

NEWPORT COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

Tuesday February 12, 2008

12:00M

Held at the Gateway Information Center

3rd Floor Meeting Room

MEETING MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 12:06pm by Chairman Len Panaggio.

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Chairman Len Panaggio, Karen Oakley, Shirley Mello, Donna Kohler, Rocky Kempanaar, Katie Wilkinson, Stephen Coyne, Brian Arnold, William Clarke, Charron Reed, Greg Fater, Pieter Roos, Mark Stenning

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE:

Laurie Stroll, Susan Samson

STAFF PRESENT WAS:

Evan Smith, Kathryn Farrington, Cathy Morrison, Tim Walsh, Deb Gatta, Ellen Crawley

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC IN ATTENDANCE:

None

I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for January 8th, were reviewed. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Donna Kohler and seconded by Karen Oakley. The motion passed unanimously.

II. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The financial report for January was read by Mark Stenning. City Bed Tax for November, 2007 was up 9.64% and Regional Bed Tax was up 10.87% for a combined YTD growth of 9.94%. Mark reviewed the revenues and receivables for the month of November, 2007. A motion to accept the treasurer's report was made by Katie Wilkinson and seconded by Stephen Coyne. The motion passed unanimously.

III. STAFF REPORTS:

A. CONVENTION AND TOURISM:

Tim Walsh, Vice President of Sales reported on the following:

- Client event in Boston, MA – 1/7/08: Boston area meeting planners along with Newport County industry partners attended annual luncheon/trade show went well.**
- Newport Life Bridal Show 2/9, at Rosecliff & Oceancliff, very successful**
- Sales department is hosting a luncheon in Hartford Ct. tomorrow (2/13/08).**

B. MARKETING :

Kathryn Farrington, Vice President of Marketing reported on the following:

 She attended the Boston Wine Festival held 2/9 – 2/10. The NCCVB co-oped with the NE Coastal Wine Group for the 8th year. It is the largest wine show in America.

 The marketing department created a new campaign to market midweek rooms this winter called, “Have we got a deal for you”, offering rates from \$39-\$99, Sun – Thurs only. Promotion will run February to May 15th. There has been a very good response of about 30 properties participating. Advertising will be via TV campaigns, radio promotion, email blast and mailings.

 Upcoming events will be:

- 20th Annual Newport Winter Festival, 2/15-2/24/08**
- Taste of Kinsale 3/6-3/9, kicking off March as Irish Heritage Month**
- Newport Restaurant Week Spring 4/6-4/12/08**

C. PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Evan Smith, President/CEO reported that he spoke with Keith Stokes, Executive Director of the Newport Chamber of Commerce. The NCCVB in collaboration with the Chamber of Commerce will be taking a delegation to Charleston, SC for a Network Program. They will meet with their Chamber of Commerce, CVB, City Council, Cruise Facility and tour Ex-Naval station surplus land and how they are converting it.

They will travel, on 2/19 and spend 3 days in Charleston to study what they do well and to exchange notes on some key issues:

- Parking**
- Motor coach regulation**
- Historical preservation**

- **Navy conversion**
- **Cruise Ships - development**

V1. COMMITTEE REPORTS:

A. FINANCE COMMITTEE:

Mark Stenning reported that the committee met on 2/8/08 and discussed the following issues:

- **The proposed renovation for the ticket counter in the information center and request for 3 bids**
- **Reviewed request for funds for the Board of Directors Retreat**
- **Budget planning – discussed time outline for new budget development.**
- **Ongoing review of the NCCVB healthcare program and employee co-pay**

The next Finance Committee meeting will be held 2/14, at the Gateway

Information Center, 3rd floor meeting room.

B. GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE:

Greg Fater stated the committee met on 2/11 and reviewed the following:

- By-laws & legislation, identified some areas we need to address**
- Options for staggered terms**
- Quorum – reduction from 10 to 9 members**
- Meeting dates – proposed not meeting in December & February**

Greg asked the board to review by-laws 3.2 – Regular Meetings & 3.5 – Quorum. Discussion followed. Greg made a motion to amend by-law 3.2 to read, the board may designate regular meetings to be held every month except when the board designates at the beginning of the year, the months that would not have meeting. Ammend by-law 3.5 from a required quorum of 10 members to start the meeting to 9 members. Mark Stenning seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

C. SALES & MARKETING COMMITTEE:

Bill Clarke reported that the committee met on 1/14 and the following items were discussed:

- Annual marketing plan development**
- 2009 Visitors guide & Meeting Planner guide – RI Monthly is host**

company that publishes both. Should change be made and CVB have more creative input? Pros and cons discussed.

- Retooling website, GoNewport.com – new homepage launch planned for March, 2008**

D. FACILITIES COMMITTEE:

Brian Arnold stated bids for reconstruction of the ticket counter in the Gateway information center are still coming in. When all bids are received he will present to the Finance Committee for review. Katie Wilkinson made a motion to approve funds not to exceed \$28,000 for the renovation project. The motion was seconded by Mark Stenning. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Evan Smith reported on the following:

- He spoke with Keith Stokes and proposed a plan to take Newport**

County and Middletown hoteliers on a tour of the Navy Base to better understand what lodging options are on base.

- **A Board Retreat – a memo was passed to board members to explain purpose and goals**
 - o **The NCCVB received 4 proposals from facilitators, cost and qualifications were discussed**
 - o **Dates available for each facilitator were presented**
 - o **After reviewing 4 proposals, the CEO, Evan Smith, recommend Zeitgeist Consulting to be the facilitator**

Len Panaggio asked board members to vote on having Zeitgeist Consulting as the facilitator. 10 votes decided yes.

Greg Fater recommended a vote on cost range. Discussion followed. Katie Wilkinson made a motion to allow Evan to negotiate with Bill Geist for a rate not to exceed \$7500. Steven Coyne seconded the motion. A majority vote approved.

V. NEW BUSINESS:

- **Len Panaggio requested that a P&L statement be included in the board report**
- **He states that the board should be concerned as a group and be very proactive in dialogue in the future with the status of the Sakonnet River Bridge**

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made to adjourn by Len Panaggio and seconded by Mark Stenning. It passed unanimously and the meeting adjourned at 1:42pm. The next NCCVB board meeting will be Tuesday, March 11th, at the Gateway Visitors Center, 3rd floor meeting room.