

Eastern Shore of Virginia Tourism Commission
Meeting Minutes
October 24, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.
25-A Market Street, Onancock, Virginia 23417

Staff Present

Allan Burns, Industry Relations Manager
Sarah Head, Executive Assistant

Commissioners in Attendance

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

Guests Present

Karyn Belknap, Ten Good Sheep
Tammy Holloway, Cape Charles Town Council
Elizabeth Russell, Northampton Chamber
Evelyn Shotwell, Chincoteague Chamber
Staci Martin, VTC
D'Arcy Weiss, Coastal VA Coordinator
Annie Jones, Eastern Shore Artisans Guild
Russell Jones, Eastern Shore Artisans Guild

Commissioners in Absence

Ace Seybolt, Chincoteague Resort Realty

1. Call to Order

- Potts called the meeting to order at 2:12 p.m.

2. Consent Agenda

- Coker made a motion to approve the consent agenda, Bridgforth seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Participation

- Holloway gave an update on the success of the Cape Charles Main Street Program.
- Russell reported on the excellent turnout for the Northampton Agricultural County Fair and stated that her last day would be October 31, 2018.
- Shotwell said the turnout for the Chincoteague Oyster Festival was good and that work had begun on the Chincoteague Christmas parade.
- Martin reported that the contract to develop the State Tourism Plan 2.0 had been rewarded to the Southeastern Research Institute and that all BOC members are on the list to be interviewed. She also informed the commission that early February would be a good time to start forming partnerships to receive the Marketing Leverage Grant.
- Weiss said that there was an Eastern Shore Trail meeting today to try to get the Artisans trail reinvigorated.
- A. Jones, representing the Artisans guild, said that they were in full press mode for the Holiday Tour, and that she was honored to have been a part of the Meet at the Table event at Chatham Flower Farm.
- R. Jones gave kudos to ESVATC's new website and said that it was at or better than what was promised.

4. Industry Relations Report

- Burns stated that the visitor's count is about 7% ahead of last year.
- Welcome center rockers have been painted, new signage has been implemented and the rack cards have been better organized.
- Staffing changes have led to need for re-evaluation of duties.

5. Executive Assistant Report

- Head reported on the liability insurance and stated that there was a need to outline who should be driving on ESVATC business. Additionally, she mentioned that we should look in to the possibility of a liability waiver form for volunteers.
- Head has filled in as well as possible on the content producer aspect of the job, but has had trouble maintaining anything other than Facebook, due to heavily increased responsibilities.

- Two options for visitor's guides. We could do a very simplified, sixteen page version or a 32 page version. Either way, there would be no ads.

6. Old Business

- Ad in Chincoteague Guide: Potts recognized that the Chincoteague Chamber has ad space left and Shotwell confirmed that if the commission would like to take out an ad, it would need to be done by the middle of November.

7. New Business

- Tourism Workshop/Website Preview: Potts stated that there was a good turnout. He recognized that there was some opposition to partners uploading their own events, but that the ESVATC knew there would be an education piece.
- Website: Potts said that there was still progress being made on the website and that he and Head had met earlier that day to work on it. Bridgforth said that she liked the idea of there being an overlap between the two websites. Discussion followed on how the commission would be able to filter posts on the website. It was also suggested that the commission create a YouTube walk through video on how to create a business listing.

8. Matters by Commissioners

- Evans informed the board about Cape Charles series of five Festive Fridays, based on free family entertainment. She also talked about the Cookie Trail with the local B&B's.
- Coker talked about the VDOT grant that is available for the bike trail and the approval of VDOT to put a stoplight and pedestrian crosswalk at the intersection outside of Cape Charles.
- Johnson said that the CBES event would be happening this weekend and that Wachapreague was gearing up for the Island House Oyster Roast.
- Bridgforth said that Barrier Island Center had started work on the chimney of the kitchen building. She reported on the progress of documenting archives for all of the historical sites on the Eastern Shore.
- Gordy stated that she was glad that the workshop went well.
- Addison said that CBBT was tunneling forward and that there were two public information sessions to be held about the toll rate increase.
- Potts talked about how they had started on Chincoteague's Christmas by the Sea campaign, as well as all of the events that go along with that.

9. Closed Session

- At 3:00pm Gordy made a motion to go into closed session to discuss legal matters, which was seconded by Evans and passed unanimously. Robert Crockett was present.
- At 4:28pm Bridgforth motioned to reconvene in open session, which was seconded by Gordy. All members were polled and the commission came out of closed session.

10. Adjournment

- Bridgforth motioned to adjourn, which was seconded by Coker and the meeting was adjourned at 4:30pm.

These minutes have been approved by:

Steve Potts, Chairman



Date

11/28/18