

**Visitor Services Board
Meeting Minutes
October 2, 2007, 10:00 a.m.
Auditorium**

Members present: Peter Bez, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Laurel Guadazno, Michael Peregon, Mick Rudd, Rita “Hersh” Schwartz, and Rob Tosner.

Member absent: None

Staff: David Gardner

Others: Mary Jo Avellar (arr 10:40a), Lisa Bowden, Michele Couture (arr 10:55a), and Patricia Fitzpatrick (arr 10:15a),

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

Public Statements

Lisa Bowden updated the group on the walking tour and thanked Laurel for all her ideas on the street and art project for the streetscape.

Waterfront Memorial Park improvements update.

This agenda item was tabled since there is still no revised plan. Patrick Eleey will be revising the plan per the direction of the VSB and will be complying a specific cost estimate.

David Gardner will move forward on scheduling the item with the Board of Selectmen at their next available meeting.

FY09 Tourism Grant Agreements and Review Process

The discussion at a previous meeting made quite a few changes in the grant agreement form, i.e., the guidelines should not make any reference to scoring, the time constraints of the final submission, etc. The discussion continued and David said that in the past the meetings that considered the grant agreements were published as public hearings and yet the public was not allowed any input – thus – it was thought that these meetings should be listed as a regular meeting and not a public hearing.

After a thorough exchange on #s 5, 6, and 8 – yet another redo of the form was decided upon.

David G. also told the group that there are two types of grants – promotional and coop grant agreements. A 5 yr plan was approved in April and we executed the promotional plan. The coop plan does request applicants to make the final disposition by June 30th.

Rob said that he does not want to micro manage the two organizations. His feeling is that the money should be spent the best way to promote Provincetown. Specifically the grant says that the organization is given x number of dollars for marketing but it doesn’t cover staff ; Rob says it should say **any marketing expense** for promotion. It was Lynn Davies’ opinion that it shouldn’t be used for making money for the organization. The difference in the thinking now is that anything for Provincetown’s promotion is O.K. The big objection initially was that the money shouldn’t be used towards income producing promotions, i.e., selling ads in brochures, etc. but good sense finds that anything that puts Provincetown on the map is great and increases tourism. We need to renegotiate this agreement and the reasons for it. David says that we can go forward with the current grants that we have and this is why we paid the PBG for their brochure.

Rob said, “We have to make a decision and if we feel that they can make money with their brochure along with promoting Provincetown – what’s the problem?” Rob posed a question to the Board..... So - do we allow the coop grants to spend appropriately? “Because of the money Candy didn’t spend - is there any way we can let her have that money?” Hersh asked. Rob repeated that the money is there to promote tourism and that’s what the Chamber does.

Technically – there was never a coop agreement issued to either organization. We talked to Michelle Jarusiewicz about

this and followed through with getting an FY07 agreement signed. David is working with Candy to get a proper grant agreement signed. It has to be on file in case of an audit. The BoS agreed to the 5 yr plan and the two organizations acted in good faith when they requested the monies. Mick said he heard the word “advertisement” in the language and that should be reworded – the agreement needs to reflect that it’s for promotion of Provincetown.

David promised that he will sit down with Michelle and try to clean up the coop agreements; above all David said that we don’t want to create another form! Let’s look into the situation and then do it bureaucratically.

Motion: Take the appropriate measures to give the Chamber of Commerce the balance of their FY07 grant.

Motion: Hersh Schwartz Seconded: Michael Peregon Vote: 7-0-0.

At 10:50 a.m. MaryJo Avellar and Michelle Couture came in to report that there is no funding for the public restrooms in Provincetown (per the DPW budget) as of last night. MaryJo was concerned because two people had approached her at the Grand Union regarding the budget shortage and restroom closures. She was told by the DPW that our restrooms will not be open until July 1st of next year, which means they will not be available for visitors during the remaining busy weeks of Columbus Day, Women’s Week, Fantasia Fair and the remaining busy tour bus season.

Rob wanted to know if the DPW presented this problem at their budget hearing? Michael Peregon noted that the DPW’s budget rose significantly and he wondered - where did that money go? Certainly not into restroom staffing. Mick Rudd said that we should focus on the next three weeks since that is the immediate crisis. Peter Bez said that we were hoping that if we had extra money, we’d use it for the waterfront park.

Group Tour Consultant Proposal

Patricia Fitzpatrick handed something out and Michael Peregon said that it appeared to be a proposal for us to spend \$15K for your services. There would have to be a Request for Proposal (RFP) and we’re not going to vote on this. Pat assured Michael that it was just a discussion. Pat regaled the group with her many talents and abilities for the next 35 minutes. She’s been in the tourist industry for the past 25 years and is very knowledgeable; told them where the previous tourism director was lacking, and pounded on the fact that she had the real expertise. She said that ideally she would like to be engaged to train the new tourism director in the American Bus Association (ABA), and the Receptive Services Association (RSA). She even offered to share her expertise – for free!

She had previously secured time on the Town Manager’s calendar and Sharon Lynn suggested she present her ideas to the VSB.

Tourism Director’s Report

Rob T. said that the new Town position replacing the Tourism Assistant will be advertised as a full time Assistant Town clerk. The budget is in place and the next tourism director will make the decision on whether he needs staff. Sharon has asked Rob to sit in on the interviews and when we’re down to 2 or 3 candidates – they will then come before the VSB and we’ll make our recommendations. The initial interviews are starting tomorrow. David once again cautioned that it’s not the VSB’s decision . Sharon will seek your recommendations and then make her decision. David anticipates interviews will have to go into next week and our next meeting is the following Tuesday.

David informed the group that the tourism office has now been moved to the old library building on the 3rd fl. Seashore Pointe will soon be vacating the 1st floor and the Historical archives will be on the 2nd floor. This was worked out before David came on board. Bill Schneider had gone over to the library and had chosen the spot on the third floor. David said, “You’re here now (in the Auditorium) because we have a shortage of meeting spaces.” We are also hiring a housing specialist and we’re looking for a space for him. The tourism office will have to have limited access because of a security problem. Laurel thinks the tourism office should be on the ground floor and readily accessible to the general public. David thought – for the purpose of informing tourists – the lobby at Town Hall has to be maintained. The new tourism director will be located in the Freeman Street building but David said that no definite decision has been made.

Motion: Move to recommend that the tourism office remain in town hall in the location designated as Meeting Room A – and if necessary – move the tourism office to the Freeman Street building on the first floor.

Motion: Rob Tosner Seconded: Peter Bez Vote: 7-0-0.

Local Room Occupancy Excise Tax – Receipts by Quarter

A report was handed out to all and was very encouraging. Rob Tosner felt that the VSB should do a press release on

the report. David will look into it.

Tour Guide Appreciation Day

“Lisa Bowden is helping us organize this,” David said. They have also enlisted Diane Corbo to help with this. We meet again tomorrow to identify venues and will take the group to the Art House and will be talking about the Art in Windows project, etc. Also they have identified the Unitarian Universalist Meeting House and Whaler’s Wharf as two areas of the tour. Joy McNulty has reached out for the luncheon portion and was the low bid. The group will come to a close with a tour of the Monument.

The Provincetown Harbor Lights grant did not occur this year so the money carries over.

David said that he also had three contracts to present to the VSB and they resulted in the following motions:

Motion: Move to approve the 12 month contract with Panorama Magazine in the amount of \$10,768 from the FY08 marketing budget.

Motion: Peter Bez Seconded: Rob Tosner Vote: 7-0-0.

Motion: Move to approve the 12 month contract with Curve Magazine in the amount of \$5,386 from the FY08 marketing budget.

Motion: Peter Bez Seconded: Hersh Schwartz Vote: 7-0-0.

Motion: Move to approve the 12 month contract with ARTnews Magazine in the amount of \$14,850 from the FY08 marketing budget.

Motion: Peter Bez Seconded: Hersh Schwartz Vote: 7-0-0.

Approval of Minutes of September 18, 2007 meeting

Motion: Approve the minutes of the September 18th meeting.

Motion: Laurel Guadagno Seconded: Kathleen Fitzgerald

Vote: 5 in favor 0 opposed 2 abstentions (LG and RT)

Old Business

Rob wants an update on both the Ecotourism and GLBT Video News Release (VNR) for the next meeting.

Michael Peregón reported on his Sign Committee; they have passed on their list of parking and restroom signage to the DPW. The rough estimate is \$5K.

New Business

Mick was asked to follow through with MaryJo on the restroom issue.

Adjournment happened at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Gaudiano

E. Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ on _____ 2007

Rob Tosner, Chair