



**Queen
Anne's
County**

MARYLAND

Economic & Tourism Development

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James J. Moran, At Large
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Stephen Wilson, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
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Travel And Tourism Advisory Committee

Business Meeting Minutes for August 9, 2022

I. Call to Order and Determination of Quorum:

The meeting began at 8:02am. A quorum was not represented due to lack of TTAC Members present. The following Committee Members were present:

Eric Hoffman
Jody Schulz
Katherine Bonner
John Anderes

Not Present:
Gail Owings
Brian Truitt
Derek Janes
Dolores Jones
Michelle Brink-Pringle

Staff Present:

Heather Tinelli, Director, Economic & Tourism Development
April Plummer, Marketing Destination Dev. Specialist
Lisa Gallow, Office Coordinator (Zoom)

Supporting Members Present:

Nancy Scozzari, Chief of Parks & Resource Planning, Dept. of Parks & Recreation
Linda Friday, President, QAC Chamber of Commerce (Zoom)
Gigi Windley, Exec. Director, Kent Narrows Dev. Fdn, (Zoom)
Steve Chandlee, Director, QAC Parks & Recreation

II. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

Agenda and previous meeting minutes were not approved due to lack of members to complete a quorum.

- III. Department of Economic and Tourism Development Update:** Heather Tinelli, Director of Economic & Tourism Development, provided a update for the committee:
- A.** QAC Tourism continues to collaborate with additional counties that touch the Chesapeake Bay on two different efforts:
 - i. Ferry Feasibility Study which has now made its way to the final round of approval.
 - ii. Destination Development Project- The group has applied for EDA Grant Funds through Maryland Tourism that would be utilized to collaborate marketing efforts for assets located on the bay.
 - B.** The department is currently working on their Tourism Marketing strategy for FY23.
 - C.** The MD Office of Tourism announced each counties annual Marketing Grant Fund totals which included an additional 8 million from the Governors office. MD Tourism utilized the same formula to divide the funds which typically allocates larger tourism destinations with more funding. This year, due to larger destinations shut down from COVID and not utilizing marketing funds like the smaller destinations with outdoor activities that appealed to visitors during COVID, smaller destinations like QAC faired very well with the division of funds. QAC Tourism will receive \$270,000.
 - D.** QAC Tourism was awarded \$75,000 from USDA Grant for Phase Two of their rebranding project. Tourism will work with other QAC departments on rebranding projects and efforts.
 - E.** The Economic Dev. Department is preparing for MD Economic Dev. Week in October. The department will partner with Chesapeake College to host a Workforce Development Day in which business leaders and educators will come together to tour and explore the CTE programs at the college. The focus is to promote the trades and build relationships that will benefit the students, college, and businesses.
- IV. Old Business**
- A. Parks, Ramps & Beaches Update-**Steve Chandlee, Director of QAC Parks & Recreation, was present to give committee members an update.
 - a. Summer Camps are finishing up for the season this week and were a huge success.
 - b. The department is preparing for fall leagues.
 - c. Many projects have been completed or are in process:
 - i. Pickle Ball Court completed at Mowbray Park
 - ii. Field renovations
 - iii. Trail work on Rt. 8 to extend to Target
 - iv. Bulkhead Project at Chesapeake Heritage Visitors Center is complete. Paul Sidun with Department of Public Works is working on Phase Two plan for finishing the grounds/parking lot

- d. Asking Commissioners tonight for 4th of July support for 2023 event. Mr. Schulz stated, from the Kent Narrows Dev. perspective, they prefer fireworks event is never on a weekend.
- e. James Woods with QAC Parks & Recreation has received 1.7 million in grant funds and has many ramp projects in the works.
- f. Meeting with SHA about trail in NE quadrant
- g. Currenting repainting the Matapeake Clubhouse
- h. Parks and Recreation recently completed the new Ranger Station and Restroom at Terrapin Nature Park'

Ms. Tinelli asked Steve Chandlee if the addition of new staff has been helpful? He responded by saying, "Because of COVID, we found out just how popular our Nature Parks and Beaches are, so they modified the number of visitors by placing staff to moderate. They now have a very good crew of part time seasonal rangers that can relieve the pressure from the full-time staff. Staff is in place during high peak season from 9am to 7pm. This year they have rangers stationed directly at parks to moderate numbers and get the parks back to their intended use which is nature preserve. Nature Parks are not beaches. They have unmonitored waters, no lifeguards, and underlying issues on bottom with storm debris that is dangerous. We have changed the vernacular to better represent the intended use. People are now getting to the right parks for the for the right reason."

Mrs. Tinelli asked if they have had many enforcement issues? Mr. Chandlee replied, "On rare occasion we may have an issue with an individual that may push the limits but overall, the majority are compliant and supportive of the changes."

Jody Schulz voiced his concern that pier located on the newly renovated bulkhead at the Chesapeake Heritage Visitors Center will once again become a spot for fishing and impede boats from docking as its intended use, Steve Chandlee said "There should be signs on the pier that say NO FISHING but Parks staff is not able to regulate 24 hours a day. Fishing will be allowed from the bulkhead. He further stated that fishing is a recreational activity that draws people. The objective is getting people to fish in the right spots just like getting them to use the correct parks/beach. It will not be an easy task and will take time, but he is optimistic that it can be accomplished. He said when you correct an issue and make it better people begin to respect it better."

Mr. Schulz stated that there is a desperate need for signs on the trail where bikes/pedestrians cross, especially where you turn to go into the Kent Narrows boat ramp and on Piney Narrows at the old outlets. Ms. Scozzari explained that signs are ready to go for the boat ramp and entrance to Boatel and she will look further into the missing signs at the crossing at outlets. She agreed that it is a very dangerous crossing as the crosswalk is dangerously immediate after making the turn. They also agreed that the markings on the road need to be

repainted. Ms. Scozzari stated that they will be discussing trail etiquette signage at the upcoming Bike & Ped Meeting.

Mr. Schulz stated it is an easy lawsuit for the county if the crosswalks and intersections are not properly labeled and if there is an accident at least the signage would clearly state the bike/pedestrians should dismount/stop. Lack of proper signs and proper caution is a liability.

- B. Metrics-**April Plummer, Marketing Destination Dev. Specialist, provided statistics from the monthly Metric Form and MediaOne marketing campaign.
- a. Ms. Plummer stated that the preliminary reports looked great, and we continue to experience increase in traffic.
 - b. The department continues to ad web content and digital strategy for our website.
 - c. Recently added KI Resorts to the MediaOne digital marketing campaign.
 - d. Ms. Plummer shared year over year statistics for 2021 and 2022 Hotel Tax.

IV. New Business

- A. QR Code Campaign-** April Plummer, Marketing Destination Dev. Specialist, provided details regarding the QR Campaign that will be offered to Tourism Partners. The objective is to strategically place the QR Codes where visitors are sitting or relaxing. For example, tables, menus or waiting areas at restaurants or breakfast areas and room literature at hotels.
- i. Ms. Plummer showed an example of a 4x6 table topper frame as one of the many options for our partners to share the QR code at their businesses.
 - ii. The department would like to do a test run and ask business owners to participate. How the QR codes are displayed would be at the owner's discretion and images would be specific to the business.
 - iii. Mr. Hoffman stated he is ready to start with frames on his tables in the breakfast area at the Holiday Inn.
- B. Tournament Notifications with QAC Parks & Recreation-** Ms. Plummer shared details that she has been discussing with James Woods with QAC Parks & Recreation.
- i. Mr. Woods will be providing Ms. Plummer with updated lists containing any upcoming tournaments that are scheduled with the department.
 - ii. Ms. Plummer will be sharing the list with all our tourism partners so they can be better prepared for the influx of people to the region. It was not determined how this will be shared but some options were discussed.

- VIII. Adjournment-**The July Travel & Tourism Advisory Committee Meeting was adjourned at 8:55am.