



Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
April 8, 2019, 3:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA

Start Time: 3:00 p.m.

Attending – Rick Murray, Chair; Lesley Marchessault, Vice Chair; Susan Avellar, At Large; Andrea Sawyer, At Large; Regina Cassidy, At Large; Jay Gurewitsch, At Large;

Staff: Anthony Fuccillo, Director of Tourism; Nina Cantor, Assistant Director of Tourism

Minutes:

1. Public Statements

- None

2. Town Manager, David Panagore

- RM introduced the TM and that the TM is here to answer any questions the VSB may have
- TM stated that two years ago looking at Holly Folly toward New Year's seeing what can be done with Commercial Street ... DP spoke with Eversource and there has recently been a change with Eversource. They have an open public pedestrian mall with lights and now we can have LED's powered from the poles. A web of lights from the post office to Tourism office with, low costs, low power, so it would work. They are going to come back to us with more details. It would be powered right from the utility poles. It should be cost effective. It could be a pilot. It would be up to those who do events/marketing during that time.
- AS stated that it sounds wonderful
- LM stated that it was a great idea. The VSB had given the PBG funds for flags with lights. Would the PBG be asked to contribute?
- TM stated that some of the costs would be part of Eversource's community benefit project. But it would be on the utility bill. For them it's an economic development activity.
- RC likes the idea a lot. People will come down if we light it up. Coupled with the flags. Nantucket at Christmas is beautiful. They have sidewalks with Christmas trees. Anything we can do to make it look festive!
- JG thinks it's a great idea. And with the launch of the website it would be a tunnel of light and a great Instagram photo. On another note, who is responsible for chairs in town hall?
- TM – This year the priority was the AC System. So it was held back. It is up for discussion for FY21
- JG asked if we can get working on the lighting this summer.
- TM stated that we move according to the speed of a utility company. I have been working on this for a long time. For this year we have a yes! Until we get a design and agreement, there can't be a schedule.
- JG asked if there's there something the VSB can help with that
- TM stated that he is not sure at the moment. And it will need support when it comes to the front.
- RM stated he would like to discuss Strategic Planning. I wanted the new website to happen in January/Feb and that won't happen. But we need to stay on track. There have been many discussions regarding Red Thread Productions - highs/lows and discussion. Asking staff through the Town Manager – are we reviewing the contract and should we start RFP now? It should be 8 months out. I think Red Thread did a good job but some did not. Is there is a timeline as to when the agency wants to reapply?
- TM answered – In the abstract, regardless of timeframes when do you think the next contract begins?
- RM answered - If the contract ends the way our season starts we should have things starting 6 months prior to season. Us who market plan 6 to 8 months out. We should be doing the same.
- TM – On that basis, is that in the abstract, having a firm on board from November to January is the right timing so there is 6 months to get to May? There is open place to have the conversation, but we should have a rational conversation with Red Thread/Nadine. We should not have this conversation here.

- TM – I take my direction of the Select Board. They have these conversations about grants and other things.
- RM – We have made improvements with the grant programs. DP – I hear you and I’m there with you on that.
- RM – I don’t want to lose anymore timing. All 3 entities (chamber, PBG, tourism office) need to work together. There is a PBG meeting in May... but I haven’t gotten direction as of yet. There are surprises they have found, but we are all on the same page. We need to make it happen.
- TM stated that his last conversation with the Select Board was about VSB grants. There was a request to do a review of the last 20 years. But the conversation should start here with what is the purpose of the grants. What is the priority? Nonprofits? Events that drive a lot of people to visit? This may have never been addressed. What are the outcomes that you all are looking for as opposed to policy’s that is given to you?
- LM asked if it is within the VSB purview and do they want us to recommend what the grants are for? Would there be a written policy?
- TM stated the VSB is an advisory board and should give advice. There could be a policy on the town floor and it gets passed, past that, it could be a Select Board policy and passed that it could be the VSB. The Select Board might want to try something out for 2-3 years or something that needed Town Meeting endorsement. Then the Select Board would vote on the grants. The Select Board made a change to the Economic Development Board - no grants for development on properties. Now that is a rule.
- LM stated that there is a lot of human element and we don’t all agree already on the Board. We should have that conversation within the VSB.
- TM stated that at a past position, we gave a large amount of money to an arts agency because it was going to bring \$250,000 to Town so we gave them most of the money to them. And once it is given, it usually never goes away.
- RM stated that DP and staff did a great job accumulating funds and asked if the police station and fireworks will be funded with the Tourism fund every year.
- TM responded not to worry about less money... worry about more. Because of B&B taxes, there will be more. If at all possible, I don’t see a desire to continue the funding for the airport. I don’t remember how much money is left. The reserve is untouchable. Grappling with making sure we make use of the new money coming in and that it is used correctly.
- RM stated: before you became town manager, it used to be 45% not 35%. I want to get back to 45%.
- TM responded - look at the amount that comes in, not the percentages. The challenge is figuring out what is coming in and how to spend it and figure it out in an intelligent way.

3. Director’s Report

AF presented the Director’s Report

- Tourism fund – spending is on track with \$422,594 committed/budgeted and \$20,492 in fund available.
- The Tourism Department has received a request to advertise on the Cape Cod Chamber map for \$1,000. It’s a preferred spot and Red Thread agrees to do it. There will be 40,000 copies printed. The Provincetown Chamber is no longer advertising.

AS Motion

SA 2nd

- JG asked if the ad will include the rainbow tagline
- AF stated yes, it’s subliminal and it’s appropriate
- RM stated that the rainbow wording is the first thing that drew him to the map

Recommended motion to authorize \$1,000 for Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce

AS Motion

SA 2nd

All in Favor 6-0-0

Digital Ads Report

- The requested report of the Digital Ads in 2018 has not been received yet
- RM is requesting it for the May 6, 2019 meeting.

Strategic Plan

- The FY20 Strategic Plan has been received, and hopefully will be presented for the 22nd.

Bellweather Update

- Bellweather presented to the Stakeholders group on March 27, 2019.

Here are some highlights.

- They are drilling down on who is looking for us - who is the current visitor and who is searching for Provincetown. We learned there are people who are looking for Provincetown who are in the younger age bracket.
- They presented that urban city dwellers are looking for Provincetown online. Urban searches are high.

Digital Advertising

- The Spark group report demonstrated that the digital advertising is successful.
- Normally an average engagement session is 2-3 minutes and ours is just 1 minute with a 57% bounce rate. We will do engaging and interactive including surveys. And Bellweather is planning to create a best practice sheet for businesses to share with the stakeholders.

Hashtag Report by Spark Group

- RM asked why isn't #gay somewhere on the report.
- LM asked if the results are these related to us or other's searching. AF stated that it is others searching using hashtags but the subjects are related to Provincetown.
- LM noted that artists and exhibits are listed here and would like to do more hashtags
- RM requested that #shopping, #gayptown #gayallday should all be included
- AF stated that all these best practices will be helpful to businesses... we'll give them the hashtags to use

Bellweather Update

- AF reviewed the top Provincetown searches from the period of March 2018-2019.
- JG stated that there are an insane number of people searching for whales so we can take advantage of that.
- SA mentioned that the whale watching idea started in 1960 with her father and Al. And by 1970 it took off.
- JG – Noted the difference in search numbers for Provincetown vs. Ptown. Provincetown is much higher
- AF stated that phase one with Bellweather has been completed. Then there will be creative sprints, eight – two week sprints. We don't have the stop dates yet.
- Red Thread initiated a creative meeting but Bellweather thought it was too soon.
- RM asked if there was money for photo and video. AF answered that if Bellweather wants to do a 30 second video, Red Thread can put it together.
- RM stated that many businesses have done videos. Can we from request private businesses to use their footage? And take out the business names?
- AS stated that we should do a drone shot of the ferry coming into town.
- AF stated there will be a request for the assets from Bellweather to the businesses.
- JG suggested Bellweather might not realize how hard it will be to get people's attention by end of June. A PBG meeting will be in the 2nd or 3 week in May. Not sure when the Chamber dinner will be...
- RM – let us know if you need support to be able to share at the PBG meeting

Fall Business Meeting

- AF stated that the VSB meeting with businesses has moved to September/October.
- JG stated it's around the time that the website is launched.
- SA asked to make sure all entities are invited... not just businesses
- AF stated that is all inclusive. Gallery owners too.
- AF gave the VSB some "homework" regarding the meeting with businesses

- Please come to the meeting prepared to discuss:
 - What does the VSB recommend?
 - What is the objective?
 - What is the desired outcome?
 - What type of keynote speaker do you want?

Other

- AF stated that there are three candidates for the open seat on the VSB
- Select Board approved VSB recommendations for 2020 Grant Awards
- Award letters will be sent out by May 1, 2019

Media Placement & Activity:

Publication/Project	Purpose	Up To/Amount
Cape Cod Chamber	Map Redux	\$1,000

Tourism Administration:

Organization / Project	Purpose	Up To/Amount
None		

4. **Board Members’ Statements—comments from Board members.** Discussion dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken.
 - JG asked if the staff has seen any press releases? AF – yes, today.
 - AS thought this was a good meeting with positive information and is excited about lighting up the town.
 - LM mentioned that PTV has videos that can be shared and would like an update regarding ptown 400
 - RM thanked David and added that if the board is serious about changing the grant process they need to meet with us.

Approval of Minutes

Approval of March Minutes

RG Motion JG second All in Favor 6-0-0

Motion to Adjourn at 4:30

Motion: LM Second: AS Motion Approved 6-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Nina Cantor
Assistant Director of Tourism