

# TOWN OF PROVINCETOWN

## VISITOR SERVICES BOARD

### MEETING MINUTES OF OCTOBER 10, 2000

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### Meeting Held in Judge Welsh Room, Town Hall

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

**Members Absent:** None

**Others Present:** Mr. Bergman (Town Manager), Pat Fitzpatrick (Tourism Director), Rachel Crosby (Recording Secretary), Ms Collins-Boden 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

September 12, 2000 – *postponed.*

October 3, 2000 (Public Hearing) – *postponed.*

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

### PUBLIC STATEMENTS –

- ◆ Father Andrew of Saint Mary's of the Harbor Church reported on the results of the recent dance/concert weekend events that were partially funded by a Tourism Fund grant in the amount of \$2500 (for which Father Andrew thanked the Board). The Soup Kitchen received a donation of \$300 from the proceeds of the weekend, but the overall revenue did not offset expenses. Father Andrew said that they expected to hold a similar weekend next year and would be applying for another grant. Steve Melamed encouraged Father Andrew to apply again, as most events did not make money in their first year.

### TOURISM DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms Fitzpatrick distributed a copy of her report, October 10, 2000, and discussed the contents with the Board, including:

- No one has yet been designated as the facilitator the **Packaging for Success Seminar**, currently scheduled for November 15, 2000. Twenty-six people have indicated interest in attending. All the transportation providers have indicated that they would be participating. The Board discussed whether the anticipated participation was sufficient to hold the event and whether a paid facilitator needed to be found. Pat Fitzpatrick reported that she had attended a presentation on packaging given by the new President of the National Tourism Association (NTA). The Board discussed other facilitator options, including someone from Massachusetts Office of Tourism (MOT). Pat Fitzpatrick will follow up with phone calls to possible facilitators.
- Provincetown was accepted by the Greater Boston Concierge Association as an Associate Member, which will enhance the Provincetown-Boston connection. Most concierges expect to receive some sort of commission/referral fee for helping visitors make reservations, etc. in Provincetown.
- Pat Fitzpatrick was invited to attend and spoke at a recent meeting of the Cape Cod Motor Coach Committee.

### NOMINATION for WOMEN INNKEEPERS' MEMBER

Sarah Peake appeared and presented the Board with a letter to the Board of Selectmen recommending that Rose Basil be appointed as the Women Innkeepers' member. Ms Peake explained how the Women Innkeepers differed from other guesthouse groups and said that the group existed as a separate legal entity. Ms Peake discussed how the Women

Innkeepers coordinated and sponsored various parts of Women's Week. Rob Tosner said that he would like to see the event opened up to allow participation by other guesthouses. ***Barbara Rushmore moved to appoint Rose Basil as the Women Innkeepers' member of the Board, Joan Lenane seconded, and it was so voted, 6-0.*** All members of the Board were polled for their vote.

## **FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL PLAN FOR TOURISM FUND EXPENDITURES**

Mr. Bergman said that he felt the Public Hearing went well, though he regretted that it had appeared that the staff plan and the Visitor Services Board plan were in competition. Mr. Bergman affirmed that the Board of Selectmen will ultimately only be considering the Visitor Services Board plan. Mr. Bergman also reported that the Federal government had recently awarded the Town sufficient funds to pay for the public restrooms on the Pier, thereby eliminating the need to use Tourism Funds.

Mr. Bergman said that he did not have any objections to spending more money on marketing, but that he felt that the public needed to be kept fully informed on how the extra funds were to be spent.

In response to a question from Hunter O'Hanian, Mr. Bergman clarified that the remaining public restroom(s) funded in the Plan had been voted upon by Town Meeting and the funding was therefore not subject to Visitor Services Board approval.

Barbara Rushmore asked about the Shuttle funding and Mr. Bergman said that there had been no separate Town Meeting vote on how the Shuttle was or will be funded. Mr. Bergman confirmed that the Town will receive a final Shuttle financial reckoning for this year which will determine how much will come from the Tourism Fund. Mr. Bergman said that the Board could still try and reduce the Shuttle funding for this year, but that the appropriation had been a Chamber of Commerce recommendation.

Steve Melamed and Mr. Bergman clarified how the Room Tax revenues were allocated to various purposes, including the Tourism Fund.

Mr. Bergman replied to a question from Barbara Rushmore concerning what would happen if Tourism Fund revenues exceeded expected appropriations, saying that an article could be put into Special Town Meeting to fund additional grants and projects with the surplus funds.

The Board and Mr. Bergman discussed the advisability of maintaining a reserve fund and the percentage to be set for the reserve fund.

The Five Year Plan is on the agenda for the Board of Selectmen's meeting on November 13, 2000.

The Board discussed in detail the financial figures in the Five Year Plan "Appendix A" and "Appendix A1," with Joan Lenane noting how the Visitor Services Board recommendations differed from the staff recommendations.

Hunter O'Hanian discussed the impression he had received from the Public Hearing on October 10<sup>th</sup> that Municipal Projects, such as public restrooms, should not be funded from the Tourism Fund, especially as 55% of the total Room Tax revenues already went to the Town's General Fund. He said that the Visitor Services Board could, despite the Town Meeting vote(s), make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen that such Municipal Projects be removed from the Tourism Fund and the Five Year Plan. Steve Melamed clarified that such recommendation would imply the reversal of the Town Meeting vote(s) and that the Finance Committee, the Board of Selectmen and the Town Administration would not recommend such a reversal. In response to a question from Hunter O'Hanian, the Board members voiced their opinions on attempting to reverse the Town Meeting vote for the MPL restrooms. One option discussed was to promote an Town Meeting article to simply cut the amount allocated to the MPL restrooms and other municipal projects, as opposed to totally reversing the Town Meeting vote(s).

The Board discussed the Shuttle ridership figures as recorded to the end of September 2000 and by consensus, the Board agreed to leave the Shuttle funding as is for this year. Pat Fitzpatrick clarified that the Shuttle money had not yet been spent, that it was encumbered awaiting the final financial reckoning. Joan Lenane referred to a motion passed on the Shuttle funding at the September 6, 2000 meeting. Dana Henricksen recommended footnoting the Shuttle funding line in the Five Year Plan to note that the actual amount of the subsidy was yet to be determined.

***Barbara Rushmore moved that the Visitor Services Board recommend that the final subsidy for the Shuttle in 2001 to be 90% of the previous year's contribution from the Tourism Fund and that the Town raise and appropriate the remaining 10% at the 2002 Town Meeting. Further, if Truro's share is increased or if some of the subsidy is lowered, the Visitor Services Board/Provincetown share would be 90%/10% of the final amount required of Provincetown. The motion did not receive a second.*** Barbara Rushmore asked that she be allowed to present a minority report on this issue to the Selectmen.

Dana Henricksen led a discussion on how the Visitor Services Board's credibility had increased in the past year and how it was important to maintain that credibility by not being too radical in making additional recommendations at this time. Dana Henricksen discussed having a long-range philosophical/conceptual plan that would lead to future opportunities to change the way Tourism Funds are expended.

The Board discussed various changes to the proposed FY 2002 expenditures.

*Steve Melamed moved to:*

1. *Rename the budget line for "Municipal Projects, All Projects Not Listed Separately" to "Fireworks."*
2. *Take \$10,000 from Municipal Projects Not Listed Separately for FY 2002 through FY 2005 and add that same \$10,000 to the Marketing Budget for FY 2002 through FY 2005;*
3. *That, in year FY 2006, \$15,000 be taken from Fireworks budget line, with \$10,000 going to Marketing and \$5,000 to Promotions for that year;*
4. *That \$20,000 of the Marketing budget be dedicated for co-op advertising with the Provincetown Business Guild and Chamber of Commerce, with \$10,000 appropriated for each organization, for FY 2002 through FY 2006.*

*Rob Tosner seconded.* The Board discussed the advisability of specifically naming the PBG and Chamber in the part of the motion for co-op advertising. *The Board approved the motion by a vote of 6-0.*

*Dana Henricksen moved that the budget figure used for FY 2002 Shuttle funding be the actual dollar amount reported in the final financial reckoning, not to exceed \$60,000, and that that actual figure then become the cap for future years' shuttle funding. The surplus funds would then split proportionately three ways and transferred to Marketing, Promotions, and Beautification. Barbara Rushmore seconded, and it was so voted, 6-0.*

*Steve Melamed moved to change the name of the Plan's budget line item "Promotions" to "Promotions and Grants," Dana Henricksen seconded, and it was so voted, 6-0.*

*Joan Lenane moved that Pat Fitzpatrick request that the DPW director provide a updated project status report and timetable prior to the November 13, 2000 meeting with the Selectmen, Rob Tosner seconded and it was so voted, 6-0.*

The Board again discussed whether to make an official recommendation on reducing or eliminating the funding for the MPL restrooms. Dana Henricksen suggested footnoting the MPL restrooms line item to state that the money had been allocated by Town Meeting vote(s), and that the Visitor Services Board did not plan to recommend any further funding for restrooms. Dana Henricksen recommended referencing a pertinent motion made at the September 6, 2000 meeting concerning the need to have all future projects of any kind, funded in whole or in part from the Tourism Fund, be brought first to the Visitors Services Board for review.

Hunter O'Hanian reaffirmed his position that municipal projects and purposes (including the Grant Administrator's compensation) paid for out of the Tourism Fund be reduced to an absolute minimum and that he was not concerned about political credibility. Hunter O'Hanian referred to the original Town Meeting article creating the Visitors Services Board, explaining that the Board should take a "purer" approach, truer to the Board's original purpose, in making recommendations on the Five Year Plan.

**OLD BUSINESS** – discussed as part of Five Year Plan.

**GENERAL DISCUSSION & NEW BUSINESS**

- Discussed in context above.

**CLOSING STATEMENTS**

- Next meeting date is tentatively scheduled for October 31, 2000.
- Joan Lenane recommended that the Grant Administrator be strongly encouraged to attend every Visitors Services Board meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT**

*Rob Tosner moved to adjourn at 1:44 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:

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Visitor Service Board Signature

Title

**Rachel T. Crosby**, On-call secretary