



**Town of Provincetown
The Visitor Services Board
October 7, 2019, 3:00 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

Attending –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

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

Minutes

1. Public Statements

Robert Sanborn, Executive Director, Provincetown Business Guild

- RS updated the VSB that the Street Flags are in process. Hues are more vivid.
- The PBG Annual Meeting is a week from Wednesday with response overwhelming and they are at capacity. Membership is up to 300 which shows our mission is still vital to the business community,
- The Holiday Guide is out in print and online. This year we focused from Halloween through first light. Bay State Ferry will extend through Holly Folly (12/8). Spread the word!

2. Public Landscaping Committee - Bill Docker and Frank Vasello.

- BD and FV presented the Annual Report. Thanked the DPW and COA who provided two volunteers.
- There is \$10k in their general fund.
- One of goals was to partner with other committees and advisory Boards.
- Self-watering containers were purchased.
- There is a working group for the park in the East End and we have a representative attending the committee meetings.
- Request – The committee receives \$10,000 but it is being stretched to its limits and we would like an increase of an additional \$5,000 to \$10,000.
- FV – The beds outside of Town Hall could be improved. 5,000 bulbs are coming in a week. We will be adding them to the park and in Town; the committee is involved with DPW and Pilgrims First Landing through their budget but there may be other things.
- BD – We are trying to make next year a 4-quarter season with planting and decorations.
- FV – 40 boxes are first petunias and then mums... and we would like to do more.

Discussion:

- SA asked if they receive funds from the Town for their budget. BD replied the Town does not contribute to their budget.
- SA stated that she is on the East End Waterfront Park Committee and that Rec has little or no money because they are in charge all of the recreational space of the Town. This VSB has allocated \$200,000 for Pilgrims Landing.
- FV stated that there is \$23,000 in the account and are planning spending most of it now through spring to get ready for 2020.
- BD– we need to plan because we don't get our new money until July 1 and we plant earlier in the season.
- JG asked how many self-watering planters will be needed. Is the request is for planting or planters?
- FV stated that self-watering planters is per requests so they don't know how many more yet and the request is for both planting and planters.
- AS – Would the \$5,000 be in perpetuity? BD stated it would be in perpetuity



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3. Tourism Grants review and evaluation process and procedure - Discussion dependent. Motions may be made. Votes may be taken

David Gardner, Acting Town Manager

- DG stated that he met with JG regarding the grant evaluation process. They spoke with Town Council and the Board is to adopt a procedure on the process for evaluation. Every Town Board has the ability to adopt rules and procedures on how you function on the Board. The Chair has the right to run the meeting. The Board should discuss and follow procedure.
- JG read the following: The VSB adopts the following procedure for reviewing Tourism Fund grants and awarding funds:
 1. All applications must be submitted online only by the deadline, as announced in public notices.
 2. All applications are available for review and scoring by VSB members as they are submitted.
 3. VSB members will review and submit completed evaluations via online portal by an agreed upon date. Any VSB member who fails to submit a completed evaluation for any application may participate in the discussion of the grant application, however will not vote for said grant funding award.
 4. Tourism Office staff will compile the scores and rank all applications from highest average score to lowest.
 5. The VSB will use the average score rank from highest to lowest as the order in which applications will be reviewed. The average score rank does NOT automatically mean a higher scoring application will get more funds than a lower scoring application. It is used as a guideline and a method of ordering the applications as well as ensuring that the application is compliant with the purpose of the grant.
 6. VSB members are advised that their scores are public documents and subject to Open Meeting Law record keeping. Notes within the evaluation are not subject to public viewing.

Recommended motion to adopt the above procedure and process for reviewing, evaluating and recommending Tourism Fund Grant Awards

Motion – DW

2nd – RC

Discussion:

- SA – If there are difficulties with the application, what happens? NC – I would help them.
- SA –When averaging the scores, what happens when a member is recused from an application? NC – it still evaluates on the scores at hand.
- RM – If we are going to look at all these things we should do it in a more comprehensive way. If there is a recusal there should be a process.
- AF – suggested language - VSB members who have an identified conflict of interest will recuse themselves from evaluating that application. The VSB member should notify department staff as to such recusals by the agreed upon date.



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Recommended motion to adopt the above procedure and process for reviewing, evaluating and recommending Tourism Fund Grant Awards

Motion: DW

2nd: RC

Vote: 4-2-1

Andrea Sawyer & Rick Murray Opposed; Susan Avellar Abstain

4. Park at 387 Commercial Street

Discussion of park use and rental policy – Susan Avellar

- We have a confidential mission station but the committee wants to protect the vista view down to the harbor. We came up with an interim sketch where on the west side you would look straight down the water and the condos could be a rental space and the guidelines would include a COI, restricted dates and hours. The park is run through the REC. There are fire and safety requirements. Not sure about alcohol. Can't obstruct the harbor front if you put up a tent. No open fires, propane, etc. The rec department will hold a public forum on the 9th at the community center.

5. Discussion of Five-Year Plan 2021

- AF reviewed the budget charts including the FY 2021 spend.
- JG – The projected increase will be to \$842K which is based on the spending lower than the actual 16.5% increase we have already seen from B&B tax. So this is very conservative. We should be thinking about a larger number. Input?
- AF – money for Key West budget is \$6m for marketing and promotion and advertising.
- RM – can the chair give us a number?
- Jay – a conservative number is one million. We would be increasing marketing and grants. Our budget keeps us at status quo.
- RM – if Tourism is our economic engine and if we are serious we need to all back this. We have been told that we do want to give us more money so we need to ask for it. RM thinks the 1 million is too low and there is a need to change the way we look at budgets in this Town. We have always had a strong support from Town Floor. We have had the same budget for multiple years. RM suggests \$1.25 million. Second home owners and tourists out way any other avenue. RM questioned why beautification comes out of the Tourism budget. No money comes into the tourism fund from state so we need to support the local economy in order for people have a place to live.
- JG – Thank you RM and I agree! We need to give businesses a reason to stay open!
- RC – I like that the staff should be getting better salaries. RM – We are here to give expertise in a particular field. Every Town employee should have raise.
- Jay – let's try to get this to more specifics.
- RM – \$600,000 marketing, \$300,000 grants \$120k municipal \$120k coordination and support! Plus build in an increase of 10% and 35% moving forward. And increase the percentage back into the Tourism Fund to 45%. We need to support the high season too. We shouldn't mind set to certain months. There needs to be flexibility.
- DB suggested a 10% increase every year added to the budget. Also – we also must all agree that they can't lower the 35%. And our growth is at 0.



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- AF – That percent could change depending on what is brought to the Town Hall.
- RM – Tourism and Housing go hand-in-hand. We spent millions on infrastructure now it's time for tourism. I think there will be a conservative number for Air B&B.
- AF – based on the one deposit so far and they want to wait a year to see what happens.
- RC – We want to roll it back up to the 45% over the years.

3 points are:

- \$1.2M ask
- Minimum deposit at 35% (plus increase each year)
- Increase budget by 10% each year

6. Director's Report

Placement Creative Work & Activity:

AF reviewed the media placement plan and is anticipating an 18K spend

- **Sponsored Content – Online Publishers**
 - Content - Plan your 2020 vacation in Provincetown
 - All will include Provincetown 400 Commemoration
- a. **Pride Media**
 - i. Jan/Feb Launch 1/15/20
- b. **Towleroad**
 - i. February/March Launch 2/15/20
 - ii. Requested proposal
- c. **Newengland.com**
 - i. March/April Launch 3/15/20
- d. **Broadway World**
 - i. May/June Launch 5/15/20
- e. **Arts – TBD**

Tourism Administration

- **Tourism Website**
 - The final virtual stakeholder meeting has been scheduled for Monday October 21, 2019 at 9:30 AM to provide local feedback to Bellweather and the committee
 - Bellweather has moved the soft launch of the website to end of October/beginning of November
 - The month extended maintenance will now be through the end of January/February
 - The maintenance and hosting contract with Bellweather will begin in February 2020
 - Bellweather has been transferring landing page content from existing website and making edits as directed
 - Bellweather is writing 150 to 300 words of copy for all the new landing pages
 - Bellweather has been conducting user testing and will react to responses to meet user needs as appropriate



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- The final stakeholder feedback will be considered and allow two weeks prior to launch to implement agreed changes
- **Joint meetings with BoS and VSB:**
 - **Tuesday, October 15, 2019**
 - This meeting will take place during schedule 6:00 PM BoS meeting
 - Discussion of grant evaluation process
 - Tourism Fund Five-Year Plan objectives prior to completing the VSB recommendation for 2021
 - **Tuesday November 12**
 - Meeting time TBD
 - Review and approval of the VSB 2021 Five-Year Plan recommendation

AF – Reviewed local option tax and meal tax collected.

7. Approval of August 5, 2019 meeting minutes

Motion: AS 2nd: DB Vote: 6-0-1 (SA had not reviewed them).

8. Board Member Statements

DB stated that one of our ads had negative comments from local and outside of Town. And we should all be careful how we should respond.

JG reminded the VSB that if you are posting on the Town Tourism page please be careful.

Motion to Adjourn at 4:52p.m.

Motion: RC 2nd: DB Vote: 7-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Nina Cantor
Assistant Director of Tourism