

AMERICA'S CUP WORLD SERIES HOST COMMITTEE

MEETING OF HOSPITALITY AND EVENTS SUBCOMMITTEE

PUBLIC SESSION

FEBRUARY 23, 2012

A meeting of the America's Cup Hospitality & Events Subcommittee was on held Thursday, February 23 at 10:00 a.m., at the Newport County Chamber of Commerce, 35 Valley Road, Middletown, Rhode Island.

Subcommittee Members Present: Ms. Jody Sullivan (Chair), Ms. Laurie Lebreque, Mr. Andrew Nota, Ms. Maureen Crowley, Ms. Robyn Greene, Ms. Patricia Yeoman, Ms. Sue Maffei Plowden, Mr. William Riccio, Mr. Robert Spagnolo, Ms. Diane Mederos. Mr. Lynn Singleton joined via teleconference.

Also Present: Mr. Paul Harden, Ms. Christina Treger, Ms. Ann Sweeny, Ms. Kathleen Papp, Mr. Stephen Hourahan, Ms. Wendy Mackie, Mr. Edward Silveira, Ms. Amy Garry and Mr. Ken Shane.

CALL TO ORDER AND OPENING REMARKS

Ms. Sullivan called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. She noted that subcommittee co-chair, Ms. Martha Sheridan, was unable to attend the meeting.

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2012 Subcommittee meeting. Motion carried.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Paul Harden informed the committee that the America's Cup Committee was going "full bore" and moving forward at a fast pace in planning for the event.

The task forces of the Hospitality & Events Subcommittee reported as follows:

Gala/Fundraiser

Ms. Greene indicated that she had unsuccessful at getting this group together since the previous subcommittee meeting, and that they were still working on the date this should be held and the nature of the event.

Ms. Sullivan stated that Ms. Sheridan had been working on getting responses back from various venues and that she was preparing a spread sheet with availability and prices. She noted that Mr. Brown was working on this as well.

Possible dates for this event were discussed; Mr. Hourahan stated that holding the event three weeks before would most likely not get participation from America's Cup participants. He noted that he would be happy to assist in this effort.

The Eisenhower House was discussed as a possible location, with the difficulty with parking in this area noted as a concern.

Ms. Sullivan suggested that they keep all possible venues as an option and that price will also play a role in whether the venue will be feasible.

There was also discussion regarding the involvement with non profits in this event such as Sailors for the Sea, etc.

Other possible venues, such as the Yachting Center and Ocean Cliff were discussed, as well the Newport Mansions.

Ms. Sullivan stated that the decision will be based on availability and pricing, and that they would review the options and make recommendations as they are currently gathering data. Mr. Silveira indicated his willingness to assist.

Ms. Maffei Plowden stated that she would check with the America's Cup Event Authority to see if there are any conflicting events.

Ms. Sullivan stated that it appeared that the consensus was that this event should be held closer to the event, perhaps a week before, and that when they are preparing the spread sheet they will expand it to include dates closer to the America's Cup events.

#### Downtown Event

Ms. Tregler recapped the discussion with her task force regarding the Friday night event downtown. She stated that the intention is to draw visitors downtown and to help the businesses in the area.

Mr. Spagnolo stated that he had spoken with the Newport Yachting Center and that there is nothing booked at this location on June 22, 2012. He noted that Mr. Bart Dunbar of Bowens Wharf indicated a willingness to partner with this group for a fee.

There was discussion regarding where the funding would come from, with Mr. Harden indicating that this was to be a self supporting event, but that if there was another event that could make money this might offset any costs here.

Ms. Sullivan stated that the committee would look at this and other locations, but that free space would be preferable. The notion that a sponsor could offset the cost was also brought forth.

Mr. Riccio suggested that they consider closing Market Square and holding an event there; the difficulties associated with closing off this area were discussed, including parking, deliveries to restaurants, etc.

Mr. Silveira stated that the traffic issues and logistics associated with closing off an area sometimes deter people from coming downtown. He indicated that it may be preferable to have this at another location rather than closing off a road.

It was suggested by Mr. Spagnolo that holding this event away from downtown would deter tourists from attending.

It was noted that IYRS was willing to help out in any way.

### South County Event

Mr. Nota reported on the South County event planned during the America's Cup event. He noted that significant changes had been made since he last reported to the committee.

Mr. Nota stated that on June 21 there would be a competitive regatta in Narragansett of six twelve meter yachts between 1 and 5 p.m. He stated that they had secured The Towers as a backdrop for the race. He stated further that this is a weather dependent event, and that they were also exploring another more affordable event showcasing historic memorabilia and perhaps a panel discussion.

Mr. Nota stated that they were going through the same type of analysis regarding the cost and possible venues for some of these events. He is also trying to secure sponsors, but that whatever they decide on will be complementary to other events. Mr. Nota stated that they would also be reaching out to other sponsors and would welcome vendors to service the expected crowds. He noted that they would like to see this become an annual or bi-annual event.

### Speakers Series

Ms. Tricia Yeoman reported that this sub group had discussed many good ideas for speakers, locations, a possible MC and possible tie-ins. She indicated that they could not go forward with planning until open dates are determined, and perhaps these speakers could be tied into other events. She noted that Ms. Maffei Plowden was working on getting information about when the teams would be coming to town, etc.

Ms. Mackie stated that the RI Marine Trades Association has funds to help support this effort, particularly as it relates to the boating industry in Rhode Island that already exists. She noted that this was a good way to 'build momentum' and a way to involve all areas of the State.

Mr. Silveira's opinion was that he did not want to have too many events downtown to "overload the system". He brought up the road closure issue and suggested that there needed to be a collaborative effort to make sure there are no "dream killers". He offered that the Middletown Town Council would be receptive to assist in funding some of the events, noting that Middletown is also invested, as the impact on the hotels and restaurants is extensive.

It was noted that over 1500 hotel rooms in the area are already booked during this event.

Ms. Yeoman suggested that there has been discussion about some group events to tie-in to the America's Cup event, such as a photo exhibit, community photo contest; she also suggested that other groups could participate, such as Yacht Clubs, local Rhode Island sailors, Save the Bay, etc.

Ms. Sullivan stated that at the informational breakfast on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 41 North she hoped to receive some input from the business community for promotion opportunities during the event.

### Visitors Center

The location of the hospitality center at the America's Cup Event was discussed at length. It was suggested that some areas were too distant, such as the DEM Visitors Center, and that the south end of the main parking lot would be a good location.

Controlling the traffic in this area was discussed, as well as trying to utilize the Exploration Zone being planned by committee member Ms. Donna Kelly to provide an area for youth activities. It was noted that Ms. Kelly was willing to work with this group to maximize exposure.

#### New Business

Mr. Shane informed the group that the film "Charlotte" would be shown at the Jamestown Art Center sometime next month. He stated that perhaps this could be added to the schedule of events.

#### CLOSING REMARKS AND ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting of the Hospitality and Events Subcommittee was planned for Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Newport Chamber of Commerce. It was noted that the full America's Cup Host Committee was scheduled to meet on March 9<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 p.m. at Newport City Hall.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 a.m. All were in favor.

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Diane C. Mederos, Secretary