

TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

VISITOR SERVICES BOARD

MEETING MINUTES OF AUGUST 29, 2000

Meeting Held in Judge Welsh Room, Town Hall

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Members Present: Steve Melamed (Chair), Barbara Rushmore (Vice-Chair), Hunter O'Hanian, Joan Lenane, Dana Henricksen, Rob Tosner

Members Absent: None

Others Present: Pat Fitzpatrick (Tourism Director), Rachel Crosby (Recording Secretary), Ms Collins-Boden and Mr. Harrison from the Chamber of Commerce.

Call to Order: Chair Steve Melamed called the Meeting to order at 11:00 A.M.

REGULAR MEETING

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 8, 2000 – *Joan Lenane moved to approve, Dana Henricksen seconded and it was so voted, 4-0, 1 absent (Hunter O'Hanian), 1 abstain (Rob Tosner)*

May 9, 2000 – *postponed until reconstructed by Steve Melamed.*

Hunter O'Hanian arrived at 11:02 AM.

PUBLIC STATEMENTS –

- ◆ Tom Walter, one of the owners of Crowne Pointe Guesthouse, spoke as a citizen and business owner concerning how the Tourism Fund is allocated. Mr. Walter said that he felt that the funds should not be so heavily directed to the Municipal Projects (i.e., the Shuttle and public restroom), but rather should more directly benefit the businesses collecting the tax and the guests paying the tax. Mr. Walter inquired concerning whether a marketing study had been done to determine who is paying the room tax. Steve Melamed responded by advising Mr. Walter of the upcoming Public Hearing on the Visitor Services Board Five Year Plan and also explained the mission and activities of the Visitor Services Board. Ms Rushmore also explained that the Selectmen have the final say in how the Tourism Fund monies are spent. The Board discussed various aspects of the tourism economy and the demographics of Provincetown's overnight and day visitors. Ms Collins-Boden commented on the Shuttle's ridership and its impact on the room tax and economy.

TOURISM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms Fitzpatrick distributed a copy of her report and discussed the contents, including:

- The Tourism Office has been contacted by the Falmouth Historical Society concerning the arrival of a Viking ship in September.
- Pat Fitzpatrick has joined the National Tourist Association on behalf of the Town
- The 2nd annual Tour Guide Day has been posted.
- The Tourism Office has been tracking phone inquiries concerning means of transportation to Provincetown.
- Resort Community Summit dates have been set for Spring 2001. Key West representatives have expressed excitement about the Summit and will participate. Other communities are also showing interest. Mr. Bergman is also enthusiastic.
- Pat Fitzpatrick will be attending the Boston Fair in September.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Vacation Packaging – Pat Fitzpatrick reported that there had not yet been a response to the Banner advertisement seeking interested parties.
2. Grant Guidelines – have submitted their recommendations in writing.

OLD BUSINESS

Five Year Financial Plan for Tourism Fund Expenditures – Joan Lenane commented on the need to clearly identify who the Provincetown visitors are – to consult with organizations such as the PBG and the Chamber of Commerce to gather data. Steve Melamed said he felt that the visitor base was extremely diverse and said that he felt that the Visitor Services Board’s primary concern was to put “heads in beds.” Steve Melamed also said he felt that the bus tours in August did not significantly add to the economy.

Mr. Tosner commented on items in the Five Year Plan and asked several questions, including:

- ◆ and why the Tourism Fund was identified in the Plan as a funding source MacMillan Pier restrooms.
- ◆ about other Municipal purpose items in the draft plan.
- ◆ recommended that funds be available for sustained support for grant recipients, rather than just for seed money
- ◆ supported Beautification Projects

Joan Lenane commented on items in the Five Year Plan and/or asked about the following:

- ◆ how much was being spent by the Town (from other than Tourism Funds) on public restrooms.
- ◆ Fireworks – have them at a non-traditional time of the year
- ◆ Need to maintain high level of funding for marketing
- ◆ Reserve for lean times – cautioned that the Town will attempt to appropriate if municipal finances are generally in jeopardy
- ◆ Supported Beautification Projects, but asked that there be some long-term vision

Barbara Rushmore commented on items in the Five Year Plan and/or asked about the following:

- ◆ The Shuttle – Truro is benefiting and need to share more of the cost
- ◆ Develop a list of Municipal Projects, perhaps hold Public Hearings, and then make specific recommendations to Selectmen
- ◆ Conwell Street congestion – need a sidewalk from Route 6 to Cemetery Road
- ◆ Brick sidewalks – allocate \$25K annually to completely extend sidewalks to the end of Town in both directions
- ◆ Ryder Street – more benches and trees
- ◆ Build a walkway up Monument Hill
- ◆ More trees in parking lots
- ◆ Basketball court on beach in West End
- ◆ Windmill at burn dump
- ◆ Town landings improved – more signs, benches, etc.
- ◆ Wooden fence around MPL
- ◆ Gazebo bandstand near Bas Relief
- ◆ Telephone wires underground in center of Town – remove telephone poles
- ◆ Connect posts on Cemetery Road
- ◆ Intersection of Standish and Bradford Street – make it safer and more defined

Dana Henricksen commented on and/or asked about the following:

- ◆ Marketing percentage is too low (only 8%)

Bob Harrison commented that the Town had a history of creating plans, doing studies, etc. and then not acting upon them.

Pat Fitzpatrick reported on the staff meeting held to develop the Draft Plan and said that she also felt it was unfair that the room tax monies were so focussed on Municipal Projects. Ms Fitzpatrick also said that she had recommended the creation of a Visitor’s Center with bathrooms in the center of town and a Historic Walking Path.

Mr. Tosner agreed with Joan Lenane’s concerns about the possible eventual use of a Reserve Fund by the Town to offset hard times.

Steve Melamed commented items in the Five Year Plan and/or asked about the following:

- ◆ Marketing percentage needs to be increased. Also, should have dedicated amounts/percentages for

specific purposes.

- ◆ Wants \$100K base marketing budget, with specific portions for various purposes and organizations
- ◆ Promotional Budget – return to baseline of \$68,000 from two years previous and use same guidelines to trend forward. Current full-strength would be \$85,000.
- ◆ Do not restrict grant fund use to only seed money – use to provide annual support (in agreement with recommendations from the Guideline Sub-Committee)
- ◆ MacMillan Pier Restrooms – already voted upon by Town Meeting – Board does not have any discretionary powers in use of the money.
- ◆ Restrooms in general – Visitor Services Board should not be involved in funding. Or recommend a cap for annual funding.
- ◆ Fireworks – is personally opposed to expenditure, but is a political disaster to officially recommend against.
- ◆ Long Term Planning – need to have recommendations written up.
- ◆ Beautification Projects – allocate monies annually, but get written recommendations from Beautification Committee.
- ◆ Vacant seat on Visitor Services Board – ask Women Innkeepers if they still want representation.
- ◆ Visitor Center – opposed – does not want to be in building maintenance business
- ◆ Fund Surplus – need recommendation to reduce percentage, perhaps to 5%.

Hunter O'Hanian added the following comments on items in the Five Year Plan:

- ◆ Enabling legislation placed at start of Five Year Plan
- ◆ Create priorities for how Reserve Fund is used
- ◆ Create guidelines for where marketing monies, especially media buys, should be spent.

Barbara Rushmore commented further on various aspects of the Plan, including funding municipal projects, keeping the reserve lower, and a cap on money used for public bathrooms.

Dana Henricksen asked if there were reserve fund percentages for other Town Departments.

The Board discussed how to proceed in summarizing and organizing all the various recommendations/comments for the Five Year Plan. By consensus, the Board agreed to have Rachel Crosby prepare a summary of the recommendations from this and the previous meeting.

Hunter O'Hanian moved to have only the summary recommendations for the Five Year Plan on the agenda for the meeting of September 6, 2000, Dana Henricksen seconded and it was so voted, 6-0.

The Board discussed whether the public will be able to give input at the meeting of September 6, 2000.

Dana Henricksen left the meeting at 12:40 PM.

The Board discussed how to schedule meetings, public hearings, how to present/publicize the recommendations and how to provide public access to the final document.

GENERAL DISCUSSION & NEW BUSINESS

- Discussed in context above.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

- Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, September 6, 2000 at 11:00 AM to develop consensus recommendations.
- Need to give something in writing to Banner on September 11, 2000.
- Draft recommendations finalized at regular monthly meeting on September 12, 2000.
- Public Hearing on Five Year Plan tentatively scheduled for October 3, 2000.

ADJOURNMENT

Rob Tosner moved to adjourn at 12:50 P.M. and it was so voted unanimously.

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These minutes were approved by a vote of the Provincetown Visitor Services Board at their meeting on

_____, 200__

Respectfully Submitted:

Visitor Service Board Signature

Title

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Rachel T. Crosby, On-call secretary