

**RECORD OF MINUTES  
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD  
THURSDAY, AUGUST 18, 2022  
9:00 A.M.  
OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES  
MANTEO, NC 27954**

**ATTENDING:**

**In-Person:** Tim Cafferty, Chair; Monica Thibodeau, Vice Chair; Ervin Bateman, Treasurer; Ivy Ingram, Assistant Treasurer; Jamie Chisholm, Secretary; Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Bambos Charalambous, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Jay Wheless, Legal Counsel.

**STAFF (in person):**

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

**OTHERS ATTENDING:**

George Berry, Southern Shores Resident; Philip Ruckle, *The Coastland Times*; Dave Hallac, Superintendent, and Robin Snyder, Deputy Superintendent, National Park Service, Outer Banks Group; Luke Halton, The OBX Way.

The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. The Board then recited the pledge of allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Mr. Holland moved to approve the agenda. Second by Mr. Charalambous. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Ms. Thibodeau moved to approve the meeting minutes from June 30, 2022 meeting. Second by Ms. Chisholm. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

**PUBLIC COMMENTS:** George Berry stated he liked the “open air event site” but suggested the Board “think big” and consider building a convention center in Kitty Hawk, at the Aycock Brown Welcome Center and nearby medical facility site.

Superintendent Hallac reviewed ongoing and new projects in the parks, and introduced the new Deputy Superintendent, Robin Snyder.

**STEERING/CHAIR’S REPORT:** The Chair and Lee Nettles reviewed the amended Long Term Unappropriated Fund Grant Guidelines. Ms. Ingram moved to accept the amended guidelines. Second by Mr. Charalambous. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

Legal Counsel reviewed how the end of the North Carolina State of Emergency for COVID-19 would impact virtual meetings. While the statute is clear that elected boards would no longer be allowed to meet remotely, there was not a clear answer for appointed boards. He referred to the Board’s bylaws and recommended that the Board meet in person for the foreseeable future. There were no comments or objections from the Board.

The Chair noted:

- a letter from the Town of Southern Shores expressing appreciation for the Board joining the amicus brief, and that the Board's share of the cost is \$2,136.10
- NC Department of Commerce released the county-by-county economic impact figures. Dare County held its spot at number 4.
- an inquiry from the Town of Nags Head regarding possible grants for lifeguarding services in the off season. Steering Committee discussed the inquiry and felt there was not a grant this fit into, and the Steering Committee asked staff to inform the Town of Nags Head that Town occupancy collections to offset additional services had grown substantially over the last few years.

Ms. Thibodeau moved to enter closed session pursuant to NCGS 143-318.11 (a) (3) to consult with an attorney employed or retained by the public body to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorney and the public body, which privilege is hereby acknowledged.

The Board entered closed session at 9:27 a.m.

The meeting resumed open session at 9:40 a.m. There was no action taken to report.

**BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT:** Mr. Bateman reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2022-2023 are up 5.19% compared to 2021-2022 actual receipts.

**OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES:** Lee Nettles reviewed:

- County by county economic impact numbers and noted that 12, 295 people in Dare County were employed in a travel and tourism business.
- Two new television ads for connected TV
- Long Term Tourism Management Planning is starting, and the first portion is a survey to community leaders. A resident survey will go out soon.
- Marketing dashboard and visitation figures

Lorrie Love noted:

- the upcoming tourism summit on November 3, 2022
- the 2023 Travel Guide production is underway. Staff is looking to add additional pages to the guide this year as demand for ad space in the guide is high.
- The North Carolina Restaurant and Lodging Association meeting on September 6, 2022
- Upcoming events at the Soundside Event Site
- Aaron Tuell on a media mission in Toronto, Canada

**OLD BUSINESS:** Lee Nettles:

- updated the Board on the grant to install electric chargers at the Sarah Owens Welcome Center. The Bureau was not able to put them at the Welcome Center since it does not own the land, so staff looked at the event site. In further investigation, there was still considerable expense to install, even with the grant, and the chargers were slow chargers. Staff will not pursue the grant and will investigate other options to have high speed chargers installed.
- Noted that per the Board's direction, staff has a contract for a pay scale study. He reviewed the process, noting that updating the personnel policy manual is included in the cost, even though it is not listed in the proposal; and that the process could not start until January. He recommended signing the contract to lock the company in.

Mr. Bateman moved to approve the contact. Second by Mr. Holland. During discussion, Lee Nettles asked that the Executive Director be considered part of the study this time. There was no further discussion. Ms. Thibodeau asked about timing to implement the results. Diane Bognich noted that the changes could be incorporated into the proposed fiscal year budget or amend the current fiscal year budget. There was no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

**NEW BUSINESS:** There was no new business before the Board.

**BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:**

- Mr. Hines noted the Town of Kitty Hawk was doing its due diligence regarding purchasing the former medical facility site.
- Mr. Ballog noted restaurants were still very busy and short staffed. He asked if there had ever been a discussion of running a ferry between the Soundside Event Site and the Town of Manteo. Other Board members noted the sound was too shallow to do that.
- Ms. Thibodeau noted that the Town of Duck was still busy
- Ms. Chisholm noted beach nourishment was looking good
- Mr. Berryman noted that the National Flood Insurance was moving away from flood zone maps and grandfathering, and owners were seeing massive increases in their insurance. He asked if anyone heard from owners about this, please share with the Outer Banks Association of Realtors and called attention to the need to consider how traffic will impact the county in the future. He also noted the Chairman's podcast, Sarah & T.
- Mr. Holland noted the Town of Southern Shores lowered the speed limit on the portion of Highway 12 that runs through Southern Shores.
- Mr. Owens noted that the Town of Manteo was busy and had leased six trams to help move people around the Town.

**SET DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 15, 2022. The meeting will be held in Buxton, North Carolina, with the location to be announced.

The Chair asked if there was any further business before the Board. Hearing none, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:23 a.m.

**ATTESTED:**



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Clerk, Dare County Tourism Board