

**TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN
VISITOR SERVICES BOARD**

MONDAY, August 1, 2005

JUDGE WELSH HEARING ROOM

Chairman Lynne Davies convened the meeting at 11:02 a.m. noting the following attendees:

VSB members: Lynne Davies, Chairman; Peter Bez; Kathleen Fitzgerald; Laurel Guadazno; Michael Peregon; Mick Rudd; Hersh Schwartz

Other attendees: Bill Schneider, Acting Tourism Director; Michelle Jarusiewicz, Acting Assistant Town Manager and Grant Administrator; Winthrop Smith, Economic Development Task Force; Candace Collins-Boden, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce

Recorder: Cynthia Curran

The following are meeting minutes, in brief:

APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF 7/25/05

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of the July 25, 2005 VSB meeting as amended.

Motion by: Peter Bez Seconded by: Laurel Guadazno **Yea 6 Nay 0 Abstain 1 (MR)**

Chairman Lynne Davies said she didn't have a budget update because she was waiting for the month end budget figures. She said that there was an article on the VSB in the Banner and she has received positive feedback about it. Ms. Davies also distributed a task calendar for the VSB and a handout about staffing which was a compilation of what was discussed at the previous meeting. She said that the BOS would like the VSB to get the "housekeeping stuff" out of the way so that it can focus on larger issues.

Winthrop Smith gave an update from the Economic Development Task Force. He said they had decided on six subcommittees and passed out a list with short descriptions. The six areas are:

1. Branding
2. Honest Broker
3. Lighting up Commercial Street
4. Packaging
5. Cultural Website
6. Cultural Assets

Mr. Smith reviewed these briefly. He said that VSB members are welcome to attend the EDTF meetings. Lynne Davies has been attending some of the meetings and said it can sometimes be difficult because many of the topics discussed are the same as those the VSB is working on or has in the wings. Mr. Smith said that the EDTF will follow through with the Adams grant and may try for another one. He said that right now they are developing ideas, but have no funding. Lynne Davies summed it up by saying that the EDTF is coming up with some great ideas, many of which validate what the VSB has on its plate and that the VSB will continue with its current direction, but be aware of what is being suggested by the EDTF in conjunction with the Adams grant. She asked Bill Schneider to email a list of the EDTF meetings and times to the VSB members so they could attend if interested.

Bill Schneider gave his report. He said that Provincetown has received two requests from companies wanting to film commercials here. He is working on a proposal to develop a film production application permit process. He said that this could be an additional source of income for the Town. The proposal would be voted on by the VSB and then sent on to the BOS for approval.

Mr. Schneider gave more information about advertising with the Boston Phoenix. He said a regular display ad would

be \$942 per insertion. He thought that given their circulation, this was not a good idea. There is also the possibility of a banner ad on their web site. This ad would be linked to a form for a contest. Filling out the form would make one eligible to win two ferry tickets to Provincetown. The third possibility would be sponsoring their back-to-school concerts. Since there isn't much time and it involves setting up a booth at the concerts, he thought that it should not be considered for this year, but perhaps for next year.

The banner ad would run every other week and will cost \$175 per week. The VSB is not locked in and can change the rate of insertion and the ad as needed. It was suggested that the ferry companies might donate the tickets. The ad will also link to the web site to give more information about Provincetown. Hersh Schwartz said that she is still opposed to targeting 18 to 20 year olds. Peter Bez said that people start to come to Provincetown in their 20's and that the Phoenix reaches college students and those a little older.

MOTION: Move to have Bill Schneider move forward with the Phoenix banner ad with an insertion every other week at \$175/week.

Motion by: Laurel Guadagno Seconded by: Peter Bez Yea 6 Nay 1 (HS)

Bill Schneider brought up the ad in the Destinations Travel Guide. Upon further research he did not think that advertising in it would be worthwhile.

MOTION: Move to rescind the motion to advertise in Destinations Travel Guide.

Motion by: Laurel Guadagno Seconded by: Mick Rudd Yea 7 Nay 0

Mr. Schneider has also re-negotiated an advertising contract with *Instinct Magazine*. He is working with the PBG to prevent overlapping ads.

The Tourism Office has pre-registered for the '06 American Bus Association International Conference. Mr. Schneider requested approval of his travel expenses for the show.

MOTION: Move to approve travel expenses of \$1,700.00 for the '06 American Bus Association International Conference.

Motion by: Peter Bez Seconded by: Hersh Schwartz Yea 7 Nay 0

Lynne Davies next brought up the co-op advertising grants with the PBG and the Chamber of Commerce. The VSB had originally voted to remove the matching aspect of the grants because they were a hardship for the Chamber of Commerce. The BOS suggested changing the grant so that \$6000.00 would have to be matched, of the \$10,000.00.

MOTION: Move to recommend the Board of Selectmen award grant agreements to the Provincetown Business Guild and Provincetown Chamber of Commerce for \$10,000 for each organization for FY 06 cooperative advertising; provided that said grant shall be matched by an expense of at least \$6,000 by each organization.

Motion by: Peter Bez Seconded by: Hersh Schwartz Yea 7 Nay 0

Bill Schneider said that PRNewswire could perhaps provide additional services, especially regarding travel writers. This subject will be re-visited and the Board would like to know more about what they could do,

Lynne Davies suggested that Michael Patrick Communications be invited to the VSB to give general information about what a public relations firm does. This might help in writing the RFP. Michael Peregou felt that this might give an unfair advantage to MPC if they later submitted a proposal. Michelle Jarusiewicz said that sometimes contractors working for the Town did supply her with information, so it was not necessarily a conflict of interest. She said that it would have to be handled carefully. She said that the VSB must tell the PR firms what the Town is looking for. There must be very clear reasons why one firm is chosen over another. Mr. Rudd suggested that perhaps the VSB should go right to the RFP process. Lynne Davies asked Bill Schneider and Michelle Jarusiewicz to draft an RFP for a public relations firm. Mick Rudd also suggested that copies of the RFP's that Falmouth and the Cape Cod Chamber of

Commerce used could be requested as references. It was also suggested that other people in town, such as heads of non-profit organizations or former public relations people, might look over the draft RFP and give suggestions.

Michael Peregon asked if the Town employed any other PR firms to see if the VSB could “piggy-back”. It does not. Mick Rudd, Lynne Davies and other VSB members explained that the VSB was the only Town entity that actively advertised the Town. Lynne Davies said that the VSB should move ahead with the process for the selection of a Tourism Office head, a PR firm and other identified staffing entities so that things could be put into motion quickly once the BOS approves the staffing plan and other members agreed.

Candace Collins-Boden thought that the primary purpose of a public relations firm is to get travel writers to come to Provincetown. She said travel writers can get the word out all over the world. The Town had a PR firm about ten years ago and it was very helpful.

Referring to the list of EDTF suggestions, Lynne Davies said that the “Honest Broker” should be a unifier of different groups. She also suggested the possibility of hiring a part-time person to work on putting together travel packages as part of the strategic staffing plan and asked the members to think about it for the next meeting. She said that the Tourism Office is in the best position to be the honest broker for the whole town. Mick Rudd said that the government is required to represent the entire tourism industry as an over-arching meeting ground.

It was suggested that having a “Waiter Appreciation Day” at the beginning of the season might be a good idea. Candace Collins-Boden said that the surveys she has been doing indicate that customer service is going downhill. She said that in the past there have been training sessions for employees, but that these sometimes caused resentment. She thought that an appreciation day was a better idea. Mick Rudd thought that something could be developed with input from business owners. Lynne Davies said this was an excellent topic to pursue however, that the meeting time had already gone over by 20 minutes, the discussion would be tabled for two weeks.

NEXT MEETING: Monday, August 8th 11:00 a.m.

(The next meeting will be a two-hour meeting.)

The meeting was adjourned at 12:24 p.m..

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