

**Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission
Meeting Minutes
August 22, 2018 at 1:00 p.m.
25-A Market Street, Onancock, Virginia 23417**

Commissioners in Attendance

Steve Potts, Chair, Bill's Seafood
Carol Evans, Cape Charles House, Vice Chair
John Coker, Northampton Supervisors
Laura Belle Gordy, Accomack Supervisors
Paige Addison, CBBT
Blake Johnson, The Island House
Monika Bridgforth, BIC
Ace Seybolt, Chincoteague Resort Realty

Staff Present

Kerry Allison, Executive Director
Sarah Barban, Content Producer
Sarah Head, Executive Assistant

Guests Present

Tammy Holloway, Cape Charles Town Council
Elizabeth Russel, Northampton Chamber
Cherron Davis, New Church Welcome Center
Deborah Christie, Congressman Scott Taylor's Office

1. Call to Order

- At 1 p.m. Potts called the meeting to order
- At 1:03 p.m. Addison made a motion to go into closed session to discuss personnel matters. Gordy seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- At 2:36 p.m. Addison made a motion to reconvene in open session. Seybolt seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
- Potts called the meeting back to order at 2:45 p.m.

2. Consent Agenda

- Coker made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Evans seconded and the motion passed unanimously. Seybolt made a motion that the minutes be approved with the corrections. The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Participation

- Christie reported that there has been no response from Taylor's request to have the anchorage area off Cape Charles designated a no discharge zone.
- Holloway told the board that Governor Northam visited Cape Charles in July to do ribbon cuttings at all the new businesses. Cape Charles' Main Street has been officially designated and named the first Virginia Downtown. Three-, four- and five-day reservations were up at the inn, which allowed her to build trips for visitors so they could see other parts of the region.
- Russel said she'd been helping a lot more people plan vacations. The chamber will host a social media seminar on September 11. She is working on plans for the agricultural fair.
- Davis echoed that people asking for itineraries for extended stays was up at their welcome center. Canadian travel is up. Addison asked Davis what the top three questions that they receive were. Davis said questions about the CBBT, what there is to do on the ESVA and how to plan a week in Virginia Beach. Davis said the top three destinations of their visitors are Virginia Beach, Chincoteague and Williamsburg.

4. Content Producer Report

- Barban acted as manager on duty while Allison was away. A new Instagram photo contest will bring new image assets into the TC's archives for marketing use. Four new guide editorials are in draft form.

5. Executive Assistant Report

- Head is streamlining the filing process and looking into how to securely manage passwords. Research about a new auto insurance policy to cover employees while driving on business is in the works. Sales training with Allan

Burns continues.

6. Executive Director Report

- Blue Water Development paid the \$5,000. Seybolt asked if Head would be going out on sales calls without being covered under a company liability policy. Allison said they didn't currently have a policy and that they'd be looking into options. The fall marketing campaign launched. Addison asked for an update on the website. Allison said the programmers were working on the coding. There were challenges with the event feed from VTC. A program to educate partners on their new role in producing their own event and business listing content is underway. Staff from Otto would do a soft launch of the website at the fall workshop. There would also be an outreach program to help partners get listed on the new site.

7. Matters by Commissioners

- Evans said Art Rocks the Inns was very successful and she estimated she saw 400 people. Sea Gate, the oldest B&B in Cape Charles, is closing. The new businesses in Cape Charles seemed to be doing well.
- Coker was on the railroad board and they were in the process of cleaning up the railroad yard in Cape Charles. The Cape Charles Museum was interested in taking several of the old rail cars. Parksley also wanted one of the engines but getting it to Parksley would be a challenge.
- Addison said the tunnel boring machine Chessie hadn't arrived but had been commissioned. Tours of the new construction went well. The *Virginia Living* wedding issue was out and it featured an Eastern Shore wedding.
- Seybolt said his office had passed its sales and rental totals from the previous year with three months left to go. Pony Penning seemed to be a rough crew this year compared to previous years.
- Bridgforth said the rehabilitation of BIC's kitchen building would start soon with a ground breaking on September 20. Work was underway to reprint the Eastern Shore Museum Network brochures. There was talk of trying to arrange an Eastern Shore event with Earl Swift who wrote a book about Tangier.
- Johnson said with July being so rainy, headcounts were down, but sales were up. The tackle shop was up 13 percent and there had been more boats in Wachapreague. He said there was still very little transient boat traffic into Wachapreague because of shoaling in the inlet.
- Potts said August had been very busy. There was sidewalk work going on in Chincoteague.
- Addison asked about the retreat. It was decided that the retreat would be held October 17 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There was some discussion about finding a facilitator and Potts suggested Lynn Lochen.

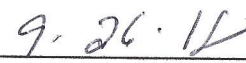
8. Adjournment

- Gordy made a motion to adjourn, Johnson seconded and the meeting was adjourned at 3:35 p.m.

These minutes have been approved by:



Steve Potts, Chairman



Date