

**Talbot County Tourism Board  
Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, May 10, 2018**

**8:00 a.m.**

**215 Bay Street, Conference Room #1, Easton, MD 21601**

**I. Call to Order**

Vice-chairperson Kimberly Weller called the meeting to order at 8:04 a.m.

**Board Members Present:** Kelley Cox, Angela Eade, Ian Fleming, Tracey Johns, Dolores Jones, Harold Klinger, Laura Price, Jeff Schneider, Al Silverstein, Cassandra Vanhooser, Waitman Vanorsdale, and Kimberly Weller

**Board Members Absent:** Judy Bixler, John Booth, Ben Simons

**Recording Secretary:** Candace Harris

**Visitors:** Ryan Snow

**II. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes from the April meeting were presented. Al Silverstein moved that the minutes be accepted as written. Dolores Jones seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

**III. Old Business**

**2018 Travel Guide:** Ms. Vanhooser distributed the 2018 Travel Guide. She reported that 23,000 were sent to the subscribers of *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*. The office has distributed all but one box of the 2017 Travel Guide, of which 50,000 copies were printed. Ms. Vanhooser noted that she is considering increasing the number of guides printed for next year and that the decision depends on how many we give out this year.

The Ferry is on the cover in 2018 in celebration of its 335th anniversary. Dolores Jones asked how many guides are being downloaded from the website. Ms. Vanhooser said that she has requested that tracking be added by our web developers, but she is unsure of the numbers. The *Chesapeake Bay Magazine* sales person sold more ads this year. We also changed our listings around, which she thinks is much better and easier to use. We added the icons and darker print. We are very pleased with the product.

The staff will be delivering guides to all the hotels. Ms. Vanhooser mentioned that a couple came in the Visitors Center and noticed the guide was old. She offered to drop off the new one when it was delivered, but they said they would come back and get it. Ms. Vanhooser reinforced the fact that visitors still want printed products. The State Office of

Tourism has reported that Millennials want printed products too. We mail out about 12,000 guides a year for leads generated by our co-op advertising. The guide will be linked to the website site as soon as we receive it from *Chesapeake Bay Magazine*.

**Restaurant Week:** Ms. Vanhooser reported on expenditures for Restaurant Week. She discussed her advertising strategy, noting that she has streamlined her advertising with more digital ads. She still advertises in local radio and newspaper. This year, we recorded radio interviews with a number of chefs and ran them on WCEI. We do have a restaurant week website.

Ms. Vanhooser also asked that the Board set the dates for Restaurant Week for 2019, which is our 10<sup>th</sup> year. She recommended April 7-13, as Easter is very late next year. Ms. Vanhooser, Ms. Jones, and Mr. Fleming have already met to discuss some ideas for next year, including an idea from School Superintendent Kelly Griffith suggesting that we invite the culinary students to be guest chefs. We have sent out a survey to the restaurants, but we do not have a lot of participation in the survey yet. Al Silverstein made a motion to accept Ms. Vanhooser's recommendation and set April 7-13 as the dates for Restaurant Week 2019. Jeff Schneider seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous vote.

#### IV. New Business

**St. Michaels Water Trails Map:** Ms. Vanhooser reported the St. Michaels Water Trails map is currently being recreated because Economy Printing refused to return clients' original documents when they closed. Joanne Shipley is working on recreating this very popular piece of collateral now. She also announced that she and Preston will soon begin to work with Lisa Gutierrez at DNR on an Oxford Water Trails Map. This will give us maps for St. Michaels, Tilghman Island, and Oxford. We are also in the queue with Caroline County to do a Tuckahoe / Upper Choptank Water Trails Map. She will expect it will take 2 to 3 years to get both of those done.

**Bike Maps:** We are also planning to reprint our bike maps. We will be having a conversation on how to transition the bike map to a digital format. Jeff Schneider asked if we will be getting rid of the print product of the bike map. Ms. Vanhooser said that we will not discontinue this piece as it is very popular.

**Frederick Douglass Website:** We have new rack cards for the Frederick Douglass website. We will be working in the future to make the Frederick Douglass website into a print product.

**Hill Community Project:** Ms. Vanhooser reported that we received a \$50,000 grant to do banners, a walking tour map of the Hill, and a website. This is all supposed to be done by the Juneteenth celebration, but she is not hopeful that it will all be done by then.

**Signage Projects:** Ms. Vanhooser reported that we are working with Nace Hopkins family in Trappe to get signs for the new park and the cemetery there. We have a

contingent in Bellevue that emerged from the Master Plan process who would like interpretive signs about the ferry and the canning history in Bellevue. There is a gentleman who wants to pay for the Welcome to Bellevue sign to be put up, and we are working with State Highway on that project.

Frederick Douglass Park on the Tuckahoe project is moving forward. The State Office of Tourism Development is helping Cassandra put together the interpretive panels for the kiosks. Preston and Cassandra are getting bids for engineering studies for the overlooks and the parking lot. We will be forming a committee to work on this project. We have an aggressive time line on that to have this done by Frederick Douglass Day. Ms. Vanhooser noted that this is going to be a busy summer!

**Business Appreciation Breakfast:** Ryan Snow reported that we had a very successful Business Appreciation Breakfast. We had a total of 192 guests, including Deputy Secretary of the Maryland Department of Commerce Benjamin Wu who was our guest speaker. Everyone loved the videos. We thank Sam and MC TV for an amazing job on the videos. We spent the entire day with Deputy Secretary Wu and organized a number of business retention visits with him. Mr. Wu said that he thought it was great to combine Tourism and Economic Development. Cassandra was most proud that we had two award winners from the Tourism Industry.

#### **V. Town Reports**

Representatives from each of the towns reported on news and events taking place in their jurisdictions.

#### **VI. Next Board Meeting**

The next board meeting is scheduled on Wednesday, June 13, 2018.

#### **X. Adjournment**

Ms. Weller thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Al Silverstein motioned for adjournment and Jeff Schneider seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:03 a.m.