

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD
THURSDAY, MAY 19, 2022
9:00 A.M.
OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
MANTEO, NC 27954**

ATTENDING:

In-Person: Tim Cafferty, Chair; Monica Thibodeau, Vice Chair; Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Bambos Charalambous, Leo Holland, David Hines, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, and Jay Wheless, Legal Counsel.

Via GoToMeeting: Jamie Chisholm, Secretary; and Mike Siers.

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Ervin Bateman, Treasurer; and Ivy Ingram, Assistant Treasurer.

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
Aaron Tuell, Public Relations Manager
Stephanie Hall, Senior Content Coordinator

OTHERS ATTENDING:

Via GoToMeeting: Katie Stone.

In-Person: Woody Joyner, President, North Carolina Watermen United; Charlotte Walker, Councilwoman, Town of Kitty Hawk; Bill Cress, Developer, Wright Brothers Tribute Museum; Philip Ruckle, The Coastland Times; Joe and Melanie Schwarzer, Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum; Bob Woodard, Dare County Commissioners; Beth Hinson, Re/Max Coastal Associates.

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.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Thibodeau moved to approve the meeting minutes from April 28, 2022 meeting. Second by Mr. Holland. There was no discussion.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Woody Joyner, President of the North Carolina Watermen United, discussed the history of North Carolina Watermen United (NCWU) and the challenges facing working watermen.

Bill Cress spoke about the location choice for the Wright Brothers Tribute Museum and stated that welcome center employees “would not lose a day of employment” and that the welcome center would be addressed first to maintain that function.

PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED FISCAL YEAR 2022-2023 BUDGET: At 9:15 a.m., Ms. Thibodeau moved to open the Public Hearing for the proposed Fiscal Year 2022-20213 budget. Second by Mr. Robinson.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

The Chair called for any comments. None were made. The Clerk stated no written comments regarding the proposed budget were received. Ms. Thibodeau moved to close the public hearing. Second by Mr. Charalambous.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0). The public hearing was closed at 9:17 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS CONTINUED: [Tribute Museum discussion continued] Mr. Berryman asked how the site was selected for the museum. Bill Cress noted they had surveyed Dayton, Ohio, as a location but felt Kitty Hawk was the right location. Dare County Commissioners Chair Woodard noted that it would be a compliment to the Wright Brothers National Monument and its programs.

Joe Schwarzer spoke about the \$250,000 Restricted Fund Grant request for exhibits and audio/visual (A/V) effects and exhibits at the Graveyard of the Atlantic Museum and how important the A/V exhibits would be to the overall museum.

Chairman Woodward encouraged the Board to take a serious look at the request from the Graveyard of the Atlantic and noted that the County Commissioners would split the amount of the project [a total of \$500.000].

CHAIR/STEERING COMMITTEE REPORT: Lee Nettles reviewed the Tourism Impact Grant Extension request from the Town of Manteo for Phase 2 of the Town Common. The Town needed to rebid the project and that caused a delay in construction.

Mr. Berryman moved to grant an extension to October 31, 2022, to the Town of Manteo for the Tourism Impact Grant. Second by Ms. Thibodeau.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Diane Bognich reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2021-2022 are up 16.85% compared to 2020-2021 actual receipts. The Board discussed whether rising gas prices were impacting vacation plans (it does not appear to be so).

FISCAL YEAR 2022-23 PROPOSED BUDGET: Diane Bognich reviewed the proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2022-2023.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles reviewed:

- Careers Beyond the Counter concept and the enthusiastic response from the tourism community
- Public Meeting for the Event Center Concept to be held June 6 at Haven on the Banks
- Long Range Tourism Management Planning firm hired, and the project is just getting started
- Marketing for the upcoming fiscal year, with the focus on passionate, enthusiast audience to connect tourism (visitors) with the community
- Marketing dashboard and visitation

Lorrie Love reviewed the group and bus market interest in the Outer Banks and upcoming events at the event site.

Aaron Tuell reviewed travel influencer visits and recent coverage of the Outer Banks.

OLD BUSINESS: Legal Counsel and Lee Nettles reviewed the reasons for the Tourism Board to join the Amicus Brief (traffic, public safety, and economics for example). The Board discussed these factors. Following discussion, Ms. Thibodeau moved to support the Amicus Brief in Support of the Mid-Currituck Bridge, with the extent of the financial involvement on a pro-rata basis post filing. Second by Mr. Berryman. There was no further discussion.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Lee Nettles reviewed the draft resolution supporting the Wright Brothers Tribute Museum. Following review and discussion of the resolution, Ms. Thibodeau moved to adopt the resolution with the [grammatical/phrasing] changes made by Legal Counsel. Second by Mr. Holland.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

Resolution 2022-3 is attached and hereby incorporated and made a part of these minutes.

NEW BUSINESS: The Board discussed the request from Graveyard of the Atlantic. Following discussion of the grant and application, Mr. Owens moved to award \$250,000 contingent upon the County awarding \$250,000. Second by Mr. Hines.

Yes: Mark Ballog, Gray Berryman, Tim Cafferty, Bambos Charalambous, Jamie Chisholm, David Hines, Leo Holland, Bobby Owens, Dennis Robinson, Mike Siers, and Monica Thibodeau.

No: None. The motion passed unanimously (11-0).

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Charalambous asked staff to re-examine and modify the Restricted Fund guidelines for timing of requests.

Mr. Ballog asked how to get more welcoming signage at the bridges into Dare County. He talked about the number of J1 students coming to the county this summer and that some of the area restaurants were working cooperatively to create a Christmas Town atmosphere.

Mr. Berryman noted that the Worrell 1000 race would land in Hatteras and would continue to work its way north to Virginia Beach.

Mr. Holland thanked the Board for participating in the Amicus Brief.

SET DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The next meeting is scheduled for 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 30, 2022 in the Curtis Creech Memorial Boardroom, Outer Banks Visitors Bureau Administrative Office, Manteo, NC (virtual and in-person options available).

The Chair asked if there was any further business before the Board. Hearing none, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

ATTESTED:

Amy Wood

Clerk, Dare County Tourism Board