



**Newport & Bristol County Convention & Visitors Bureau
DBA Discover Newport
Board of Directors Meeting
12pm – Tuesday, May 16, 2017
Newport Harbor Hotel and Marina
49 America's Cup Avenue
Newport R.I.**

MEETING MINUTES:

The meeting was called to order at 12:05pm by Treasurer Keith Chouinard

BOARD MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE WERE:

Nancy Blount, Stephan Brigidi, Marco Camacho, Keith Chouinard, Kristine Cox, John Edick, Matt Gineo, TR McGrath, Barbara Pelletier, Matt Plumb, Brad Reed, Frank Sallee, Nancy Parker Wilson, Elizabeth Woodhouse

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & EXCUSED WERE: Duncan Maio, Paul Rodrigues, Brewer Rowe, Kathleen Seguin

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT & NOT EXCUSED WERE:

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

GUESTS PRESENT WERE: Joyce Holland from Stone Blossom Florist - Warren

Note: Our host, Kristine Cox, from the Newport Harbor Hotel and Marina introduced the board to her senior staff members and gave a brief talk on the history of the 133-room hotel, 6,000 sq. ft. of banquet space, 61 slip marina, Salt Water Restaurant and upcoming events including an Art Show and the Oyster Festival. She offered the board members a tour of the newly renovated rooms at the end of the meeting.

I. PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES:

The previous meeting minutes for April 2017 were reviewed by the board including changes. A motion to accept the minutes was made by Marco Camacho and seconded by T.R. McGrath. The motion passed unanimously.

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

III. TREASURER'S REPORT:

The treasurer's report for May 2017 was presented by Keith Chouinard. Keith went over the new format, which compares monthly actual vs budget and year-to-date actual vs budget. For February bed taxes, the City of Newport was up + 24% as compared to budget, Newport County (excluding City of Newport) was up + 19% as compared to budget, and Bristol County was up + 305% as compared to budget. Private revenue for the month of May agreed to budget, with total revenue +17% compared to budget. Total expenses were underbudget by ~ 5%. Keith then reviewed the revenue and expenses for April. A motion to accept the Treasurer's report for April 2017 was made by Marco Camacho seconded by T.R. McGrath. The motion passed unanimously.

IV. COMMITTEE REPORTS: no updates to report

V. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

- Evan Smith spoke about the annual fiscal audit. The Finance committee and our staff has begun the planning process for the audit in July.
- Evan is waiting on hearing dates for state house bill #6126 and senate bill #640 introduced by Rep Carson and Rep DiPalma requesting our funding remain at 47% of the lodging tax. He invited the board members to attend the hearings and will let them know the date and time.
- The lodging petition and district definition of a tourism marketing district (T.M.D.) in Newport has the city solicitor's approval. Petitions are being distributed to all lodging properties with 20+ rooms this week seeking support.
- The RI State Tourism Council expires in June. Rep. Lauren Carson is asking for an extension of the commission through December of 2018 to continue making recommendations on the breakdown of RI tourism funding and the best structure for a state tourism office.
- Commerce RI has released an economic impact report. The state tourism staff is developing an event called the "State Tourism Summit" tentatively scheduled for October 19th.
- The Breakers Mansion Visitors Center construction begins this week. Cambria Suites is scheduled to open Memorial Day.
- The Gateway Center construction is progressing. Buses are going to have access by June 10th. Steel structure are being installed this week.
- The repair work to both the Pell and Mt. Hope bridges has begun. Traffic delays are expected for commuters. We will adjust our travel advisories according to RIBTA updates.

VI. NEW BUSINESS:

The new *Ride the Rails- Rail Explorers* located in Portsmouth is now running daily (2) hour tours on custom built, easy to pedal "rail explorers". Scenic views of Aquidneck Island and Narragansett Bay for all ages.

The Newport Car Museum on W. Main Rd in Portsmouth is now open for tours at the Raytheon site.

Elizabeth Whitehouse reported the Little Compton town council has passed an ordinance allowing Sakonnet Vineyards an entertainment license to host 28 events this year.

VII. STAFF REPORTS: none given in the interest of time

VIII. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 1:10pm

**The next Board Meeting will be held
Tuesday, June 20, 2017
Newport Car Museum
1847 W. Main Road
Portsmouth, RI
12pm**