

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD
THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2016
9:00 A.M.**

**OUTER BANKS WELCOME CENTER ON ROANOKE ISLAND
MANTEO, NC 27954**

ATTENDING: George Banks, III, Ervin Bateman, Bambos Charalambous, Nancy Caviness, Tonia Cohen, Dorie Fuller, Leo Holland, Natalie Kavanagh, Stuart Pack, Wally Overman, Susie Walters, and Dwight Wheless, Legal Counsel.

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Town of Kill Devil Hills Representative, and Martha Wickre.

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: Bill Coleman, Roanoke Island Historical Association/The Lost Colony; Dave Hallac, Superintendent; Mark Dowdle, Deputy Superintendent; Outer Banks Group, National Park Service; and Mike Hogan.

The meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m. The Board then recited the pledge of allegiance, followed by a moment of silence.

OPENING: Dwight Wheless swore in the following Dare County Tourism Board Appointees:

- George A. Banks, III, Member at Large
- Bambos Charalambous, Outer Banks Restaurant Association
- Stuart Pack, Outer Banks Association of REALTORS®

Upon advice from Legal Counsel, the Board reached consensus to not swear in the reappointed members as long as they were serving a consecutive term as they had previously taken the oath.

Dwight Wheless presented the Nominating Committee's recommended slate of candidates:

- Chair: Susie Walters. Mr. Wheless called for nominations from the floor. Mr. Overman moved to nominate Susie Walters as Chair. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Wheless called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.
- Vice-Chair: Ervin Bateman. Mr. Wheless called for nominations from the floor. Mr. Holland nominated Ervin Bateman as Vice-Chair. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Wheless called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.
- Secretary: Nancy Caviness. Mr. Wheless called for nominations from the floor. Ms. Kavanagh nominated Nancy Caviness as Secretary. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Wheless called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.
- Treasurer: Dorie Fuller. Mr. Wheless called for nominations from the floor. Mr. Holland nominated Dorie Fuller as Treasurer. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Wheless called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

- Assistant Treasurer: Leo Holland. Mr. Wheless called for nominations from the floor. Ms. Cohen nominated Leo Holland as Assistant Treasurer. Hearing no further nominations, Mr. Wheless called for the vote. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Wheless turned the floor over to Chair Walters. The Chair thanked the Board for their support and welcomed guests to the meeting.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mr. Holland moved to approve the agenda as presented. Mr. Overman seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Mr. Bateman moved to approve the December 16, 2015 meeting minutes. Ms. Kavanagh seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Mark Dowdle updated the Board on plans for the Centennial Celebration for the Park Service, which includes an exhibit with the Outer Banks History Center, programs with Roanoke Island Historical Association (The Lost Colony), Night Skies and Life Saving Service programs on Hatteras Island. He also updated the Board on completed ramps, repairs and renovations at NPS Sites, new exhibits at Wright Bros. and that NPS would fully fund lifeguard service along their beaches.

Bill Coleman noted growth in attendance at The Lost Colony, new staff, and assisting NPS in the Centennial Celebration with costuming the narrator of the play in a NPS Ranger uniform. He updated the Board on changes to a program, Ghosts of The Lost Colony (formerly Haunted History), and invited the Board to attend these shows.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT: The Chair asked the Board members to return all paperwork; then asked the Board and staff to introduce themselves.

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Ms. Fuller reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2015-2016 to date are up 5.60% from the same time period in fiscal year 2014-2015. She asked Board members to let her know if they had any questions or would like her to report differently.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles reviewed:

- **THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC GOALS:** Goals were last set in 2012. The Board discussed setting new goals and if a facilitator was wanted or if the Board could do without. The Board agreed a facilitator might make the process easier and asked Lee Nettles to come back with pricing to see if hiring a facilitator would be feasible
- **VHB CONTRACT:** Lee Nettles provided background on phase II, especially reorienting the pavilion and HVAC system changes. The Board earlier approved an estimate that did not include the reorientation and HVAC and these changes require additional planning not covered under the original contract. Mr. Bateman moved to accept the amended contract for phase II, with amount increased by \$20,700. Mr. Holland seconded. During discussion, Lee Nettles clarified that the additional funding was for design services for the reorientation of the building and plans for the HVAC system. These specifications would be in the bids and the Board would still have the option to go forward with HVAC if desired. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously
- Continuing discussions with the National Park Service regarding best use of the Weather Station and assisting with an event for the NPS Centennial
- Invited to attend a Bureau of Ocean Energy Management meeting in Washington D.C. on February 16 to discuss off-shore drilling
- Biggest OBX Fan contest on Instagram

- Inquiry, Fulfillment and Visitation Numbers. The Board discussed the trend of page views downsizing as social media grew and how social media and smart phones changed the way people interacted with sites and how that impacted tracking and reporting
- Progress on the new website

Mr. Holland asked if there was anything to report regarding the state audit. Mr. Nettles noted he and Diane Bognich had spoken to the state auditors and were expecting a draft letter to be sent in the first half of February but he was hesitant to speculate what the letter would say but early indications were positive.

Lorrie Love reviewed previous and upcoming group sales missions, including the Travel South Showcase FAM in March, and announced the location for the 2016 Tourism Summit, which will be at the Hilton Garden Inn (Kitty Hawk) on May 5, 2016.

Aaron Tuell described the release of a "How To..." video series. The first of the series is on rental homes, with other accommodation types to follow. He hopes to show one of the videos at the February meeting. He also reviewed upcoming articles and press trips.

OLD BUSINESS: The Board was given a copy of the letter written by the North Carolina Watermen United (NCWU) asking the Tourism Board to write a resolution like the one from the Dare County Commissioners condemning the action of the NC Marine Fisheries Commission on the use of the supplement process to restrict southern flounder.

Dwight Wheless reviewed the purview of the Board in its establishment documents, which read "The tourism board shall promote year-round travel and tourism in Dare County as provided in Section 7 of this act and perform other duties required by law" and asked the Board to consider how the resolution met this criteria. The Board discussed how the restrictions impacted fishermen and restaurateurs. After discussion, the Board felt that they supported the resolution passed by the Dare County Commissioners but this issue fell outside the purview of the Tourism Board. Staff was asked to write a letter to the NCWU explaining this.


NEW BUSINESS: Mr. Overman discussed an idea from the Airport Authority to bring in private plane groups to the Outer Banks and asked staff to assist the Airport Authority with this idea. Lee Nettles and Lorrie Love will meet with them to discuss the goal and if, and how, the Bureau can assist.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Ms. Fuller noted that Currituck and a few towns in Dare County were looking at larger event homes and possible restrictions for those homes, and how those restrictions might impact tourism.

SET DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The next Tourism Board meeting was set for Thursday, February 18, 2016 at 9 a.m. at the Outer Banks Welcome Center on Roanoke Island.

Hearing no further business before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 10:40 a.m.

ATTESTED:



Secretary, Dare County Tourism Board