

**Talbot County Tourism Board
Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, August 9, 2017

8:30 a.m.

101 Marlboro Avenue, Suite 53, Conference Room #1, Easton, MD 21601

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Judy Bixler called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Board Members Present: Judy Bixler, Kelley Cox, Angela Eade, Ian Fleming, Dolores Jones, Laura Price, Jeff Schneider, Al Silverstein, Cassandra Vanhooser, and Kimberly Weller

Board Members Absent: John Booth, Tracy Johns, Harold Klinger, Ben Simons

Recording Secretary: Candace Harris

Visitors: Samuel Shoge, Ryan Snow

II. Approval of Minutes

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

III. Old Business

Tourism Board Positions: Mr. Corey Pack and Mrs. Laura Price recommended an at large position. The Talbot County Board will recommend that Harold Klinger fill that at large position. Ms. Vanhooser asked the board to bring recommendations to the next meeting of individuals to fill the Hotel/Motel board position.

Frederick Douglass 2018: Ms. Vanhooser reported to the Board about the plans for the Frederick Douglass 200th Birthday Celebration. The first meeting has been planned for August 10 at 5 p.m. at the Community Center. We invited a group of people that would be interested in working on the committee to come together to discuss their celebration ideas. The state of Maryland is involved in facilitating celebrations all over Maryland. Ms. Vanhooser reported that she is trying to get an app for the driving brochure. She also reported that she has reconfigured the driving tour by taking off the GPS coordinates and stating that the Wye House is a private residence on the map. The Tilghmans do not want to be listed on the tour. They have said that tour buses come to their property.

Restaurant Week: Ms. Vanhooser reported that we have agreed to remove the launch party and just have Restaurant Week. We looked at the old survey that our office conducted and everyone felt like it was best to have Restaurant Week in March. The board discussed the date to have Restaurant Week and decided March 19-25. Mr. Silverstein motioned to have Restaurant Week on March 19-25 and Ms. Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed by consensus. Ms. Vanhooser also stated that the pricing of \$20.18 for lunch and \$35.18 for dinner does not seem to work. It was decided that Ms. Vanhooser, Ms. Jones and Mr. Fleming would meet to discuss pricing for Restaurant Week.

IV. New Business

Short Term Rentals: Ms. Vanhooser stated that she attended the Chapter 190 Update discussion. She asked queried the Board about the need to take a position on Short-Term Rentals (STRs) as they are a key component of the update.

Mrs. Price stated that they have been having meetings on STRs. She stated that during the meetings it was discussed that potential buyers should not buy property in Talbot County just to rent out. The potential buyer should have a stake in the game. They should be required to live on the property a certain amount of time. She also stated that property owners who want to rent their property as a short-term rental should be licensed. Unfortunately everyone is not. It was suggested that when the property owner wants to advertise their property for rent, they would have to list the license number on the advertisement. If the advertisement doesn't have a license number on it, that is a big red flag for the County to get involved. Mr. Schneider asked who monitors those things. Ms. Weller replied that the Town of St. Michaels monitors them in town. Elisa DeFlaux is in charge of STRs at the County level. Ms. Eade said the problem is that the management companies are not doing their jobs. Rental companies need to use a registered agent. You should meet the guests at the homes and go through the rules with the clients.

Mr. Silverstein stated that he thinks we should create a subcommittee to take a look at the STR problems, then come back to make a recommendation to the Board. The Board would then make a recommendation to the County Council. Mr. Schneider made a motion to create a committee to examine the issues and Dolores Jones seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Silverstein, Ms. Weller, Ms. Eade, Mr. Schenider and Ms. Jones volunteered to work on the subcommittee to take a look at the problems regarding short-term rentals.

Tourism Office Visitor Numbers: Ms. Vanhooser distributed the numbers for the Tourism Office visitor sign in sheet to the Board. She stated that from the numbers most of visitors are coming from Maryland, Virginia, Washington, D.C., Pennsylvania and New Jersey. These numbers are not exact because not everyone signs in, but it gives the Board a sense of the locations from which our visitors come.

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, September 20, 2017, at 8:30 a.m. The meeting was changed because Ms. Vanhooser will be away the week of the regularly scheduled meeting.

X. Adjournment

Ms. Bixler thanked everyone for coming to the meeting. Dolores Jones motioned for adjournment and Jeff Schneider seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:30 a.m.

DRAFT