouth, RI
12pm**