

MEETING OF THE VISITOR SERVICES BOARD
JUDGE WELSH HEARING ROOM
OCTOBER 14, 2003, 11:00 A.M.

Present: Steve Melamed, Barbara Rushmore, Lynne Davies, Michael Van Belle, Rose Basile, Pasquale Natale

Staff: Patricia Fitzpatrick, Tourism Director; Pam Hudson, Administrative Assistant

Absent with excuse: Mick Rudd

Mr. Melamed called the meeting to order at 11:02 A.M.

1. Tourism Director's Report:

A. Room tax revenues:

The room tax revenues report for the quarter ending June 30, 2003 shows a decrease of \$35,917 from last year. The total decrease for the latest two quarters is \$53,995. Forty-five % of this (\$24,298) is from the Tourism budget. The Tourism office is looking for ways to reduce the current-year budget. At present, the optimal way to allocate cuts has not been determined.

It should be noted that, while revenues have declined from last year, they still show an increase over the previous two years.

B. Tour Guide Appreciation Day – October 31:

To date, 823 coaches have visited Provincetown this year, about 300 more than ever before. The demographic of the bus tour visitor has shifted to the “over 50s” instead of the “over 70s”. There is more interest in active/adventure travel.

There will be a premier showing of the Provincetown CD and the Cavalcade of Music CD at Whaler's Wharf in conjunction with Tour Guide Appreciation Day.

C. Trip to Rio de Janeiro:

A recent report by the Travel Industry in America group says that Brazil is one of the largest travel markets in the world today. Provincetown is destination of the month for October on www.deltavacations-sudamerica.com (great exposure!).

This trip will cost about \$3,750. (By comparison, the G&L trade show in NY will cost over \$6,000.)

Comments on the Tourism Director's Report:

Room Tax Receipts: Mr. Melamed said that he would like to see the income from the next quarter before making any adjustments to the budget. The VSB is supposed to get money back from the town, \$87,000 of which is to come in during this coming year and is earmarked to go into a reserve fund to cover the shortfalls of low-income years.

Mr. Natale moved and Ms. Basile seconded that the VSB go forward with the principal of level funding, with the idea of having this reserve available. Passed 6 – 0 – 1

Rio: Ms. Basile cautioned that Provincetown should not be sold as just a fun place, but also as a cultural destination.

2. Five-Year Plan Marketing budget:

Specific expenditures in the marketing budget were discussed and the following modifications were agreed upon:

- Delete *Quick-Guide* and replace with *Where*.

- Change *Guest Informant* to “Other Print Media”.
- Increase amount for G&L.
- Change Rio to “Foreign Trade Shows”.

Discussion of the Democratic Convention Delegates’ Party: The Tourism Director suggested that Provincetown would get national and international press coverage, a million-dollar opportunity. The delegates would be brought over from Boston at no charge by the two ferry companies and then be taken directly to the Monument. Ms. Basile suggested that we request that a bill be passed that all art sold in Provincetown be tax-free (as it is in Providence, RI).

The value of advertising in Provincetown Magazine and LIP was questioned. The difficulty of applying the procurement order process and still obtaining the most effective advertising was discussed.

Mr. Van Belle moved and Ms. Davies seconded that the marketing budget of the 5-year Plan be accepted with the modifications mentioned above. Passed 6-0-1.

4. Mr. Natale moved to accept minutes of October 3. Mr. Van Belle seconded. Accepted with minor corrections: 4-0-3

5. Five-Year Plan Beautification Committee budget (Line 651):

Ms. Rushmore noted that the Beautification Committee has not submitted a report. Mr. Melamed requested that Pam write a formal letter to James Mack asking him to appear before the VSB on October 28th to report on work that was done during the previous fiscal year.

Ms. Davies moved and Ms. Rushmore seconded that the 651 Beautification budget be accepted contingent on James Mack’s report. Passed 6-0-1

6. Birdman Event 2004:

Curt Rogers, Mark Green and Peter Donnelly of the Gay Men’s Domestic Violence project (GMDV) were recognized. They gave brief report of last year’s Birdman event. Attendance last year was about 2000, and attendance for the coming year is projected to be about 3000.

The specific date of the event is in question due to a combination of conflicting staff commitments and the time of low tides on the weekends in June. Two acceptable dates are Sunday on Memorial Day Week-end, and the Saturday of Portuguese Festival.

The consensus of VSB was that this Board should not fund events on Memorial Day. GMDV personnel have sounded out the Portuguese Festival committee as to the compatibility of the two events. At first blush there doesn’t seem to be a conflict. The VSB had a generally positive response to the overlapping of the two events for this year, but requested that GMDV have further discussions with the Portuguese Festival Committee.

7. Shuttle:

Ms. Rushmore and Ms. Davies have met to discuss the discrepancy of \$5000 between the assessment for shuttle and what was taken from the Tourism Fund for FY02. They will continue to pursue this issue with Bruce Miller and others.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:51 PM