



**Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
September 8, 2020, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA**

Meeting is turned over the David Burbank as Chair

- DB asked if there is a nomination to be Vice Chair
- RC stated she would like to remain as Vice Chair
- DM made a motion to appoint Regina Cassidy for the position of Vice Chair of the Visitor Services Board

Motion to appoint Regina Cassidy as Vice Chair of the Visitor Services Board

Motion: DB SA - 2nd Vote 6-0-0

Discussion: None

Roll call vote: RC – yes; SA – yes; AS – yes; DB – yes; DW – Yes; SH yes

- DB asked if there is a nomination for Clerk
- DW offered to volunteer to be the Clerk
- DM made a motion to appoint David Wilson for the position of Clerk of the Visitor Services Board

Motion to appoint David Wilson for the position of Clerk of the Visitor Services Board

Motion: DW SA – 2nd Vote: 6-0-0

Discussion: None

Roll Call: RC – Yes; SA – Yes; AS – Yes; DB – Yes; DW – Yes; SH - Yes

2. Open Public Statements specific to Town Warrant: 1:11pm

AF read the Article:

Article 23. Expenditures from the Tourism Fund. *To see if the Town will vote to transfer from the Tourism Fund the sum of \$705,000 to be expended under the direction of the Select Board and the Visitor Services Board to fund the following expenditures which market, beautify or enhance tourism in Provincetown pursuant to Chapter 178 of the Acts of 1996:*

1. \$155,000 for coordination/support of the Visitor Services Board and the Tourism Department, and costs related thereto;
2. \$450,000 for marketing, and costs related thereto;
3. \$0 for municipal projects, and costs related thereto;
4. \$100,000 for tourism grants, and costs related thereto;
5. \$0 for Beautification Committee, and costs related thereto;

or to take any other action relative thereto.

[Requested by the Select Board and the Visitor Services Board]

Explanation of Article 23: *This article transfers \$705,000 from the Tourism Fund to cover the costs associated with the Tourism Office pursuant to the Five-Year Financial Plan for Tourism Fund Expenditures proposed by the Visitor Services Board and approved by the Select Board each year. Tourism funds are generated by 35% of the room occupancy tax.*

- DB asked if there were any public comments
- Bill Docker stated he will be advocating for some funds for beautification.
- DB asked if there were any other Public Comments
- Hearing none, DB asked the VSB if there are any recommendations.
 - RC – None
 - SA asked if the original budget was a little higher. AF stated the original budget was \$840,000 but due to the pandemic, and projected capacity, it was determined by the finance department to \$705,000 which the VSB recommended to the select board and was approved by the select board in August
 - AS – None
 - DW – None
 - SH – None



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- DB made a motion to recommend Article 23 as written in the Town Warrant

Motion to recommend Article 23 as written in the Town Warrant

Motion – DB 2nd – DW Vote 6-0-0

Roll Call: RC – Yes; SA – Yes; AS – Yes; DB – Yes; DW – Yes; SH Yes

- DB closed public Comments

Visitor Services Board meeting began at 1:20pm

3. Public Statements

Robert Sanborn, Executive Director, Provincetown Business Guild (PBG)

- I hope you viewed the virtual carnival. It was well received.
- Next year's theme is Over the Rainbow which seems very appropriate.
- We are at Labor Day weekend which is usually viewed of as the end of the high season and I want to thank the community. Under the circumstances it was a successful season. We had luck with the weather – it worked in our favor. And the overall numbers of Covid within the community. It exceeded expectations with safety, mask compliance.
- Obviously, there are no large scale events planned but we are collecting names for the fall yard sale (masks required) and shops are open. No big events are planned.
- RC – when is the yard sale?
- DB – Columbus Day weekend. We don't produce the event, we only promote it. It's only twice a year that zoning allows outdoor venues.

Radu Luca, Executive Director, Provincetown Chamber of Commerce

- Congrats to your appointment of Chair and reappointment of Vice Chair and Clerk
- We encourage everyone to please become members of the Chamber and renew your membership.
- We hope to have a good fall season and have been receiving good press. Safe fall to everyone

4. Beautification Committee Report

Bill Docker presented the Landscaping Report

- I'm glad to be with you. This has been a challenging summer and were grateful for the good weather
- I hope the budget will be reconsidered for next time.
- We will have a committee meeting next week and we only have only \$500 in the general fund. We have \$18,000 in the gift fund for benches. A meeting will be held on site tomorrow.
- The DPW had asked for money from our gift fund. At our next meeting we will re-examine the funding as stated in article 23.
- All the flowers cost about \$4,000. Our request would be consider up to \$3,000 to 4,000 to beautify the Town and not \$0. And we are against a hard rock, the DPW did not bring back their workers and the COA did not have volunteers so it was difficult. We bought hoses and tried to keep things watered. It was a dry summer.
- Recap: First Landing Park work will continue. On the horizon us the Elaina Hall project and we'll be working with the Recreation Department on that.
- DB – Thank you, Bill
- SA – Bill you do a great job and I would be in support in the future for asking for funds. I hope your committee will come before us again and receive more positive response.



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- DB – I will work with AF and NC on the finances. What you do is important. Thank you for taking the time to meet with us.
- BD – thank you!

5. Five Year Plan for 2022-2026 Budget Recommendations to Select Board

a. Postpone to January in order to review Department of Revenue Deposits

- AF stated that at this time of year we begin the process of starting budgeting for the next year but the process has been postponed. A recommendation is normally due to the Select Board in November but due to the circumstances, we do not have our deposits of our accommodations tax fund (the past 6 months is 85% of our budget). In order to know what our capacity is, we should wait until January which will still be in time for the FY22 warrant. It would be difficult to plan without the information. Would you like to make a recommendation to request approval Postpone to January in order to review Department of Revenue Deposits

SA made a motion to postpone the VSB recommendation of the Five Year Plan for 2022 – 2026 to the Select Board until January 2021. DW – 2nd

Discussion

- RC – I agree. We don't have the information to make a sound decision.
- SA – I'm all set. I'm sure Tony and Nina will do a fine job.
- AS – we should wait. We don't have the numbers
- DB – I agree with previous speakers. I strongly support in postponing
- DW – I agree. When will get updates? AF – End of September and end of December
- DW – yes
- SH – I agree with everyone.

Motion to postpone the Visitor Services Board recommendation of the Five Year Plan for 2022 – 2026 to the Select Board until January 2021.

Motion – SA 2nd – DW Vote 6-0-0

Roll Call: RC – Yes; SA – Yes; AS – Yes; DB – Yes; DW – Yes; SH Yes

- BS (point of order): BS stated that it is his understanding is that it is written in the Town's Bylaw that the Select Board submit the 5 year plan in November. The VSB voted to ignore your recommendation... have they agreed to that?
- AF read from the legislative information. This is a recommendation of the VSBS and the SB can deny the recommendation. If the budget is submitted in January, there will still be time for the budget to be on the warrant. Sometimes the SB will move the meeting until December. And they have postponed meetings.

6. Department Report

- AF – reviewed budget
- AF stated the that the temporary marketing strategy (due to Covid19) will end at the end of September

Fall (September/October – December)

- Retail – Shop local; shop holidays
- Outdoors - Last chance for sun and sand; trails



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Winter (January – March)

- Plan your stay – for spring and summer
- Mention of events planned for spring and summer
- Quiet time for visiting – listing of what's open; outdoor activities

Spring – (April – June)

- Exciting – full blown Welcome Back!
- Update on the "State of the Town"
- Promote Safecation (if needed)
- Promote events (if applicable)

Summer (July-September)

- Come for the Fall
- Promote day tripping
- Promote Safecation (if needed)
- Booking last minute stays

- AF - We don't know what the fall and winter will bring so things can change and we have to take things a step at a time. We will speak to events based on what we know.
- DB asked when the survey info from the Health Department will be ready. AF - This week. DB – I have been speaking to the business owners and they don't know what to do. AF – we are trying to get more info more information.
- AF updated the VSB on print advertising. Suggested to stay with Boston Spirit. There are places we normally participate (NE traveler) we will forgo that this year. We can forgo American Bus Association.
- SA stated that she needs to leave for another meeting at 2pm.
 - Shared that Yankee Magazine included 85 best things to do in NE and included the beautiful sunsets at race point, whale watching and retail and the dune shacks. And the Dunes are still open through October.
 - We might want to capitalize on the article Boston Globe about the Wampanoags.
 - Stellwagen bank is back up and in planning.

(Susan exits the meeting 2:02.)

- DW – There has been a shift in the demographics to more family and kids. They are here and what are we going to keep them here. AF – They are included in the general tourism campaign and will continue to be included. There will be a strong effort beginning January to push the LGBTQ. We are bringing our demographic down to the 20's.
- DB asked if we are marketing anything about Provincetown 400. AF – everything is canceled except the fireworks.
- SH – Are they still lighting the monument early? AF – it seems so. Our radio ads run through October
- NC asked about the Lobster Pot Tree
- Radu Luca answered – I spoke with the Popko family and as of right now they don't know what will happen. If there is one, there will not be an event associated with it and they will inquire with the Town of what they can and cannot do.
- SH – In your packet you sent in the executive summary. Can you explain winter? And can things change if we need to? AF - Yes, for the purpose of a strategy, this is the plan and we can change it.
- AF – We have a lot to watch and listen. Many events may be canceled. We want everyone to visit and we want the LGBTQ to return.



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- DB – There were a fair amount of people who have not been to Ptown and it was a big plus of the Town coming together with everyone with masks and rules being followed.
- DW – It seems like 2nd home owners are staying longer and sales are faster. It seems that people are staying longer. Real estate is through the roof. It seems like there will be more people in town throughout the winter and next spring.
- AF – there will be a concern about what the businesses will do. We have a feeling that there not be much to do this winter.

DB - Recommended motion to approve the fiscal year 2021 marketing strategy

DW – 2nd

Discussion:

- AS - I saw two masks that people say wear masks but the ads don't have photos. As it gets darker earlier people are not wearing masks and are inebriated. I think people are coming in from unsafe places and not quarantining. We ask people to come here but I don't feel safe. And I stay close to home. I don't know the answer and this isn't over.
- AF – Our social media comments have been very positive about how safe they felt. We have also received emails from many visitors of how impressed they were. We receive one from a mayor from MA and they were so impressed on our implementation. And yes, we do see people who don't wear a mask and it's usually when eating/drinking. We don't have control over everyone and we need to keep marketing. The more we do it, the more we enforce it.
- DW – It is more the exception that it haven't worked well and hopefully we will now see a difference.

Motion to approve the fiscal year 2021 marketing strategy

Motion: DB 2nd – DW Vote: 5-0-0

Roll Call: RC – yes; AS – yes; DB – yes; DW – Yes; SH yes

(AF Director's report continued)

- Current Campaign activity:
 - SEO – MultiView had a smaller percentage of google
 - Key words – not a large LGBTQ keyword search but we are working on that
 - Ads and brand ID has transitioned to be in line with our website
 - Ads – most successful were LGBTQ
 - Our click through rates are higher than expected

Public Relations

- Great working with ConranPR
- The photographer for T&L is coming in September. We have been getting steady responses to our press releases.

Print

- The sponsored content in Boston Spirit was supposed to run in February but we waited until July. It has been getting a great response and we boosted it through MultiView.
- We want to do a spread in their winter issue.



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DW Recommended motion to authorize \$6,100.00 for Boston Spirit Magazine

RC – 2nd

Discussion:

- DB – when is the ad copy due? AF - story will be written by Conran and it will be about booking your vacation. Everett Potter will be writing it.
- DB – I find it will be difficult to make a story with so many unknowns.
- RC – when are ads due? AF – 2/15 for march/april and 5/1 for may/june

Motion to authorize \$6,100.00 for Boston Spirit Magazine

Motion: DB 2nd – RC Vote: 5-0-0

Roll Call: RC – yes; AS – yes; DB – yes; DW – Yes; SH yes

- AF – I’m laying out the document for the 5-year plan would you like to begin discussion? The budget went in to \$915,000 and then it was \$840,000 and now it’s \$705,000 but is there a number you would like to start working with?
 - DB – I would go forward with the original \$915,000
 - RC – I agree
 - AS – I agree
 - SH – I agree
 - DW – I agree

Board Statements

- RC – Thank you David and David for stepping up. Thank you to the tourism department have continued to maintain professionalism while going through this. The times coming up is going to be challenging. Everyone here in Town has been through unbelievable stress. We need to need to encourage to shop/eat/stay locally. And continue to follow safety and be patient if businesses can’t accommodate be sensitive. Shout out to Kenny – thank you for being such an amazing ambassador to the Town.
- AS – thank you to DB, DW and RC. I would like to thank Kenny – the best Town crier we have ever had. I would we need to keep up with our due diligence. I want to make sure everyone is safe and we need to keep our nose to the grindstone.
- DB – thank you for voting for me today. I hope to continue the work that Jay and Rick has done and continue to work on this Town up from Tourism. I hope we have plans to bring events back next year. It’s been in a real joy working for this board. It is great to have a shout out to Kenny – a wonderful Town Crier.
- DW – Thank you and RC – for supporting me and being my coach. I want to note that I am the arts representative and try in advance to figure out what 2021 is going to look like. They are trying to plan for 2021 and open but probably in a smaller scale.
- SH – Congrats David and Regina. It’s going to be a challenging fall and we don’t know what will happen next year. We need to be able to visit. And bring back the Gays!

Motion to adjourn at 2:55pm

Motion: AS 2nd: RC Vote:

Roll Call: RC – yes; AS – yes; DB – yes; DW – Yes; SH – yes

Respectfully Submitted,

Nina Cantor
Assistant Director of Tourism