

**RECORD OF MINUTES
DARE COUNTY TOURISM BOARD MEETING
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2015
9:00 A.M.
“SWEET DREAMS”
27244 TARHEEL COURT
SALVO, NC 27972**

ATTENDING: Tim Cafferty, Chair; Susie Walters, Vice-Chair; Ervin Bateman, Assistant Treasurer; Tonia Cohen, Sheila Davies, Ernie Foster, Leo Holland, Natalie Kavanagh, Donny King, Wally Overman, and Dwight Wheless, Legal Counsel.

EXCUSED ABSENCE: Nancy Caviness, Secretary; Dorie Fuller, Treasurer; and Martha Wickre.

STAFF:

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

OTHERS: Ann Wood, Surf or Sound Realty; Chris DeWitt, VHB; and Andy Garmin, Town of Nags Head.

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: Ms. Davies moved to approve the agenda. Mr. Holland seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Ms. Davies moved to approve the minutes from the September 24, 2015 meeting. Ms. Walters seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Cohen arrived at 9:05 a.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Ann Wood welcomed the Board to Salvo and rental home Sweet Dreams before playing a short video about Surf and Sound and Hatteras Island vacations.

CHAIRMAN’S REPORT: The Chair noted two Short Term Restricted Fund Requests:

- Hatteras Island Ocean Center, requesting \$50,000 for Discover Hatteras. Lee Nettles explained the project and that the Steering Committee had recommended the request for full Board approval. Ms. Walters moved to award \$50,000. Mr. Holland seconded. During discussion, Mr. Overman asked about the types of exhibits and if they represented the fishing industry in a positive manner. Mr. Foster noted that they did. The Board discussed other exhibits in the building and grant funding from other sources. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.
- Town of Nags Head, requesting \$250,000 for Dowdy Park, Phase I. Susie Walters and Andy Garmin explained how phase I fit with the master plan for the park, additional grant funding requested for the park and the type of equipment featured on the playground. Following discussion, Mr. Holland moved to award \$250,000. Mr. Bateman seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT CONTINUED:

The Chair and Lee Nettles reviewed the Guidelines, Policies and Rates forms for rental of The Soundside. The Board had a lengthy discussion on how to handle logistics of multiple users of the site on the same day. Legal Counsel suggested letting staff handle this when and if it arose and recommended adding a sentence to the form "reserving the right to amend terms and costs" to the application. Following discussion, Ms. Davies moved to approve the form with the inclusion of the "reserve the right" sentence. Ms. Kavanagh seconded. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORT: Mr. Bateman reviewed the meals and occupancy receipts received. Receipts for fiscal year 2015-2016 to date are up 3.97% from the same time period in fiscal year 2014-2015.

OUTER BANKS VISITORS BUREAU UPDATES: Lee Nettles reviewed:

- Newsletters had been distributed throughout the county. He asked Board members to let staff know if they needed additional newsletters.
- Audit by State Auditors underway. The Board discussed how the audit came about, how it tied into the Board's yearly audit and what the results would lead to but at this time, there was no definitive direction for the audit nor time frame for when the audit would be complete. Lee Nettles noted that he looked forward to the results of audit.
- Option to move the Welcome Center on Hatteras Island from the Weather Station to the Hatteras Ocean Center for 10 years, rent free, with the option to renew the lease for an additional 10 years. The Board discussed the current Memorandum of Understanding with the National Park Service (no rent charged), what would happen to the building if both parties dissolved the MOU and feelings in the community about the move, timing of the move, and the potential to operate a welcome center at both locations. Following discussion, staff was asked to meet with NPS, NOAA, and Hatteras Island stakeholders, especially Hatteras Village Civic Association, to discuss potential for a NOAA/NPS partnership in the Weather Station and other ideas for using the Weather Station if the Welcome Center does move.
- Inquiry, Fulfillment and Visitation numbers
- Board member opportunities for events

Lorrie Love reviewed recent and upcoming sales missions and past/upcoming events at The Soundside. The Seafood Festival had approximately 9,000 attendees and the Bewtag had approximately 1,000. Future events include a smaller scale seafood festival like event called the Outer Banks Crab Crunch and the Outer Banks Jeep Mutiny. She also noted the 2016 Outer Banks Official Travel Guide was at the printers.

Ms. Davies was excused at 10:17 a.m.

Aaron Tuell reviewed recent and upcoming media missions, as well as recent articles and blogs about the Outer Banks.

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

NEW BUSINESS: Lee Nettles and Chris DeWitt discussed work for phase II that includes the open-air pavilion with bathrooms and an office, and pulling the parking construction out of phase III and beginning it in phase II. The bid is for preliminary work, not for construction at this time. It was noted that this was an amendment to an existing contract and did not need to be bid. Mr. Bateman moved to go forward with the contract. Ms. Walters seconded. During discussion, it was noted that Mr. Holland asked about reimbursable expenses. Chris DeWitt noted that they included travel, meals and mileage costs. The Chair asked who would be overseeing the work to make sure things were done properly and in a timely manner. Chris DeWitt noted that VHB would be doing some oversight and responding to contractor

questions and another agency would be doing some materials testing but a daily, on-site inspector was not included. Other discussion items included how a consultant would work with the contract and VHB. There was no further discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Overman moved to direct staff to hire a project-consulting engineer. Mr. Holland seconded. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously. Staff will come back to the Board with a recommendation.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS: Mr. Holland noted the upcoming Veteran's Day ceremony, with the Knights of Columbus, on November 11, 2015 at Southern Shores Town Hall. Mr. Foster noted his visit with Russian scientists who were visiting along with the North Carolina Coastal Federation, and Mr. Cafferty noted he would be running in the New York City Marathon.

SET TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: The Board set dates for the remainder of the year:

- Thursday, November 19, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. at the Outer Banks Welcome Center on Roanoke Island
- Thursday, December 17, 2015. Time and Location to be announced.

Hearing no further business before the Board, the Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:00 a.m.

Attested:

Secretary, Dare County Tourism Board