

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

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
Laura Belle Gordy, Accomack Cty Board of Supervisors
Monika Bridgforth, BIC
Ace Seybolt, Chincoteague Resort Realty
Paige Addison, CBBT

Staff Present

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

Guests Present

Cherron Davis, VTC
Kari Kemp, Otto
Lauren Shoff, Otto

1. Call to Order

- Potts called the meeting to order at 2:10 p.m. Potts introduced Bridgforth, the newest commissioner.

2. Consent Agenda

- Gordy made a motion to approve the consent agenda. LeMond seconded and the motion passed unanimously. LeMond asked why accounts receivables 90 days past due were up from the month prior; Burns said it is due to visitor guide ad sales.

3. Public Participation

- Davis said VTC would no longer be working with Highway Information Media for brochure and ad placements at state welcome centers, and warehousing of guides. As of January 1 those functions will revert back to VTC. VTC will also be taking state rest areas under their umbrella
- Kemp and Shoff made a presentation and answered questions about Otto's proposal for the website project.

4. Welcome Center Report

- Mears reported that staffing was still a problem at the welcome center. She asked the board if they had any advice on how to tackle those challenges. Potts suggested getting in touch with local high schools as a source for volunteers.

5. Industry Relations Report

- Burns reported that about \$75,000 in ads had been sold and he expected the final total to be between \$75,000 and \$80,000.

6. Operations Report

- Chamberlain said Anthem was dropping individual health coverage in Virginia, so something would have to be done about Allison's health insurance. Potts said that he had switched to a group policy. Chamberlain said they were looking into that option.

7. Content Producer Report

- Barban wrote itineraries for several travel writers. She updated the board the results of her trip to the Annapolis Boat Show.

8. Executive Director Report

- Allison reported that she ordered 250 hats, but refused delivery due to subpar manufacturing.

9. Old Business

- Free Rack Card Space Policy - Mears said the Outer Banks and Ocean City receive free rack card space and she will contact those markets to set up payment.

10. New Business

- November Meeting Change Permanently - LeMond made a motion that the November meeting be permanently moved to the Wednesday before Thanksgiving week and Evans seconded it. The measure passed unanimously.
- Top Three Priorities - Allison's top three priorities were the guide, the grant for the website and the website.

11. Matters by Commissioners

- Evans informed the board that the Cape Charles Community Enhancement Board was still searching for a project manager.
- LeMond received a gift basket as thanks for his time as chair. He thanked everyone and said he had enjoyed working with the board and the staff.
- Seybolt said he was beginning to prepare for the next summer season and that the ESVATC should start marketing vacation rentals as early as February.
- Bridgforth said she was happy to be able to bring the mission of the commission to the museum network.
- Addison said that the restaurant on the bridge-tunnel had been demolished to make way for the new tunnel.
- Gordy had nothing to report.
- Potts proposed a new T-shirt design that would include an outline of the Eastern Shore, a word cloud and a tag line. He had suggested "close to nature, far from normal" and Barban suggested "close to nature, far from average." The staff from Otto suggested "close to nature, far from ordinary." He is working on an advent calendar promotion at the New Church Welcome Center where staff would hand out local products and gift certificates in a countdown to Christmas.
- Allison mentioned that they were planning a small holiday potluck luncheon and invited the board.

12. Adjournment

- Gordy made a motion to adjourn, Addison seconded. The motion passed unanimously and the meeting was adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

These minutes have been approved by:

/s/ Steve Potts

November 15, 2017

Steve Potts, Chairman

Date