

Visitor Services Board
Meeting Minutes
August 24, 2007 11:00 a.m.
Judge Welsh Hearing Room

Members present: Kathleen Fitzgerald, Laurel Guadazno, Michael Peregon,
Mick Rudd, Rita “Hersh” Schwartz, and Rob Tosner.

Member absent: Peter Bez

Staff: David Gardner

Others: Lisa Bowden, Candi Collins-Boden, and Candace Nagle.

The reconvened meeting was called to order at 11:05 p.m.

Agenda:

Public Statements

David Gardner said that 2 Board members needed to be sworn in because their terms had expired. Laurel Guadazno was sworn in and the other, Peter Bez, was absent so he could not be re-sworn.

Dog Park Proposal

Candace Nagle was in attendance and presented a large proposal. The proposal ran for 49 pages and seemed to answer most of the questions that the Board members had. Rob Tosner said that she’s basically looking for an endorsement prior to the public hearing on September 5th at 10:00 a.m. Candace feels there is a correlation between increased visitor traffic and dog parks. Many people ask, “Where is your dog park?” and in order to remain competitive – we have to have a dog park.

Rob Tosner asked about proposed locations. There are two: one is the current staging area for Metcalf and Eddy on the corner of Shankpainter and Route 6; the other is east of the Jerome Smith parking lot. Either area would be located atop effluent fields which the DEP prefers.

Hersh Schwartz worried about the liability issue which was satisfied on page 23 of Ms. Nagle’s proposal. The Town does have liability insurance and it would cover the dog park provided the dog park have mandated signage which states: *(Use of the dog park is at your own risk. The Town is not responsible for personal injury or for damage to personal property.)* Ms. Schwartz also asked how “picking up” will be enforced. Candace feels that the types of people going to a dog park are more conscientious. It will be self policed. People don’t understand about the correlation between parasites and poop. Also Ms. Nagle felt that maybe the next generation of dogs will be better socialized. We have 410 dogs in our town and this park could address the socialization of these animals.

There has evidently been a great deal of research on this matter and two main reasons for the failure of dog parks are: 1) having it covered with grass (not practical) and 2) not having a small dog area as well as an area for larger dogs.

There was a lively discussion on how people would park and if it would be metered and if it should be angle parking and if there should be lights - but - all of these decisions come after the dog park decision.

David Gardner, citing a section about by-laws, said there is currently a restriction on many areas of Town due to a case of rabies. Bill Schneider and David had discussed this and found that in Massachusetts – if there are no more cases of rabies within two years – then the baiting has been successful and rabies is no longer considered a threat.

Motion: Authorize the chairman of the VSB to send a letter of endorsement to the BoS in support of the dog park at the Cumberland location.

Motion: Mick Rudd Seconded: Laurel Guadazno Vote: 6-0-0.

Motion: Also suggest in the body of the letter that there should be one curbcut, a metered parking area, and beautification of the park.

Motion: Mick Rudd Seconded: Laurel Guadazno Vote: 6-0-0.

FY 2009 Five-Year Plan For Tourism Fund Expenditures

This plan was presented a couple of week ago by Bill Schneider. Rob Tosner led the discussion by saying that it's in the focus of spending as much money as possible on marketing. He went into the media plan and said that it runs the gamut of support for all groups.

Mick Rudd wanted to know if - when you say regional – you're thinking Massachusetts – or reaching out to Cape tourists, too?

Michael Peregon said that there obviously have been some changes – Bill's gone – and wondered if we are under pressure to put something in place? David G. doesn't believe that we're in any rush and if there's a major shift then they can go back to the BoS.

Hersh S. said that she is very comfortable with this plan. David G. told the group that last year it was approved budget section by budget section.

Motion: Approve the 5 yr plan going from 2009-2013 as a staff recommendation.

Motion: Hersh Schwartz Seconded: Laurel Guadazno Vote: 6-0-0.

Tourism Director's Report

Rob Tosner mirrored the feelings of the entire board when he said that he is very disappointed that Bill will not be in the position since he was great in the position and he has done a great job in the short time he's been here. Rob further said that he has met with David Gardner and fortunately David's been involved with many of Bill's decisions. Rob T. said, "Anything we can do to make the transition as easy as possible." The position has been advertised and David can prioritize what we need to do and Rob will work closely with him to make everything run smoothly.

Hersh thought that Bill was doing a fabulous job and we'll all certainly miss him.

Michael Peregon was very saddened by the happenings.

Laurel Guadazno, too, was so sorry.

Mick Rudd said that Bill understood the need for balance in this community.

Kathleen Fitzgerald said she will help David in any way she can.

David Gardner said that he had an enormous respect for Bill; I am your interim director of tourism and encourage all of you to look very closely into the community to identify someone who can fill Bill's shoes. David said that he will not be applying for this position.

The ad for a replacement runs until Sept 20th so a replacement may not be found until October. David G. will prioritize what we absolutely need in the following months. Please let him know what we have to do. David G. handled the accounting aspects and he never really had a plan for marketing – he has no experience in that spot. We need to prepare for the next VSB meeting and he has to have contracts for the VSB to sign. Bill has graciously said that he could be contacted for any help. This week there was a phone conference to change the date of Family Pride Week. They have moved it to July 26th to August 2nd. One of the problems is that some of their members have already made their reservations before leaving town. It's probably a lot easier to reach the inn keepers – but he's waiting to hear from Jennifer and this will be forwarded to the Chamber of Commerce for their input. “Any suggestions to get that word across?”

Rob said that if we give that information to the PBG and the Chamber – that should be enough.

Bill purposely put it on the web. Rob thought that maybe we can go back to the PBG and send out an e-mail blast. Bill sent out an e-mail blast and we did get a decent response.

Hersh said that at the August 10th meeting we approved certain ads – David is working on that and it will be his priority for next week – he wants to sit down with Bill.

Michael Peregon wondered if we could we ask the Town Manager to have David relieved of his duties in the Town Clerk's office. Rob thinks it's wrong to get involved in personnel issues. He's been doing a lot of the paper work for Bill. We'll try to fill that gap as well as we can.

Michael P. wondered what role the VSB will have in the selection process. Rob has a meeting with Sharon Lynn to hammer that out.

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 5th at 10:00 a.m. There is no agenda as yet so subjects can be added.

Approval of Minutes – August 10, 2007

They're not available.

Old Business

Laurel Guadagno will speak to Michelle Jarusiewicz and Lisa Bowden and offer to take them on a walk and help them to identify historic sites. Hersh thinks this can be left until November. Laurel suggested - why don't we let it rest for a little while?

Hersh said, “Wouldn't it be valuable to have a walk to the waterfront park – like 9:30a. before the 10:a

meeting?" David said that he will have to post this by next week – Rob thinks allowing 45 minutes would be quite enough. Whether people provide input is up to Rob. Mick R. said that at one of the times we had Rex McKinsey there and it was valuable. David said that he will reach out to others if you so desire.

New Business

At the next meeting we need to discuss the fiscal \$3,146. remaining. We need to discuss what we want to do with it.

Adjournment happened at 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Gaudiano

E. Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ on _____ 2007

Rob Tosner, Chair