



**Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
February 9, 2021, 1:00 p.m.
Town Hall, Judge Welsh Room
260 Commercial Street, Provincetown, MA**

The Visitor Services Board: David Burbank, Chair; Regina Cassidy, Vice Chair; David Wilson, Clerk; Susan Avellar; Andrea Sawyer; Stephen Hooper; Erik Borg

Attending: David Burbank, Chair; Regina Cassidy, Vice Chair; David Wilson, Clerk; Susan Avellar; Stephen Hooper; Erik Borg

Absent: Andrea Sawyer

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

RC – 1 p.m. - Call to Order

AF as moderator:

NOTE: THIS IS A REMOTE PARTICIPATION MEETING

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: **365 537 739#**. 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.

Agenda:

1. Public Statements (Limited to 3 minutes, VSB does not respond to public statements)

Radu Luca, Executive Director, Provincetown Chamber of Commerce

- Reminders – Chamber will be featured 2021 Town Guide – Office of Tourism will take out an ad. Chamber will take out an ad in the summer guide cape cod. MOTT, encouraging those to sign up your businesses. Happy and safe valentine's weekend.



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2. FY22 Draft of Strategic Plan

- AF – each year we have a Strategic plan. Tourism is the driving force of the economy and we need to think through how we present Provincetown.
- Reviewed the Executive Summary
- We are still in 2021 plan. The crisis marketing ran for 6 months
- Picked up the plan in October and we are still in that part of the plan. It is always fluid.
- FY22 – we are not promoting themes and events right now. Just the Brand. We anticipate seeing a similar season as last season. We do know that people are working hard to re-imagine plans.
- May-October taxes – the rooms tax had a 4% decrease. I would like to mention that the entire year during the calendar year there was a 3.7% increase.
- Meals tax – bars and clubs were not open. There was a 42% drop for calendar and 45% for fiscal.
- Last year in calendar year we had 92M on food/beverage. And in this past calendar year there was only 53M spent. Over 38million loss.
- We clearly had people here but activities were different.
- Our theme right now and for the summer season. Demographics helps us find our marketing and targeting. We are targeting younger people and will do more
- Reviewed the outreach vehicles
- Any feedback on the plan?
- SH – What is the narrative we communicate to people? What is happening with events? We are letting people know that the promoters are not having Bear Week. We are trying to prevent the panic.
- AF – The Bear Week producer said Bear Week isn't canceled, but there won't be large scale events. Even the Film Society is working on how to take care of their events. They plan on having small scale events in Town.
- DB – With large scale events, it will land on the individual businesses and they might not be able commit yet. I'd be curious to know what the PBG is putting out for Pride.
- SH – We are waiting another month before planning. And we created a sub-committee to see what we can do outside.
- DB – I spoke with the PBG ED and he made a comment about events being Covid compliant. The Board of Health and SB should also be contributing to the conversation. We continue to pivot.
- R Luca – (with permission)
- I agree with your comments. Vaccines will probably play into the fall and we all have been able to pivot as needed. We need the tourism dollars and the health of visitors and residents in the forefront.
- DB – Safecation. We need to be general in our scope and not be too specific so people keep the brand of Provincetown in their mind.
- BS – I agree. We will do whatever we can do safely. We will be promoting, and producing covid-compliant events. It could be an outdoor show, or bingo or something beyond that. There will be activities and the approach the PBG is taking is marking tent-pole events. But we will be silent to the activities inside the tent. Maybe there will be small parties outside and they all will be compliant within the state and Town.
- RC – At the Inn, our advanced reservations are running better than usual. We tell everyone to check with the promoter's website. Last year we came and it was different and hopefully this year hopefully it will be a little better.
- DW – I support everything that was said. We should encourage folks to come as long as they understand there won't be any major gatherings. We need to encourage tourism.
- AS – Everything sounds good and encouraging. I love the covid complaint phrase.
- EB – I agree with everything... I don't think anything should be described as "canceled." People get it... as long as we are promoting tourism in an abbreviated way.
- DB – I look forward to the process of planning for 2023 survey.



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3. Department Report

- The campaign launched on 1/21. There is a special call out to the LGBTQ audience.
- The press release was released on Plan your Vacation Day.
- Shared some of the ads that are currently running in print/Social Media/digital display and other vehicles.
- This strategy is the best for reaching a large number of unique users.
- By maximizing reach, this allows us to get in front of more individuals with compelling messaging about Provincetown tourism.
- Since working with Multiview, over the past six months we have served **over 1.6 million impressions** and reached **over 92,000 unique users** in January.
- We broke 8M in Instagram. We have substantially grown. Once we reach 10K it will give us even more opportunities.
- DB – asked about masks wearing in the photos.
- SA – stated there is an ad that has four women sitting at a bar. AF – that is with a meal.
- DW – I asked because I hadn't seen any masks... but it seems like it was made on purpose.
- SA – I want to add I think Provincetown did a remarkable job staying healthy. And the majority of people were mask compliant. The VSB has the responsibility to make sure anything we put out must promote Ptown as a safe healthy town.
- DB – We agree and will continue to push.
- SH – I love the direction of the ads but needs younger people.
- DW – We should include families in photos.
- DB – How can we ask other businesses to help us? AF – businesses are doing their own advertising. We tag bigger businesses.
- EB – There are local people – can they do a take-over? And cross promote? Everywhere that person is posting, any business would share it on their account and it would continue to share.
- AF - #myptown was a way to feed our Instagram to our website and it was on the blue chair.

Social Media

- Social media ads target and engage individuals who are not following our pages allowing us to expand our audience. In January Instagram exceeded **8,000 followers** and the Facebook page reached more than **36,700 likes**.
- Over the past six months we have driven **18,579 users** directly to the Provincetown Tourism website by clicking on our social media ads.
- We also reached a total of **186,545 unique users** and received **over 19,500 engagements** on Facebook and Instagram combined.

Paid Search/Search Engine Marketing

- Since launching SEM on July 7, 2020, we have driven **26,516** to our website through clicks from search engine text ads.
- In October we began tracking users looking for accommodations. Over the past four months 428 users visited Provincetown hotel websites directly from the Ptown Tourism accommodations page.

Website

- Through January 2021 the website is performing well with a low bounce rate of 30%, down -1% since the end of November 2020. The average Travel and Tourism bounce rate is 44%.
- Over the past six months there were over 279,000 (233,000 unique) page visits with 91,000 (77,000 unique) page visits of which were the direct result of the MultiView digital ads



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Grant Agreement Discussion

Events scheduled for July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022

Discussion:

The FY22 Grant cycle is July 1, 2021 through June 30, 2022. Should there still be restrictions in place due to Covid-19, the VSB has an opportunity to include various reimbursement options for the applicants.

The following are *examples* of options to the FY22 Grant Agreements should there be a change to the applicant's submission due to Covid-19:

1. If an event is canceled due to Covid19 restrictions, the applicant may submit for reimbursement of marketing costs up to 30 days prior to cancelation.
2. If an event goes virtual, the applicant may receive reimbursement up to a certain percentage of the award. The VSB must be notified within 60 days prior to original event date to re-evaluate a revised application.
3. If an event is restructured (different than application submitted) the VSB must be notified within 60 days prior to original event date to re-evaluate a revised application and review award amount.
4. Other?

A final decision should be made before the Town Meeting scheduled for the first week of May, 2021.

- RC – I think we this is something we think about and discuss. I am fine with giving a percentage for virtual so people are still active in Ptown.
- SA – not yet... I want some of it to jell. We do need flexibility as we maneuver through covid. Flexibility can be a good idea and it should be done cautiously and it must be fair.
- AS – We need to do it this year. We should specify that it should be covid related or just FY22. We want to encourage people to get their act together and market.
- DW – I support flexibility
- SH – I agree. A lot of effort goes into organizing. Cutting the grants hurt. I think the highest percentage we can give is important. If we can afford it, I think we should be as generous as possible.
- EB – I agree. People need flexibility.
- DB – We need to tie it in with state government... until phase 4. I spoke to some grantees, they took a loss but it does affect them. Is matching marketing grant in the same vein? Women's week and PBG did amazing work last year.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the October 13, 2021 VSB Meeting Minutes

Motion: AS DW – 2nd – DW Vote: 7-0-0

Roll call: RC SA; AS; DW; EB; DB

5. Board Statements

- RC – TY Nina and Tony. I appreciate the comments of the VSB and it has given me things to think about.
- SA – None
- AS – I have one concern. While it was useful to have others speak during the meeting but we should not have people interrupt the meeting. It was a good meeting and I thank Nina and Tony.
- DW – These conversations are so helpful since we are looked upon to be ambassadors. Let's continue our meetings like this. Thank you Nina and Tony.
- SH – It was a great meeting with healthy discussion. Question – regarding the report – is it public record? DB – yes.
- EB – Nothing. Good meeting
- DB – Thank you Tony and Nina for their dedicated work to bring tourism to town. And thank you to our partners to bring people to town. We will continue to weigh the needs of the community.



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Motion to Adjourn at 2:41pm

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

Roll call: RC SA; AS; DW; EB; DB

Respectfully Submitted,

Nina Cantor
Assistant Director of Tourism