

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025
9:00 A.M.
OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
MANTEO, NC 27954**

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

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Mark Batenic.

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
Jeff Schwartzberg, Community Engagement Manager

OTHERS ATTENDING: None.

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. Hess moved to approve the agenda. Second by Ms. Judge. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Overman moved to approve the meeting minutes from January 16, 2025 meeting. Second by Mr. Head. There was no discussion. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: There were no public comments made. No written comments were received.

David Hines arrived at 9:06 a.m.

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS: The Chair noted the first payment made to the Town of Nags Head to purchase a portion of their share of the event site.

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Mr. Clissold reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2024-2025 were up .62% compared to 2023-2024. The Board discussed how the occupancy taxes for Airbnb and VRBO were assigned to a category and collected; the demand for flexible[shorter] stays; and how occupancy receipts were compared to the state level and nationwide.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles noted:

- Outer Edge YouTube performance and different organizations showing the video series
- the Mountain to Sea Trail reception and meeting March 21-23
- booking widgets on the website. Work is still underway for a commission free booking engine for the rental home industry while the booking engine for hotel/motels is being completed by a different company. The Board discussed how the partners responded to the idea and what role Bureau staff would play in answering visitor questions about the properties.
- Marketing dashboard and visitation.

Mr. Clissold asked about the potential to show the Outer Edge series at rental offices and homes.

Jeff Schwartzberg noted:

- the Tourism Summit for students was postponed, with a new date to be announced
- the East Carolina University open houses regarding work force housing
- attendance at the Partnership and Community Engagement Forum
- upcoming Mission Mixer with the Community Foundation

Lorrie Love reviewed the American Bus Association marketplace, reservations at the event site, and the upcoming tourism summit in November (with more details to follow).

Lee Nettles touched on the Public Relations report as Aaron Tuell was on vacation.

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

NEW BUSINESS: Lee Nettles introduced the letter from the Southeast Tourism Society and National Parks Conservation Association regarding the recent mass firing of federal employees still within their probationary periods, particularly those individuals who had been employed by the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, USDA Forest Service, and the National Park Service (letter on file).

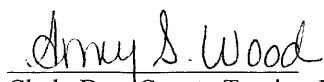
The Board discussed the letter and a majority of the Board felt the letter was pointedly political and did not feel comfortable sending it as written it but did want to know how to help the local National Park Service. Lee Nettles offered to reach out to the park Superintendent. Jay Wheless reminded the Board to not be disappointed if the Superintendent is not able to speak on this matter.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Hess noted the Economic Forecast breakfast on February 28. Mr. Overman thanked Mr. Clissold for his affirmative vote regarding a new brewery in Manteo; and asked what the difference was in the former brewery and a new brewery on the water treatment. Mr. Clissold responded that the new brewery would have less of an impact than the former brewery. Ms. Chasen noted that Local Government websites needed to be ADA Compliant by 2026 (per the Department of Justice), The Sitting Duck podcast launched and seven episodes had been released with more to follow, history documentaries with Benny Baldwin, focusing on the Heron properties, Hargraves Beach, and other Town related topics. She also thanked the Board for the grant to improve the lighting and sound at Duck Town Park.

SET DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 9:00 a.m. in Curtis Creech Memorial Boardroom, Outer Banks Visitors Bureau Administrative Office, Manteo, NC

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:



Clerk, Dare County Tourism Board