



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors Meeting
12pm – Tuesday, October 17, 2017
The Atlantic Resort at Cambria – Newport
240 Aquidneck Ave.
Middletown, RI
12:00pm**

MEETING MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 12:08 pm by Chairman Brewer Rowe

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Karen Binder, Marco Camacho, Duncan Maio, John Edick, Matt Gineo, Matt Plumb,
Paul Rodrigues, Brad Read, Brewer Rowe, Frank Sallee, Kathleen Seguin, Elizabeth Woodhouse

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Kristine Cox, T.R. McGrath, Katie Dickson

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED WERE: Nancy Parker Wilson,

STAFF PRESENT WERE: Evan Smith, Kathryn Farrington, Cathy Morrison, Alyson Adkins, Anna Duffy

NOTE: Our host, Kirby Arsenault – Director of Sales at Cambria Atlantic Resort gave an overview of the property which opened on June 9th. She offered tours to the board members following the meeting. There are 143 guestrooms all with king size beds, 60% doubles, 40% single rooms. Exercise, meeting space, Johnny's Restaurant and Lounge. Solar panels on entire roof, energy solar panel field on lawn, 30% of electricity will come from the solar panels.

New appointee from the Town of Bristol, Karen Binder was introduced to the board by Brewer.

I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for September 2017 were reviewed by the board. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Kathleen Seguin and seconded by Duncan Maio. The motion passed unanimously.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT: There were no comments from the public.

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The finance committee met on 10/11. The treasurer's report for September 2017 was presented by Matt Gineo. For July bed taxes, the City of Newport was up +21% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was up +3% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up +10 % as compared to budget. Private revenue for the month of September was up +2% as compared to budget, with total revenue up +30% compared to budget. Total expenses were underbudget by 1%. For YTD, total bed taxes are up +4% as compared to budget, total revenue is up +4% to budget, and total expenses are underbudget by 3%. Matt then reviewed the revenue and expenses for September. Discussion followed. A motion to accept the Treasurer's report for September 2017 was made by Brewer Rowe and seconded by Paul Rodrigues. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- On Friday October 20th at 11am there will be a ribbon cutting ceremony at the Gateway Visitor's Center after ten months of construction completed on the facility. RIPTA representatives, local dignitaries and Sen. Reed are expected to speak.
- Evan reviewed for the 9 municipal representatives the Food and Beverage and Hotel tax reports. He explained the total lodging impact on their communities and how the tax formula is divided.
- Newport based U.S. Sailing board members are looking at the potential of locating a National Sailing Hall of Fame at the Armory building on Thames St. currently owned by the city. There will be a meeting at Newport City Hall is on October 21st to explore the possibility of establishing a new museum locally. Brad Reed explained that currently there is virtual museum only. Annapolis, MD has been unable to gain support for development of a museum there.
- From November 1-3 the New England Innkeepers Association is holding their annual meeting at the Hotel Viking. There are over 350 attendees from 6 New England states expected attend this professional development conference.
- Massport and the MA office of tourism (MOTT), have invited Discover Newport over the years to participant on sales missions which help to form key alliance partnerships. Tim Walsh is on a trade mission to Italy to promote Discover Newport. We are the only non-Massachusetts destination invited to Italy.
- RIBTA expects Phase 1 of the Pell Bridge work will be completed by Thanksgiving. Construction is scheduled to resume in June of 2018.
- The *SSV Oliver Hazard Perry* lost power and ran aground in the harbor departing the Seafood Festival on October 15th. Although there was no environmental damage and minor damage to boats two cruise ships were unable to dock and tender in thousands of tourists the next day. Perrotti Park is the only U.S. Coast Guard approved facility in Newport to land cruise ship passengers for foreign flagged vessels. This regulation is part of the Maritime Transportation and Safety Act. Discussion followed.
- Evan informed the board of approval for two new hotels, at the Yachting Center (84 rooms) and on America's Cup Ave. (50+ rooms) in front on the Marriott. There is no status update on the Broadway/5th Element zoning application.
- Rep. Lauren Carson has asked Evan to chair a metrics tourism subcommittee. We need numeric data to measure how the marketplace is doing. An index to measure lodging, attractions, food and beverage. He asked Kathryn Farrington is explain how the ADARA tracking system which collects, analyzes and measures individual consumer interests through web site and mobile applications. This data provides a snapshot of the users' profile and converts who looked, booked and how much search time and money were spent. It is a new leap in how technology is changing tourism. This information will help us measure the effectiveness of how we measure ourselves in the future.

V. **STAFF REPORTS:** none given in the interest of time

VI. **ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 12:58pm

**The next Board Meeting will be held
Tuesday, October 14, 2017
Gateway Visitor's Center
23 America's Cup Ave.
Newport, RI**