

**Meeting of the Board of Directors of the
State House Visitor's Center and Gift Shop
Thursday, September 26, 2013 at 2:00 P.M.
Providence Warwick Convention & Visitors Bureau
G-Tech Building
10 Memorial Blvd.
Providence, RI 02903**

Meeting Notes

- 1. The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Kristen Adamo at 2:02 P.M. with the following members present: Kristen Adamo, Jon Stevens, and Sue Ellen Kroll. Others present included Alicia Philippe, Paul Caranci, Stacy DiCola (Secretary of State's Office) and Jess Unger (Governor's Office)**
- 2. Upon a motion by Kristen Adamo, seconded by Sue Ellen Kroll, the minutes of the August 21, 2013 were unanimously approved as submitted.**
- 3. Jess Unger summarized the progress of the construction, furnishings and improvements made, and being made, to the Visitor's Center/Gift Shop. Coventry Lumber, the firm selected from the Division of Purchases' Master Price Agreement by the Department of Administration will be installing the bookshelves within the next two weeks. The two display cases and desk are in place as is the wiring and security camera. The DOA may be able to pay to have a new**

wood door with glass insert made since there are no suitable and available doors within the State House. Jess will check with building superintendant Ed Butler if there are specs required and available for the construction. After the book cases are built, the glass shelving for the bookshelves will be ordered and the track lighting installed, at DOA's expense.

Upon a motion by Kristen Adamo, seconded by Sue Ellen Kroll, the Committee voted unanimously to authorize Jess and Stacy to purchase the necessary display racks needed to display Visitor's Center and Gift Shop inventory.

A second motion was made by Sue Ellen Kroll and seconded by Kristen for the Committee to accept the report of improvements, construction and furnishings of the Visitor's Center/Gift Shop. The motion was unanimously approved.

4. Jess Unger distributed a list of suggested inventory items that was reviewed by Governor Chafee and the Secretary of State Mollis at a briefing held a couple of weeks ago. Jess noted that the list was not complete and items such as the colorized state quarter, apparel and other items considered worthy of including would be added. Stacy DiCola expressed concern that the item listed were physically small which might tend to give an appearance that the store is not full. Such considerations will be addressed through both increased inventory and proper marketing display. Jess also distributed a suggested design for the Christmas Tree Ornament. Jon Stevens noted that Secretary Mollis had suggested including a date on the ornament so that each year's ornament becomes collectable.

Upon a motion by Sue Ellen Kroll and a second by Kristen Adamo, the Committee voted unanimously to accept and approve the inventory list and ornament designs and that staff be permitted to begin the inventory acquisition process. Staff was also authorized to look for additional inventory items that will both fit within the budget and take up empty space in the store.

Upon a suggestion from Sue Ellen Kroll, Jon Stevens will contact John Smith at Rhode Island School of Design to ask if they have excess inventory that we might be able to include for sale in the State House Gift Shop.

Paul Caranci presented two Consignment Agreements. The first is with the Rhode Island Publication Society for the inclusion of 25 copies of each of 20 Society publications in the Gift Shop inventory for a period of one year with a split of 50-50. The second is with Dawn Porter, a local author who wrote a children's word search book on Rhode Island history. It is also for a one-year duration and is for the consignment of an initial inventory of 50 books.

Sue Ellen Kroll moved to accept both agreements and authorize Paul to enter into them with the respective parties. The motion was seconded by Kristen Adamo and was approved unanimously.

Stacy DiCola advised the Committee that a State House lobbyist who has offered to help raise funds for the Gift Shop called to tell her that a tobacco company has offered a contribution. After much discussion the Committee decided to wait until a policy can be drafted to address the acceptance of outside funding before accepting any donations. In-kind contributions may still be accepted.

5. Stacy DiCola suggested that the Committee request permission from the Secretary of State to lease the POS system offered by Citibank. Unlike the Square, a device that plugs into a cell phone and IPAD and allows for credit card sales to be made at a cost of either a flat fee of \$275.00/month or a transactional fee of 2.74% fee per transaction, Citibank offers a complete system that has a support system and training program that comes with it. The Citibank First Data Program offers two options; an outright purchase of the program for \$5,800 or a monthly lease for \$190 per month for a term of 4 years. The First Data program is a complete POS system that includes inventory, barcode, register, a four-year full warranty and 24 hour customer service. Fees range from between 0 and 3% of each transaction. While a two year lease is available, it essentially just doubles the monthly rental price rendering the monthly expense a bit unaffordable. Paul Caranci expressed concern that the Committee offer the Secretary of State only one option since he might be hesitant to approve a lease that reaches almost three years into the term of the incoming Secretary. With the only other option being a decision for dispensed with the acceptance of credit card purchases, Paul suggested that the Committee present the Square as an alternative.

Kristen Adam moved that the Committee recommend the inclusion of a credit card system for the Gift Shop and suggested that Paul and Stacy meet with the Secretary of State, present the options and adopt his recommendation. The motion was seconded by Sue Ellen Kroll and carried unanimously. Jon Stevens offered to attend the meeting

if it is deemed necessary.

6. Stacy DiCola provided a briefing on her efforts to secure alternative staffing to the J&W Internship Program. She has had discussions with AARP, RSVP and the SER Program representatives and found these to be acceptable alternatives to the J&W Internship Program. In particular, the SER Program offer training opportunities to low income individuals, aged 55 and over, who, because of a lack of specific training have poor employment opportunities. This federally funded program offers the trainee \$7.75 per hour for a maximum of 18 hours/week. They will provide as many people as we need. They currently have program offices in South County, Pawtucket and Warwick and are anxious to work with the Visitor's Center and Gift Shop. There are currently six candidates in the Warwick program waiting to be placed. The prospects will be interviewed first by SER and then by the Committee to determine suitability of each applicant. Staffers would have to adhere to all the SOS office policies and are further restricted by specific codes offered by the SER Program. Stacy also suggested a change of hours to include 9:00 to 3:30 so as to allow the Center to be open while all the tours are being conducted. Jon Stevens further noted that the Secretary has requested that hours be extended to overlap with the legislative session. Stacy also suggested that the Center open for special events at the State House. Jon Stevens will work on securing 2-3 parking spaces to accommodate the program staff. Sue Ellen Kroll made a motion to authorize Stacy DiCola to enter into the appropriate arrangements so as to provide adequate staffing to the Visitor's

Center/Gift Shop. The motion was seconded by Kristen Adamo and carried unanimously.

Kristen Adam also moved to table discussion on a J&W arrangement until the January trimester so that we can better determine need. That motion was seconded by Sue Ellen Kroll and was unanimously approved.

7. The Committee is still planning a soft launch of the Visitor's Center/Gift Shop for Monday November 18th while a more formal program can be planned for a time after that. Kristen Adamo noted that the formal opening might include a short speaking program, a ribbon cutting, a book signing/lecture series, and other similar items. Jon Stevens added that since the Charter Room and Gift Shop have been so closely aligned throughout the planning process, we might host a "food" event at which State House employees as well as those from the DOT and the DOA can be invited to tour both facilities. Kristen Adamo will develop a proposal for presentation at the next meeting.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 3:26 P.M.