

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD
THURSDAY, MARCH 16, 2017
9:00 A.M.**

**OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
MANTEO, NC 27954**

ATTENDING: Susie Walters, Chair; Leo Holland, Vice Chair; Tonia Cohen, Secretary; Stuart Pack, Treasurer; Ervin Bateman, Assistant Treasurer; George Banks, III, Myra Ladd-Bone, Nancy Caviness, Bambos Charalambous, Mike Hogan, Wally Overman, Pat Weston, Martha Wickre, and Jay Wheless, Legal Counsel.

STAFF:

Lee Nettles, Executive Director
Diane Bognich, Director of Administration
Lorrie Love, Tourism Sales and Events Manager
Aaron Tuell, Public Relations Manager
Amy Wood, Clerk to the Board/Administrative Specialist

OTHERS: Carl Curnutte, Elizabethan Gardens; Patty McKenna and Jenny Ash, Outer Banks Sporting Events; Dave Hallac, Superintendent, Outer Banks Group, National Park Service; Darnell Tillett, Sandra Dowdy Jump.

The meeting was called to order at 9:01a.m. The Board then recited the pledge of allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The Chair asked to move items under the Steering Committee. Mr. Overman moved to approve the agenda as amended. Mr. Bateman seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Cohen moved to approve the February 16, 2017 meeting minutes. Mr. Holland seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Superintendent Hallac updated the Board on ramp accesses on Hatteras Island and renovations at the Coquina Beach Access and Frisco Day Use Area. National Park Service is also working on a swimming safety campaign. Superintendent Hallac invited Board member to the Public Meetings on March 29 and 30, 2017 regarding the Hatteras-Ocracoke Passenger Ferry project.

Darnell Tillett and Sandra Dowdy spoke about events at The Soundside that impact area businesses. Both confirmed that they were not against the site or events but had concerns for the future events during the summer months that would have potentially damaging impacts business and encouraged the Board to develop summer event policies now.

ESTABLISHED EVENT DEVELOPER GRANT PRESENTATIONS:

Carl Curnutte reviewed WinterLights (attachment A) and Jenny Ash and Patty McKenna reviewed Outer Banks Sporting Events races (attachment B).

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT: The Board discussed the potential to acquire land adjacent and/or near to the Event Site. The Chair noted that one property was for sale and that the other two were not but the Board had been approached in the past about possibly purchasing the land. Lee Nettles asked if the Board would rather put the building on hold and pursue the property, noting that any purchase of land would delay the building. Board members touched on purchasing the land and having someone else develop it or the Board continuing to develop the site. It was noted that the other areas support their convention centers via tax dollars, which the

STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT (continued): Board would not be able to do. Lee Nettles noted that the proposed building was smaller in scope than a typical convention center. Some board members felt it was prudent to purchase land, while it was available, especially for additional parking. Mr. Bateman moved to refer the matter to the Soundside Ad Hoc Committee, instructing them to explore the property(ies) available, the particularly 2 parcels to the east and 2 parcels to the north, asking prices, and authorizing them to consult with an engineer, for a minimum fee, to determine how much parking could be created. Mr. Charalambous seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair reviewed the Natural, Historic, and Cultural Grant extension request from Nature Conservancy/Nags Head Wood, noting that the Conservancy would need to consult with a structural engineer for a portion of their project, delaying the project. Mr. Overman moved to approve the extension to July 31, 2017. Ms. Cohen seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair reviewed the fireworks grant requests, noting each organization would receive \$10,000. Mrs. Wickre made a motion to approve \$10,000 for fireworks to Avon Property Owners Association, Town of Kill Devil Hills, Town of Manteo and the Town of Nags Head. Ms. Ladd-Bone seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Chair and Diane Bognich reviewed Resolution 2017-2, Appointing a Finance and Deputy Finance Officer (attachment C). Staff noted that checks always require two signatures, one from a Board member and one from Lee Nettles or Diane Bognich. Lee Nettles explained the check process, from ensuring the invoice was valid and correct to check signing. Legal Counsel noted there were many separations of duties and multiple persons involved in the process and nothing was out of the ordinary or going against policies. Mr. Holland moved to approve Resolution 2017-2. Ms. Cohen seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

The Board took a 10 minute break. Mr. Bateman was excused at 10:18 a.m. The meeting resumed at 10:28 a.m.

Legal Counsel referred back to the motion directing the Soundside Ad Hoc Committee and encouraged them to meet soon and reminded them not to act individually in contacting the sellers, noting that usual procedures are to allow the Executive Director and the Chair to be the ones to contact and gather the info and report back to the Ad Hoc Committee but that would be up to the Committee.

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Mr. Pack reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2016-2017 are up 3.16% over 2015-2016 actual receipts.

GRANTS AND LOCAL PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT: Mr. Nettles reviewed the grant process and the work of the Grants & Local Public Relations Committee.

Ms. Caviness asked why the Manteo Rotary Club award was much lower than the requested amount. Mr. Charalambous reviewed how the Committee figured out the award amounts based on the information given to the committee. Lee Nettles noted that Manteo Rotary was given a sponsorship in a lesser amount than the proposed grant award.

GRANTS AND LOCAL PUBLIC RELATIONS REPORT (continued): Ms. Caviness moved to approve the Event Grants Awards as presented.

Organization	Project/Event	Award Amount
Coastal Wildlife Refuge	Wings Over Water	\$4,000
Elizabeth R & Company	History Weekend Getaway	\$7,500
Hatteras Island Youth Education Fund	Shore Break 5K & Tide Pool Fun Run	\$6,500
Manteo Rotary Club	Inshore Slam Fishing Tournament	\$1,200
Town of Manteo	New Year's in the New World	\$15,000
Town of Manteo	Maritime Museum Wooden Boat Show	\$6,000
Motu Music Festival	Dare 2 Care OB Shred Fest	\$24,000
Mustang Outreach Program	OBX Summer Send Off	\$15,000
Outer Banks Relief Foundation	Couture by the Shore	\$2,000
Outer Banks Tennis Association	OB Charity Classic Tennis Tournament	\$4,000
Outer Banks Wedding Association	OBX Wedding Fest	\$6,000
The Rogallo Foundation	OBX Brewtag	\$10,000

Mr. Pack seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Lee Nettles reviewed the proposed changes to the Established Event Developer and Event Grant application and contracts. Legal Counsel offered wording changes to the applications and contracts. Mr. Charalambous asked about possibly changing the grant windows to specify peak season as June 1 to August 30. Lee Nettles noted that this was a topic for the Planning Session in April.

Ms. Wickre moved to approve the changes to the Established Event Developer and Event Grant Application and Contracts. Ms. Weston seconded. Ms. Caviness asked if the Board should hold off on voting as this was to be a topic at the Planning Retreat. Mr. Nettles noted that there was not a need to do so at this time. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

SOUNDSIDE AD HOC COMMITTEE REPORT: Lee Nettles reviewed the Weddings at the *Soundside Guidelines, Fees, Policies and Application* for weddings, noting these guidelines mirrored the guidelines for events at The Soundside, and that staff would be onsite to oversee set up/breakdown at the site, and address any issues at the site. The Committee discussed the portion that addresses the meeting required when there are 500 guests. The Chair noted that 500 people triggered a crowd gathering permit, which would change logistics. Other members noted that the site rental fee did not include tents, tables, chairs, etc. and this reservation fee is for the site only. Board member discussed what would happen if there were two events on the same date. It was noted that the site was by reservation only, so duplicate events would be extremely rare. Staff will promote the site as a wedding destination through public relations and word of mouth, especially through the Wedding Association. Ms. Ladd-Bone asked how this would impact staff. Lee Nettles noted that the recent job restructuring included the function of site coordinator, so the coordinator would be on site to ensure that the set up/breakdown process moved smoothly, but not be there to take out trash or other responsibilities of an event developer.

Ms. Wickre moved to approve the *Soundside Guidelines, Fees, Policies and Application*. Ms. Cohen seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried 12 to one, with Nancy Caviness voting no.

Legal Counsel left the meeting at 10:54 a.m.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles reviewed:

- Attendance at the NCTIA Legislative Day
- Presentations made to NC Catch and to the Leadership Group of the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce
- Southern Living's announcement that the Outer Banks was named *Best Island of the South*
- Participation in testing on the website, which includes changes to layout and call to actions
- Internet, Inquiry and Visitation numbers

Lorrie Love reviewed what was open/closed during the renovations at the Wright Brothers National Memorial, noting that there were no scheduled talks for student groups, only senior groups. She reminded the Board of the upcoming Tourism Summit on May 11.

On behalf of Aaron Tuell, Lee Nettles noted an upcoming influencer campaign in May, filming of 360 videos, attendance at VisitNC365 and NATJA Conferences, and recent press coverage.

Nancy Caviness was excused at 11:13 a.m.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business before Board at this time.

NEW BUSINESS: The Chair polled the Board as to whether or not to approve the resolution opposing House Bill 271. The majority was in favor of the resolution. The Board discussed the resolution opposing the repeal of the plastic bag ban and their perspective on the resolution. Mike Hogan moved to approve Resolution 2017-3, Opposing House Bill 271 (attachment D). Ms. Cohen seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion carried 10 to 3, with Mr. Charalambous, Ms. Weston, and Ms. Wickre voting no.

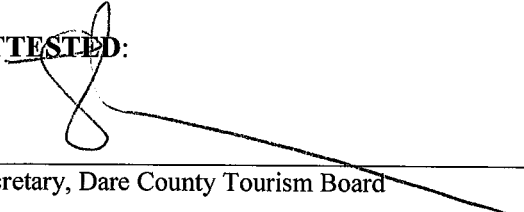
Ms. Ladd-Bone was excused at 11:28 a.m.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Overman noted there was still no response from the State Highway Patrol or Senator Cook's office regarding the traffic management at the intersection of Highway 12 and US 158. He noted the potential to send a letter from the County Commissioners directly to the Highway Patrol regarding this matter. Mr. Overman noted that there was some discussion of having authorized volunteers man the intersection but had no further information on this plan.

SET DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting will be Thursday, April 20, 2017 at Camp Hatteras Conference Building, Rodanthe, NC.

Mr. Holland moved to adjourn. Mr. Charalambous seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 11:53 a.m.

ATTESTED:



Secretary, Dare County Tourism Board