



**Queen
Anne's
County**

MARYLAND

Economic & Tourism Development

Heather Tinelli, Director
425 Piney Narrows Road
Chester, Maryland 21619
Telephone: 410.604.2100
Fax: 410.604.2101

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
Jack N. Wilson, Jr., District 1
Stephen Wilson, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Christopher M. Corchiarino, District 4

Travel And Tourism Advisory Committee

Business Meeting Minutes for February 8, 2022

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The following Active Committee Members were present and represented a quorum:

John Anderes
Dolores Jones
Jody Schulz
Brian Truitt
Gail Owings
Katherine Bonner
Eric Hoffman
Derek Janes
Michelle Brink-Pringle

Staff Present:

Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development
Katie Clendaniel, Marketing & Destination Development Specialist

Supporting Members Present:

Nancy Scozzari, Chief of Parks & Resource Planning, Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Linda Friday, President, QAC Chamber of Commerce (Zoom)
Gigi Windley, Executive Director, Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Lee Bridgman, Program Assistant in Agriculture and Horticulture with University of Maryland Extension
Ashley Genova, Manager, Godfrey's Farm

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

On a motion made by Mr. Anderes and seconded by Ms. Brink-Pringle, the February meeting agenda was approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

On a motion made by Mr. Anderes and seconded by Ms. Brink-Pringle the December meeting minutes were approved by a unanimous vote of all members present.

III. Department of Economic and Tourism Development Update: Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development provided a department update for the committee:

- A.** The department has continued to work on an internal Strategic Plan. Ms. Tinelli is hoping to have the plan completed and adopted and ready to present at the next TAC meeting
- B.** The EDC Board has shown interest in hosting joint meetings with both the TTAC Committee and EDIF Commission in 2022. The TTAC members agreed that would offer a unique opportunity to members of all committees and Ms. Tinelli will follow up with some options for meeting dates.
- C.** The EDC Board will be hosting 2 FAM (Familiarization) tours to include visits to local Agritourism business, the manufacturing sector, and the Career Technology facility at Chesapeake College. The dates are to be determined but Ms. Tinelli offered an invitation to any TTAC members that may be interested in joining or have ideas for other potential tours.
- D.** The department continues to move forward with the Ferry Project and Ms. Clendaniel will be providing a more detailed update in her Tourism report.
- E.** The department budget request is due next week. Ms. Tinelli will be considering the increase in staff, planned projects, additional travel, and conference expenses into consideration for her request. Ms. Tinelli stated that the largest budget request will be for the Marketing Budget that has not been increased in many years and falls well below the available funds that are allocated to other counties on the shore. She mentioned that a letter of support from the TTAC would be very appreciated and helpful to show the importance of these funds and how they will promote tourism assets in Queen Anne's County.
- F.** Ms. Tinelli stated that they will be discussing some proposed Legislative Bills later in the meeting, but she wanted to emphasize that the County Commissioners look to local committees, like TTAC, for letters of support, for or against, upcoming Legislative Bills.

V. Queen Anne's County Tourism Update - Katie Clendaniel, Marketing & Destination Development Specialist, provided an update:

- A.** Ms. Clendaniel conducted a follow-up meeting with local breweries to discuss collaboration ideas and plans for FeBREWary. The breweries decided that each would create a Scotch Ale for FeBREWary as well as a collaborative collectable beer glass. QAC Tourism is supporting the campaign with marketing and promotion efforts as well as a merchandise giveaway. QAC Tourism has offered the breweries use of the billboard located at the intersection of Rt. 50 and Rt. 404 and will also be including a Brewery Tour on the new self-guided tour app that is currently in the creative process.
- B.** The department is kickstarting the new App with a familiarization meeting with the App developers. She anticipates a 3-month development period with a launch in late Spring.

- C. Staff continue to add upcoming event details to the website calendar. Ms. Clendaniel stated she is seeing more signature events like the Boat Show, Bay Bridge Run and Drink MD returning with 2022 dates.
- D. Ms. Clendaniel continues to work with the newly appointed board members for Stevensville Arts & Entertainment District as they transition through the organizational and strategic planning process. They are working through the process with Rob Levitt, a consultant who has many years' experience working with non-profit and art organizations. The progress is going well and Ms. Clendaniel will keep members informed of continued developments.
- E. Rich Gilbert, Group Travel Specialist for MD Tourism, met with our Tourism team to discuss "Group Travel 101" and how we can support our businesses. Ms. Clendaniel would like to invite Mr. Gilbert back for a workshop with local businesses to discuss what is needed to be considered Group Ready."
- F. Ms. Clendaniel met with Parks & Recreation Staff to discuss possible collaborative projects and collateral materials.
- G. The department continues their partnership with Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County regarding the Ferry Project. They recently applied for an EDA Grant with Visit Annapolis for the City Dock Project. This was a collaborative effort as Visit Annapolis needed a regional component and QAC Tourism needed a more substantial project to better fulfill the requirements for the grant.

VI. Old Business

- A. **By-Laws Update-** The proposed By-Laws were submitted to the County Commissioners and approved without change.
- B. **Short Term Rental Research Update-** Katie Clendaniel provided an update on the status of the departments ongoing research. The department attended a meeting with the County Administrator and Planning & Zoning staff to start dialogue regarding the history, current regulations, and potential for future rental revenue. Both departments compiled a list of research to be completed and will make plans to meet again for updates and discussion.
- C. **Team MD-** The department met with QAC Parks and Recreation staff members and members of Team MD (State Department of Sports Marketing). Team MD will conduct an assessment to evaluate the counties strongest assets regarding Sports Tourism and what it can offer for potential tournaments and sports related events.
On a motion made by Eric Hoffman and seconded by Dolores Jones, the committee unanimously voted for Ms. Tinelli to request additional funds in the budget to cover the cost of the Team MD assessment fee.

VII. New Business

- A. Review of Proposed Legislative Bills- Ms. Tinelli stated there are currently 4 proposed legislative bills that have potential to affect the tourism industry.
 - i. **Liquor Board Owner Residency Exception-** The proposed bill would allow no more than 4 businesses in the county at one time to open a business with a liquor license whereas the owner is NOT a county resident. This could potentially allow businesses held by corporations

and limited liability companies to establish in the county except for the Kent Narrows region. For example, this may include chain restaurants such as Applebee's or Lone Star Steak House). The committee members discussed the pros and cons and were unable to come to an unanimous decision regarding support, for or against, the proposed bill. They will discuss in more detail at a later date.

- ii. **Sunday Hunting**-This proposed bill would allow sportsman/women to hunt on Sunday's during hunting season and applies only to deer and turkey seasons. The bill does not include any migratory bird hunting. The committee members agreed that this opportunity could positively enhance the tourism industry.

On a motion made by Eric Hoffman and seconded by Michell Brink-Pringle, the committee unanimously voted to submit a letter of support for bill allowing hunting on Sundays.

- iii. **Kent Narrows Drawbridge Pedestrian Fishing Prohibition**- This bill would prohibit pedestrians from fishing on or below the Kent Narrows Drawbridge due to the hazard and safety issues with boats traveling under the bridge.

On a motion made by Mr. Schulz and seconded by Eric Hoffman, the committee unanimously voted to submit a letter of support for the proposed bill.

- iv. **QAC Public Safety Building Use for Agritourism**- The proposed bill would allow agriculture businesses to utilized buildings built for agricultural use to be utilized for Agritourism events without applying for additional permitting and exception to specific regulations. An example would be hosting a wedding reception in a barn on the property. This would be the first steps and there would be much needed clarification of exemptions and specific details discussed as the bill moves forward. The board recognized the potential for this bill to positively affect the tourism industry and give much needed financial support to local agritourism businesses.

On a motion made by Gail Owings and seconded by Ms. Brink-Pringle, the committee members unanimously voted to submit a letter of support for the proposed bill.

- B. **TTAC Officer Selection**-Ms. Clendaniel inquired if any TTAC members were interested in holding a position on the committee.

- i. Eric Hoffmann stated he would be interested in the Chair position.
- ii. Katherine Bonner volunteered for the Vice Chair position.

On a motion made by Jody Schulz and seconded by John Anderes, all committee members unanimously voted to support the nominations for Eric Hoffman as TTAC Chair and Katherine Bonner for TTAC Vice Chair.

VIII. Member Reports:

- A. Brian Truitt-Mr. Truitt shared the positive feedback that he and other local breweries have been receiving in response to the FeBREWary campaign. Sales increases have been significant, and the local breweries continue to collaborate and discuss future projects, events, and campaigns.

- B. Jody Schulz- Mr. Schulz expressed interest in the committee drafting a letter to the County Commissioners to requesting funding in the budget for TTAC. These funds could potentially be used to support local tourism related projects, business, or a matching grant program. The committee members agreed to have further discussions with Ms. Tinelli regarding this request and potential uses of the funds.

- IV. **Adjournment**-The February Travel & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting was adjourned at 9:58am.