



Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
June 5, 2020, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA

The Visitor Services Board: Jay Gurewitsch, Chair; Regina Cassidy, Vice Chair; David Burbank, At Large; Susan Avellar, At Large; Andrea Sawyer, At Large; Rick Murray, At Large; David Wilson, At Large

NOTE: THIS IS A REMOTE PARTICIPATION MEETING

Attending – Jay Gurewitsch, Chair; Regina Cassidy, Vice Chair; David Burbank, Clerk; Susan Avellar, At Large; Andrea Sawyer, At Large; Rick Murray, At Large; David Wilson, At Large

Staff: Anthony Fuccillo, Director of Tourism; Nina Cantor, Assistant Director of Tourism

Call to Order: 1pm

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Provincetown Visitor Services Board will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Provincetown website, at <https://www.provincetown-ma.gov/>. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch/listen and participate in the meeting may do so in the following manner:

1. Watch on PTV GOV Channel 18, as well as an online livestream of PTV GOV at <http://www.provincetowntv.org/watch.html>
2. To listen and participate in this meeting, dial **(833) 579-7589**. When prompted, enter the following Conference ID number: **449 219 42#**. When prompted, state your name, then press #.
 - Keep your phone muted at all times when not talking
 - Do not use speakerphone
 - Do not use Bluetooth devices
 - Mute all background noises
 - Mute PTV on the television or computer and use only the phone audio
 - Please do not speak until the chair or the meeting moderator asks for public comments or questions.

No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Provincetown website an audio or video recording or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

1. Public Statements

Robert Sanborn, Executive Director, Provincetown Business Guild (PBG)

- The PBG has 300 members. Messaging is critical, and we are recommending warm and welcoming. Tourism and crisis management are two different things which has led to miscommunications. We need to send messaging that we are safe, we care and are welcome. Large scale events won't happen and we still want to welcome people. As soon as Governor allows, we need to push a button to spread the news that shops are open for business and all are welcome - just like the Mayflower did 400 years ago.
- Funding – I am concerned that the tourism budget runs out and I understand there is funds for the rainy day season and there should be funds to promote the Town.



**Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
June 5, 2020, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA**

Tom Walter, Owner, Brass Key and Crown Pointe

- I back up what Bob Sanborn. And we are on the front lines. The tourist contact hotels first and we are doing nothing but spending hours on the phone letting them know they will be welcome. The town has a huge PR problem. It was combined with social media and we need to act in an emergency PR situation.

Steven Hooper, Owner, Carpe Diem and Vice President, PBG

- Reading numbers: advance booking June – I am down June 83%; July 70%, August %80, September 54%. I have spoken to many guest house owners and they are all down. I will lose my business if there is not turn-around in bookings. And what will Commercial Street will look like with windows boarded up. Safe, Open, and Welcome should be the message. 100's of businesses will be effected. We need to get the messaging correct. We need help to save those businesses and jobs

Louise Venden, Select Board Member

- I am glad the VSB is meeting. I had supported that they should have met sooner. And the VSB needed to take responsibility that its safe open and welcome to be here. I look forward to action on your part. Best wishes.

Jill Botttway, Owner, the Boatslip

- I would like to reiterate but not repeat the comments. Messaging should be warm and welcoming. We are fielding phone calls because there has been lack of communications and it's the Town's fault. I have been in communications my entire career and a strategy is more often than not the solution to the issues, crisis and management in resolving issues. And we need it more than ever. We have missed an opportunity to use effective communications that are affecting us now. Lack of communication has made the need worse. There has been lots of discussion but it's time to execute. Will need deliverables, times, dates, and I can be part of the solution. We need solution based thinking

JG – A public comment email was sent on Wednesday from Salt Hotels. AF read the letter from *David Bowed and Kevin O'Shea*, of Salt Hotels. (The following are summary points):

- Nine years ago we took control of our first inn. As we have expanded, Provincetown has been a laboratory for hospitality ideas. It is a testament to this community that our business has flourished and thrived. We have a wide angle view of the crisis.
- Recent weeks, negative messages about the summer season have abounded. We are dismayed about tone and content of these conversations. We are resolved to make a positive statements in response. This season will be different and public health is priority.
- Small gatherings are a bedrock of Provincetown's greatest intellectual legacy. It's time to celebrate the quieter moments of inspiration.
- If we succeed, visitors will leave with a deeper appreciation for this place. We must think outside the box and approach this mission in solidarity
- Every negative Facebook post threatens our ability to achieve this. Provincetown is welcoming. For travelers it's a grand tradition. As a business communities we are the keepers of this tradition
- We hope you are able to push the boundaries on creative solutions that will allow the business community every fighting chance to succeed.

JG – People who emailed Tony for the Select Board joint meeting, all of those emails were sent to Elizabeth Paine to forward to the Select Board



Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
June 5, 2020, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA

2. Communications Update and Plan

Gayle Conran, President, ConranPR

- I have met with the Visitor Services Board members and some of others with the onboarding process. I appreciate the comments that have proceeded me. We can tackle all of them and are in my strategy. Safe, open and welcome is in our messaging.
- 1. ConranPR will introduce Provincetown to her contacts - The New York Times, Travel + Leisure, CondéNast Traveler, AFAR and more.
- 2. Strategy – Postcards from Provincetown was released and received an enormous amount of emails from reporters for story leads.
- 3. Working with Tourism on the 3 step strategy for each phase of the crisis.
 - A press release is going out on the 9th which will go far and wide on the press list.
 - Reviewed the May report.

Discussion

- JG –What can we expect to see from you after press release goes out? GC – direct pitching, pro-active – reaching out to national press and then handling media requests and requests for interviews. We then manage the messaging and fielding the inquiries. We can expect more earned media and there are already stories about how travel is going to look and we will be part of those stories. July – we want to do more when things start to open more... a 36 hours in Provincetown.
- RC – Thank you Gayle. No questions at this time.
- SA – Thank you Gayle. I enjoyed our conversation. I spoke with JG last night and our discussion focused about not going to broad on marketing.
- AS – Thank you Gayle. Your report was excellent and gave me lots of info... A good example of how to present during corona.
- RM – I don't hear any sense of urgency. We needed a sense of urgency. I'm publically stating that I am the complete opposite... I don't want kittens and puppies. We need action and commitment now.
- David B – What is Paradise Found? GC - Paradise Found – Not lost. It's just the headline, not the content. We have messaged that it will be a different kind of summer but it's going to be great. That is the sentiment we are going to convey. What you put in the subject line matters. If you are the travel editor you need the catchy headline. DB- if we do not open on the 8th – what is the message. GC – I don't know yet. DB – I would like to see the day-tripper.
- JG – If he delays past June 8th then are we not allowed to open the hotels
- DW – Do you think we can go bold and go urgent and do what we want and should we be bound to the Governor's laws? GC– I cannot answer that. We will follow the direction of the Town.
- JG – Thank you Gayle for the detailed answers. I want to see the press release on Tuesday. The Town went dark just for a brief period in March. We launched a campaign on April 3rd. We have continuously have been marketing. The radio ad was written and delayed. In March the YouTube by Red Thread produced a fantastic response. We are open for business and all our ads say that.
- RM – I don't want to talk about March/April – The campaign was ineffective. Tourism is derived by hotels and inns and messaging is not working.

Radio

- AF updated the VSB on the recent radio campaigns.
 - Summer 2020
 - Jul/Aug/Early Sep Summer Buildup
 - Reach drive market for overnight stays and daytrips



**Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
June 5, 2020, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA**

- JG – delivery date? AF – as soon as possible



7. Motion to Approve February 13 and March 26, 2020 meetings

- JG – Motion to approve the February 13 meeting minutes
- SA – 2nd

- JG – one correction on minutes sent from me

Motion to approve the February 13 meeting minutes

Roll call: RC – yes; SA – yes; AS- yes RM- yes; DB – yes; DW – yes; JG – yes

Motion: JG Second: AS Approved: 7-0-0

- JC - Motion to approve the March 26, 2020 meeting minutes
- AS - 2nd

Motion to approve the March 26, 2020 meeting minutes

Roll call: RC – yes; SA – yes; AS- yes RM- yes; DB – yes; DW – yes; JG – yes

Motion: JG Second: AS Approved: 7-0-0

- JG stated that the next VSB meeting is June 22nd at 3pm
- RM – don't you think it's important we meet next week so we can pivot?
- JG – If the campaign doesn't work we can meet, but we already have a firm plan in place for June but we shouldn't delay 3 weeks. Let's meet June 15, 2020.
- SA mentioned that she will not be able to attend.
- **Town Meeting**
 - The Select Board has postponed the Annual Town Meeting
 - September 21, 2020 is the new meeting date
- **VSB meeting schedule through June 2020**
 - All non-regulatory boards meetings remain suspended
 - Updated schedule for review
 - Request permission to hold a meeting
 - June 17
 - July 8 & 22
 - August 5 & 19

JG - Motion to adjourn

AS – 2nd

Roll call: RC – yes; SA – yes; AS- yes RM- yes; DB – yes; DW – yes; JG – yes

JG: Motion AS: 2nd Vote: 7-0-0

Adjourned 3:24

Respectfully submitted,

Nina Cantor
Assistant Director of Tourism