



**Town of Provincetown**  
**The Visitor Services Board**  
**Minutes – October 1, 2018, 3 p.m.**  
**Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room**  
**260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA**

**Start Time: 3:00**

**Attending** – Rick Murray, Chair; Lesley Marchessault, Vice Chair; Jay Gurewitsch, At Large; Susan Avellar, At Large; Andrea Sawyer, At Large; Robert Sanborn, At Large

**Staff:** Anthony Fuccillo, Director of Tourism; Nina McCormack, Assistant Director of Tourism

**Absent:** Regina Cassidy, At Large

**Minutes:**

**1. Public Statements - Board members are not obligated to respond to public statements**

Robin Lapidus, Executive Director, Provincetown Business Guild Board

- RL attended the Massachusetts Chamber of Commerce meeting. The Provincetown Business Guild is now a strategic Partner and is building new relationships with the corporate members. RL will work with her members to confirm that 51% are LGBTQ owned business.

David Panagore, Town Manager, Town of Provincetown

- RM thanked DP for helping to expedite the web process and asked if he has any thoughts regarding the committee's first choice of vendors.
- DP felt the committee selected the top 3 vendors and it's a solid price, while others bids were open ended. The vender will give the town the best possible product.
- While the bid is for more than the budget allotted, there are funds available
- Our tourism economy is \$200 million plus. Things are much more digital and clearly we have a price point that makes marketing more important than it ever has been before.
- You have the funding available if you chose to go that direction and you don't have to go back to Town.
- Rm thanked DP for his thoughts.

**2. Discussion – First Light and Fireworks**

Robin Lapidus, Executive Director, Provincetown Business Guild Board join in the discussion.

Discussion included:

- RL indicated that Holly Folly promotional pieces are completed and the PBG is now working on First Light promotional materials. First light is very weather dependent which can be stressful. For a small town with a visitor population we don't want to make mistakes. There will be warming stations this year.
- RL met with AF, NM and DP to brainstorm. AF is following up with the budget from the Finance Director
- AF stated that the "Holiday Fireworks and Events" accounts can be used for something other than fireworks. The fireworks cost \$15,000 but that doesn't include DPW and Security.
- RL – Wouldn't it be great to tie Holly Folly to First Light to get people to hear about Provincetown and a month long event would be more press worthy. If we were to ask people to drive to Town for a winter festival or carnival, should we have a lighting event? People drive to Town, go shopping, eat dinner, and stay overnight. We have found that some business owners want to close from Thanksgiving to Christmas but the PBG wants to build infrastructure.
- RM stated that its 90 days away and it has grown in the last three years. It was our intention to do two or three signature events and stay open. Are we going in a different direction?
- AF – this is being brought forth by the PBG – They want to see their options... is fireworks really a draw?

- RL – nothing will change this year... it's a process of ideas as to what will stay open. When the calendars change (and holidays fall mid-week) it makes it difficult. Last year we had very few people in town. This year we polled everyone to make a choice about the fireworks.
- RM – you are constricted by the calendar... I want to stress that it was fireworks that brought people to town. I would strongly encourage not to change from the fireworks.
- SA – Fireworks bring people in to dine, shop and see fireworks. Did you query the police department about how many people came to town? People are here for the holiday weekend. And we jump into Holly Folly and Canteen, who is also open during that time? And then Christmas into New Year... you have a wider space to think about. The season is wider than we think and festivities can run together. I think it's a FY19 discussion, not a FY18.
- AS – How many years have we been doing First Light?
- RM – The Town Manager ran a meeting three years ago and the event was then turned over to the PBG for coordination. RM stated that he is not opposed to new ideas... but it may have to be next year.
- LM – likes the idea of extending the season and it seems like we are still compiling info about the fireworks... I not sure about your timeline and bureaucratically things take a long time... so in January/February 2019 we can meet about next year
- RS – I would hate to lose the momentum that we built by altering the fireworks. But we have been lucky with the weekend. Since we are inside the inside the 90 day window, keep the fireworks.
- JG - Robin and I spoke last year... so from a retail point of view if we can have something every weekend in December. Everyone does fireworks. I love the fireworks but I would rather have business opened every weekend.
- RM – We had a cold span but everything sold out! And shows weren't available a few years ago and now there are shows that sell out.
- RL – How do we open up and let people know we are open? The question is what can we do and use to build a 5-year ladder to be sure about events. Will the Lobster Pot be lit?
- RM – 99% of people stay for New Year's Eve... It could be a 4 day weekend. Fireworks on New Year's Eve.
- RL stated that everyone is doing what they did last year... including polar bear plunge.

**RS made a motion to recommend moving the fireworks on the 31<sup>st</sup>. MS second the motion.**

Discussion:

- SA asked why fireworks were held on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January instead of December 31<sup>st</sup>. Can we have them at 12:01?
- AS – I am sensitive to the fact that there are animals that are sensitive to fireworks. I am all for New Year's Eve.

**Motion to recommend moving the fireworks to December 31, 2018**

**Motion: RS                      2<sup>nd</sup>: MS                      Motion Approved: 6-0**

**3. Discussion – NY Times Travel Show**

Robin Lapidus, Executive Director, Provincetown Business Guild Board join in the discussion.

- AF sent out an email to gather the PBG, the Provincetown Chamber of Commerce and the Pilgrim Monument and Provincetown Museum together to discuss the show. The Tourism Department previously met with Red Thread about bringing entertainment from Town to the show.
- RM – years ago, we put a call out to see who wants to go... to see who wants to volunteer. So we are not relying on 2 or 3 people.
- RL – Fred and I attended the show and we sponsored a cocktail party for writers. We split the cost of the media party. This year Man About World has a huge section and is selling booths for \$1500. The PBG is asking the VSB to fund the booth. The PBG would also invest \$1,500 for some type of media event.
- AF – stated that booths are \$3990 and that Man About World is securing 18 booths and offering smaller booths within their section for \$1500 each. When we had the initial conversation about the show, this offer wasn't available.
- RL – last year we were near Vermont... and it was lively and fun. And we held a raffle.

JG made a motion for \$1500 for an additional booth in LGBTQ section. AS – second the motion

Discussion:

- LM asked if the VSB does not authorize the money for the booth, what will the PBG do?
- RL stated that the PBG would just do the booth and no media event.
- AF stated that if the VSB authorizes the booth, the Tourism department will pay the invoice directly to Man about World.
- AS asked where the PBG will get the other funds to cover this? What were the results from last year?
- LP stated that they will not do something else in their plan in order to go to the show. The PGB met with 50 writers and gathered a list of 200 LGBTQ writers many of who covered Pride.

**Recommended motion for \$1500 for an additional booth in LGBTQ section**

**Motion: JG                      2<sup>nd</sup>: AS                      Motion Approved: 6-0**

**4. Website Update-Vendor Selection**

Discussion:

- RM – we so excited and enthusiastic - Do we make an investment with our future? Yes! The Tourism Department has adjusted the budget so we can spend up to \$160,000. I think we have to do this... this is a great investment. They do all aspects of our economy... great messaging. And I hope you concur with the Website Development Committee’s recommendations.
- AF – In order for the Town Manager to move forward, we need to be sure that the funds are available. The site will be built from phone to desktop. Town is a 200 million dollar business between rooms/lodging, food and beverage, and retail. The Tourism economy is large in Provincetown. In order to secure the budget for the project, there are few projects we would eliminate from this year’s plan.
  - Advertising Vehicles – print and billboards = \$35,000
  - Travel/Conference Trade Shows = \$7,200
  - FY’18 Funds Authorized and Encumbered = \$40,000
  - FY’ 19 Possible funds from Marketing #1251 = \$72,000
  - Municipal Tourism Enhancement Projects #1252 = \$50,000

JG made a motion to move the above funds, as explained by town staff, to cover the cost of the contract, LM – second

Discussion:

- SA asked what is community marketing partnership (CMI). AF responded that they hold a conference every year at various locations. The Tourism Department didn’t attend last year but the PBG did attend.
- SA asked if the Boston Concierge group visit Provincetown. AF stated that they do through Bay State Cruises who offer a “Concierge Day” but less and less people are coming.
- RS stated that he respects the recommendation of the selection committee but this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> website in a decade. What assurance do we have that we won’t be doing another website?
- RM responded that their methodology of research is a CEO analysis and a survey of our competition. They use statistical data and they meet the stake holders.
- JG stated that he understand RS’s concerns. They are using word press as their base, and it improves as technology improves. Bellweather Agency understands about the mini communities within a community.
- RS stated that it is great that they will maintain and update the technology but what happens when if we leave them.
- JG sated that we own the site and take all information with us.
- RM stated that he is not as tech savvy but even Beau Jackett, MIS Director for the Town choice this vendor as his first choice.

**Motion to approve \$122,000 for tourism website development**

**Motion: JG                      2<sup>nd</sup>: LM                      Motion Approved: 6-0**

**Motion to rescind the motion for Out Front Media**

**Motion: RM                      2<sup>nd</sup>: JG                      Motion Approved: 6-0**

## 5. Review of 5 Year Plan

The VSB will present the 5 Year Plan to the Select Board on November 13 2018

- Second DRAFT - edits
  - Taking into account the Tourism Fund's three year deposits trend of \$750,305 and the 2018 Rooms Tax Deposits of \$772,203 to the Tourism Fund
  - FY'20 budget will remain \$750,000
  - The VSB recommended a FY'19 budget of \$725,000 up \$25,000 from \$700,000 FY'18 budget
  - The BoS increased the FY'19 budget by an additional \$25,000 bringing the budget to \$750,000
  - The \$25,000 increase was for Tourism Marketing Grants

### Motion to approve the draft framework of 5-Year Plan

Motion: LM                      2<sup>nd</sup>: RS                      Motion Approved: 6-0

## 6. Release of Business Survey and Timeline for Prospectus Survey

- AF stated that the Business Survey will be sent to the Tourism Department on October 3, 2018 and will be reviewed by the Town Manager.

## 7. Department Report

- AF stated that we will be able to produce everything in the current advertising plan except the billboards and Red Thread has been informed.
- FY20 Grants— The grant application site went live October 1, 2018.
- NM stated that every person who has applied in the last year will receive a personal email with information and offering support. The grant application was simplified we are offering to sit down one-on-one with anyone who has difficulty with the application.
- Next step is to set up the matrix for the review process.
- JG asked if there a place for comments/feedback about the new process
- AF stated that the Tourism Department will conduct a survey of all those who applied. Applications close 12/3.
- SA asked if some grants come in earlier than others and would it be possible to have them printed. NM assured that support is available and applications can be printed.

## 8. Board Members' Statements—comments from Board members. Discussion dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken.

- RS stated that he visited the Tourism Twitter feed, Facebook and Instagram feed and asked who is working on social media. AF stated that it was a combination of the office and Red Thread. Everyday comments, postings and sharing are done internally; Boosting and coordination of the handling of advertising and promotion is with Red Thread and Spark Group. RS stated that after looking very briefly, believes there is opportunity for enhancement. We should be tweeting more perhaps 4 times a week, perhaps multiple times a day. RM asked the Tourism Department to speak with Nadine.
- JG acknowledged the passing of Provincetown resident Katherine Baltivik. And also acknowledged AS for her support and friendship to Katherine.
- RM asked for an update on a letter to Candy Collins

## 9. Motion to approve Minutes from 8/6/18 VSB meeting

Motion: RS                      2<sup>nd</sup>: SA                      Motion Approved: 6-0

### Meeting Dates:

SVB choose January 3, 2019 for the grant meeting.

November 2018 meetings are the 5<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Nina to confirm the 5<sup>th</sup> as it is the day before Election Day.

November 13, 2018 Joint meeting with the Select Board

**Motion to Adjourn**

**Motion: RM**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: SA**

**Motion Approved: 6-0**

**The Meeting was adjourned at 4:43 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Nina McCormack

Assistant Director of Tourism