

**Visitor Services Board
Meeting Minutes
September 18, 2007, 10:00 a.m.
Judge Welsh Hearing Room**

Members present: Peter Bez, Kathleen Fitzgerald, Michael Peregou, Mick Rudd, and Rita “Hersh” Schwartz.
Member absent: Laurel Guadagno and Rob Tosner (excused absences)
Staff: David Gardner
Others: Lisa Bowden, Candace Collins-Boden, and Patricia Fitzpatrick (arr near the close of the meeting)

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m.

Public Statements: There were none.

Waterfront Memorial Park improvements update

Patrick Eleey sent over plans recently which were handed out to everyone. He had said at the last meeting that he didn't think he could attend this meeting but would provide a revised plan based on the many suggestions that he had received. The boardwalk has been extended and we'll be using only one boardwalk material. The distance from the benches to the bulkhead is not 6 feet and the total boardwalk is 7½ ft. wide - so there will be a substantial area to allow for growth. We plan to leave mature trees in place. The square portion on the end of the park will remain and allows for the existing trees to remain. Also, the plan allows two handicap access points as shown on the plan. It won't involve taking any parking spaces. There was substantial revision to the plan after a meeting with Rex McKinsey and Sharon Lynn. Rex had a strong recommendation to use the design fence that Barbara Rushmore recommended. By way of identifying the fence – it is right along the frontage that runs behind the trap sheds and is a wooden fence. It may be slightly more expensive but it would generally replace the curb and would be used as a tire stop for the parking itself. In other words, it would replace the cement tire stops. Hersh, in an effort to stop the lengthy discussion on the fence, suggested that the Board members “go see” and then discuss at the next meeting.

The lobster bench that has provided many photo ops is going to be moved slightly. The same artist who painted it was responsible for the Lopes Square Christmas tree which was featured on the Dave Letterman's show.

The other outstanding issue was the west end of the park which abuts Cabral's pier. The planter was initially removed by the DPW when the town was required to remove underground gas tanks. David G. suggested that we shouldn't have too much concern regarding the access because all of this is covered in the Chapter 91 license. David recommends a drawing of the proposed improvement on the Cabral property could be presented to them for their approval, but does not feel it should be a part of the park improvements because it is not on town property and thus out of the scope of work.

Patrick Eleev has been out of town. A month after losing his mother, his partner's father was killed; that's why Patrick has been unavailable. But – at any rate - this issue doesn't have to be addressed at this point.

Hersh thought that before we go before the Board of Selectmen (BoS) we should have the Cabral issue completely decided.

Many possible – but not definite impediments – were discussed and the over-riding thought was – to just get on with it instead of micromanaging every last detail. Mick said - just focus on the waterfront itself.

The amounts that were originally earmarked for the project were discussed and David said that we are confident that we have sufficient funds that have rolled over from year to year. We're anticipating that we're within a range that could be covered. David will research the funds and asked everyone to remember..... it is still a “work in progress” (wip). David further feels this plan will be far more successful than it was the last time.

Motion: Approve the waterfront park plan from MacMillan Pier to the terminus at Cabral's Pier as presented

to the VSB on September 18th and request costing information from the architect.

Motion: Mick Rudd Seconded: Peter Bez Vote: 5-0-0.

It was further discussed that the treasurer will be asked for the process to develop a budget source for this project.

There were also questions about the Pepitone memorial sculpture and how to refurbish it. On the basis of this discussion, Mick Rudd made the following motion:

Motion: Move the existing Pepitone memorial sculpture to a more appropriate site on MacMillan Pier.

Motion: Mick Rudd Seconded: Michael Peregón Vote: 5-0-0.

Mick said that at this point we need to keep this project stripped down to get it approved and not let everyone's wishes become paramount. The pier has a lot of space available on it now. There will be memorial pavers at the entrance to the courtesy float area.

Kathleen added that - at this point - we really need cost estimates. Mick would like cost estimates which are detailed.

FY07 Tourism Fund Review and Wrap-up

David said that at a recent meeting, it was requested to have the "carry over" subject on the agenda. It was specific to allocating the FY07 grant carry over of \$7,395.87.

Different specific line items were discussed, i.e., Tennessee Williams Festival with a penalty of \$750 as a forfeiture of not using the VSB logo on their advertising, etc.

Mick suggested that we should be limiting the grant program and placing more of our budget into the marketing budget. That's why we need to do audits, offered David and then he referred to the records he keeps.

Hersh asked, "Do we want to continue with grants?" At a couple of meetings – when we started talking about grants – Laurel said that grant money is supposed to be seed money and we keep giving a whole lot of money to ongoing happenings SO, do we want to continue with grants – or put it into marketing? Peter said that we had a public hearing and most of the people who attended were grant recipients and they wanted the grants to continue.....naturally! Mick said that all we can do for next year is to stick to what we have. He's hoping that the budget will continue to grow a bit. Peter thinks everyone should think about what they vote for. Hersh said that she was blown away when she found out that one of the people running an event got \$5K for her efforts!

Mick Rudd said that - as a marketing entity – if we're changing our philosophy – then we've spent up to the limits that we're allowed. If we are going to change that it's almost fair that we have to inform people. We shouldn't just do it because we don't like events any more.

Kathleen said that we've spoken about changing the process and this is a pretty large discussion. She further said that we have a little bit of time until we have to act.

David said we are already moving forward with an unfunded waterfront park. It's just a caution, but, you don't know what the income stream will be next year.

Michael can't understand the whole money picture. Are we obligated to spend the \$100K on grants – to not do that – we have to have the approval of the BoS?

Kathleen feels more clarity is needed.

FY09 Grant Application Form review

Michael asked - how much time do we have to decide on all the issues that we have? David answered that at the first August meeting. Bill usually brought before you a calendar for the FY 2009 grant review. David remembers questions about this so, please review the guidelines and we can discuss this subject in the future.

There were quite a few changes suggested. The most questioned one was the scoring boxes on the form and what specifically was scored. They were evidently an addition for the Board's use and were not necessarily utilized.

David said, "If we're going to have these scoring boxes – or not – that's the Board's call."

Mick suggested rewording the guidelines by revising them and the Board agreed that a philosophical discussion was necessary.

Suggestions for David were:

1. Eliminate boxes from the grant application (re: scoring)
2. Suggest encouraging off-season events and giving them the most consideration
3. bold type for the "logo must" and mentioning that not using the VSB logo may result in forfeiture of the entire grant.
4. bullet that would encourage innovation as well as the creation of new events.

After all these dizzying suggestions, David said he would rework the application and bring it back to the next meeting of the Board.

Kathleen said that an agenda item - down the road – would be to revisit our Board's entire philosophy and perhaps readjust. Peter cautioned that there will never be a general Board consensus on what we need to discuss. Hersh countered by saying that - as a Board we need to have discussions about general guidelines.

David said he felt that it would appropriate for the subject to be a discussion to have with a new tourism director.

Tourism Director's Report

Kathleen asked how the tourism director hiring is coming along. David said that he talked to the Town Manager about the selection. Sharon will wait to talk to Rob Tosner when he returns.

Michael feels that the input of this committee is important. He further feels that we should be in on the hiring of a new tourism director. Hersh, softening Michael's comments, said that she feels we should ask the Town Manager if we could have a discussion on the new tourism director. David said that the position closes on Thursday. Sharon, once again, has the intention to consult the chair of the VSB. Communication will be channeled through the Chair. Kathleen will ask Rob to keep us posted on how the process is going.

Approval of Minutes – September 5, 2007

Two motions were needed since there were two meeting held on September 5th and they were back to back.

Both motions were made and approved by the same individuals.

Motion: Approve the minutes of the September 5th meeting which happened before the 10: a.m. meeting. It was a walk of the Waterfront Park. Second motion.... approve the minutes of the September 5th meeting which began at 10: a.m. after the walk of the Waterfront Park.

Motion: Hersh Schwartz Seconded: Michael Peregou Vote: 4-0-1 ab (PB)

New Business

Mick said that at the last meeting he queried everyone about the planning for a transportation center. He was appointed to be part of the steering committee. If you have any questions just e-mail Mick Rudd.

Michael Peregou said that the sign committee is meeting again tomorrow and Candy from the Chamber of Commerce is putting together updates which he will share with the Board.

The regatta was rather good and Michael was disturbed because the Board hadn't supported them financially. The reason was that their application was made a week before the event.

Adjournment happened at 12:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Evelyn Gaudiano

E. Rogers Gaudiano

Approved by _____ on _____ 2007

Kathleen Fitzgerald, Acting Chair