

**Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission
Meeting Minutes
September 27, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.
25-A Market Street, Onancock, Virginia 23417**

Kerry Allison, Executive Director
Laurie Chamberlain, Operations Specialist
Sarah Barban, Content Producer
Mary Lena Mears, Welcome Center Manager
Allan Burns, Industry Relations Manager

Commissioners in Attendance

Steve Potts, Bill's Restaurant, Chair
Carol Evans, Cape Charles House B&B, Vice Chair
Larry LeMond, Northampton Cty Board of Supervisors
Blake Johnson, The Island House
Ace Seybolt, Chincoteague Resort Realty
Paige Addison, CBBT

Guests Present

Evelyn Shotwell, Chincoteague Chamber
David Mikula, Mikula Harris
Robie Marsh, Eastern Shore Chamber
Staci Martin, VTC
Elizabeth Dodd, Northampton Chamber
Clarice MacGarvey, Exmore
Tammy Holloway, Cape Charles Business Association

Staff Present

1. Call to Order

- Potts called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

2. Consent Agenda

- The consent agenda was approved and passed unanimously.

3. Public Participation

- Mikula spoke about the proposal his company submitted for a new website.
- Shotwell said Pony Penning is a finalist for Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association's attraction of the year.
- Holloway reported that Cape Charles has taken initial steps towards a Main Street program.
- Dodd reported about the upcoming ag fair.
- McGarvey reported Exmore events are a big draw.
- Marsh said they are working on a buy-local search engine.
- Martin announced a future small museum workshop in Chincoteague.

4. Welcome Center Report

- Mears reported visits at the welcome center were down, event postings were up and consumer email sign ups were strong.

5. Industry Relations Report

- Burns reported about relocated and new businesses in Cape Charles and said visitor guide sales total \$18,000 to date..

6. Operations Report

- Chamberlain stated the ESVATC office is not required to be located in Accomack. There was general discussion about where to hold the spring tourism summit. Potts made a motion to keep the summit at the community college. Evans seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

7. Content Producer Report

- Barban updated the board on blog activity, editorial activity for the guide and travel writer itineraries.

8. Executive Director Report

- Allison updated the board on the website project, fall oyster marketing program, and marketing to boaters. The board will decide about a website vendor at the next meeting based on a ranking Allison creates.

9. Old Business

- Invoicing: Burns reported that they were down to roughly \$10-12,000 in back invoices.
- Welcome Center Storefront: Allison presented a possible design for T-shirts. Alternatives were discussed along with hat and tote designs. Addison said the ESVATC should place merchandise in the WC asap.

10. New Business

- VTC Product to Distribute Content: A new tool called Compass will enable our content to be distributed on virginia.org.
- Welcome Center Kiosk: The WC and kiosk dbases could be synced during the website project but costs might be prohibitive.
- Complimentary Advertising Policy: The board reviewed the WC complimentary advertising policy and questioned whether the Artisan/Oyster Trail should be charged or not; Potts suggested further research and the Board tabled the matter pending more information.
- Top Three Priorities: Visitor guide, the October 23 Workshop and the new website.

11. Matters by Commissioners

- Evans said the Community Enhancement Board is moving forward and shared media clips.
- Johnson said new town council member, Bob Biliki, will head up Wachapreague tourism and outlined how ticket sales will work for his upcoming oyster roast.
- Addison said the new tunnel project is on schedule; the ESVATC signs on Island One will be relocated.
- Potts updated plans for Christmas by the Sea.

12. Adjournment

- Addison made a motion to adjourn, Seybolt seconded and the motion was passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

These minutes have been approved by:

/s/ Steve Potts, Chairman

October 25, 2017

Steve Potts, Chairman

Date