

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD
THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 2024
9:00 A.M.
OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
MANTEO, NC 27954**

ATTENDING: Monica Thibodeau, Chair; David Hines, Vice Chair; Tod Clissold, Treasurer; Dennis Robinson, Assistant Treasurer; Tonia Cohen, Secretary; Mark Ballog, Mark Batenic, Terry Gray, John Head, Richard Hess, Tess Judge, Wally Overman, Mike Siers, and Jay Wheless, Legal Counsel.

STAFF:

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

OTHERS ATTENDING: Robert Outten, Dare County Manager; John DeLucia, Albemarle & Associates; Ann Wood, and Wendy Hoekwater.

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

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Judge moved to approve the meeting minutes from June 20, 2024 meeting. Second by Mr. Head. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments.

David Hines arrived at 9:08 a.m.

SOUNDSIDE EVENT SITE: Lee Nettles and John DeLucia provided a progress report for the requested variance for the Boardwalk. A final decision from the Coastal Resource Commission should be known by the end of August 2024.

Lee Nettles reviewed a previously approved [by the Tourism Board] agreement with the Town of Nags Head to purchase the Town's share of ownership in the event site, which then failed to gain consent of the County Commissioners. The agreement has been reviewed and updated, approved by the Town, and is before the Board. If the Board approves the agreement, it will go back before the County Commissioners for their consent. The Board discussed the processes involved, payment structures, and if the contract would need to be voted on each year [No, it would not].

Following discussion, Mr. Hess moved to approve the purchase contract as presented. Second by Mr. Overman. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

John DeLucia and Bobby Outten reviewed the proposed plans for pickleball courts at the Soundside Event Site [to be located on the former Pamlico Jack's parcel]. The proposed plans allow for 10 courts, fencing, and lighting. The Board discussed how tournaments would impact existing events and the event site, bleachers, storm clean-up, maintenance, general management, how the site could be improved in the future, term length, incorporating the parcel into the event site, and costs associated with the construction, if grants were available to help fund the project, and how funding all three of the projects discussed today would impact the event site line item. Bobby Outten noted that the County currently had \$500,000 earmarked for pickleball courts and would be responsible for bidding, managing the construction, and for scheduling and maintaining the courts, and that if the Board agreed with what was proposed, the County would contract with Albemarle & Associates to create final plan and costs, and come back to the Board with costs for approval.

Mr. Hess moved that the Board agreed with the concept as presented, and authorizes staff to move forward with, or participate in final planning, including a MOU/MOA, and bidding, and to report at regular meetings as appropriate. Second by Mr. Grey. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (13-0).

CHAIR: The Chair welcomed the Board back after their July hiatus.

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Mr. Clissold reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2024-2025 were up 16.43% compared to 2023-2024.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles shared the North Carolina Department of Commerce Tourism Spending Numbers for 2023. Dare County ranked fourth, with over \$2 billion in visitor-related income, and reviewed new graphs (on file) comparing collections on short term rentals vs. vacation rental managers. He reviewed the marketing dashboard.

Jeff Schwartzberg reviewed the Long Range Tourism Management Plan Special Committee meeting, noting speakers from the NC Department of Transportation, and noted the North Carolina Trail Town Guide, which has just been released.

Lorrie Love noted work with local sports groups and grants available to them.

Aaron Tuell talked about an attendance at ESTO (Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations), an upcoming appearance on WAVY TV 10 and other recent media efforts.

Lee Nettles reminded the Board that the Tourism Summit would be held November 7th in Manteo.

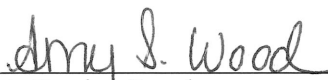
OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business before the Board.

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

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Overman thanked everyone for their well wishes. Mr. Grey noted that Jeff would be speaking to the Kill Devil Hills Commissioners and that the town would be looking at developing recreational areas around the disc golf course, which would include boardwalks and kayak launches.

SET DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, September 19, 2024 at 9:00 a.m. at the Waterfront Trellis, 207 Queen Elizabeth Street, #5, Manteo, NC 27954.

The Chair asked if there was any further business before the Board. Hearing none, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:42 a.m.

ATTESTED: 

Clerk, Dare County Tourism Board