



Resort Advisory Commission  
4525 Main Street, Suite 710  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462  
(757) 385-2900  
FAX (757)

---

## RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES

**DATE:** October 7, 2021  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Virginia Beach Convention Center, Room 4AB

### COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

BJ Baumann  
Randy Thompson  
Bill Gambrell  
Billy Almond  
Chuck Cayton  
George Kotarides  
John Zirkle  
Lori Overholt  
Mike Eason  
Michael Levinson  
Michael Mauch  
Page Miyares

Tyler Brown

### COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Ronan

### OTHERS PRESENT

Guy Tower, Council  
Linwood Branch, Council  
Bobby Melatti, IMG  
Brande Rumpf, CVB  
Brian Solis, CMO  
Capt. Harry McBrien, VBPD  
D. Nachnani, Coastal Edge

Emily Archer, SGA  
Howard Waldie, STiR Office  
Lauren Townsend, CVB  
Lisa Bleakley, RMO  
Lynn Hightower, Wildfowl Mus.  
Mark Shea, Planning  
Michael Woodhead, HR  
Workforce Council  
Nancy Helman, CVB  
Stacey Parker, The Pilot  
Kathy Warren, SGA  
Robin Hart, SGA, Recorder

BJ Baumann called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. **Motion carried to approve the September 2, 2021 minutes as written.**

CVB Update - Taylor Adams, Nancy Helman and Lauren Townsend

Taylor Adams opened the presentation with a statement about how the city is building momentum with the spring and summer ad campaigns introduced by Lauren Townsend. The travel graphs for Smith Travel Research will be updated in September 2021.

Lauren introduced the city's new marketing services partner, Media Barn, and explained how the city is continuing its "We're Open" message with respect to COVID restrictions still in place.

New messaging refers to "guests" and "fall / winter" versus "tourists" and "shoulder season" to promote the city as a year-round destination.

### QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Marketing to locals is included in the events campaign and the enhanced entertainment programming, which performed well. The holidays will be marketed on a local and regional level. It was clarified that the term "out-of-market" refers to awareness, not so much "out of town" and "in-market" refers to things to do once a guest is here. There is a focus on bringing locals to events in the fall/winter.

Commissioners requested that a better measure of performance for the restaurants exists as it does for the hotels. They were advised that a firm has been hired to develop that, and they should know more in approx. six months. It was requested that the Commission consider a future legislative agenda item to allow the Commissioner of the Revenue Office to be able to provide more detailed information to businesses.

There was concern about the development of the CVB. The second wave of COVID has affected tourism yet again and it is an existing problem. The city is working toward a solution for moving the CVB forward, and hopes to see results of their efforts in another 12 months. The marketing department is sensitive to the hardship suffered by the hospitality industry and is trying to establish a balance between a bright outlook and the reality of COVID recovery.

#### J1 Update - Michael Woodhead

Mike told the Commission that his goal is to find a permanent solution for temporary housing for J1 students. The good news is that they are able to explore options and are working on it, but they are stalled in their efforts.

Suggestions included reaching out to Camp Pendleton and the colleges' dorms, i.e. Virginia Wesleyan. BJ Baumann noted that the students have had their time allowed to stay in the U.S. extended to six months.

Capt. McBrien has this item as a priority for VBPD and will report about it during his appearance at the November RAC for the law enforcement update.

#### FY22 RAC Priorities Final Review and Approval - Howard H. Waldie, IV, (STiR) Office of Performance & Accountability

Howard reviewed the RAC's progression in developing its FY22 priorities - the background, members of the Commission and the eight strategic priorities that evolved from the process. The guiding quote for the Priorities is to "Make the Virginia Beach resort area known as the 'Best Locals' Beach in America".

He also presented other priorities that were considered as part of the eight determined priorities and listed the ongoing work that aligns with those priorities.

#### **Motion carried to adopt the RAC FY22 Priorities.**

#### Chairman's Report

BJ Baumann called for volunteers to serve on the RAC Nominating Committee for 2022 RAC Chair and Vice Chair, announcing Chuck Cayton and Billy Almond as current nominating committee members.

BJ called for chairs for the RAC committees to determine vice chairs for each of their committees per the RAC Committee Guidelines.

BJ requested that committee chairs consider committee members eligible for the first Annual R. Preston Midgett III Outstanding RAC Volunteer Award, to be awarded in January 2022.

#### Committee Reports

##### Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC) & Resort Area Mobility Plan (RAMP) Steering Committee

Chuck Cayton provided an update on the Parking Office Annual Reports from 2021 and 2022.

The committee heard CIP updates for 17<sup>th</sup> Street, 18<sup>th</sup> Street, and Winston Salem Avenue from Emily

Archer and Denis Ozowara. **Motion carried to approve a draft letter from the TPPC for RAC to send to the City Manager and Council in support of the completion of Ocean Walk and addition of a 17th Street Crosswalk.**

An update on the Atlantic Avenue Pilot Project, including feedback, was provided by Deb Zywna.

Chuck reviewed the FY22 RAC priorities assigned to the TPPC, which will remain a recurring agenda item for new discussion.

He ended the report with an update on the progress of the RAMP Steering Committee.

Planning & Design Review Committee (PDRC)

PDRC did not meet.

Oceanfront Strategic Growth Area Committee (OSGAC)

OSGAC did not meet.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

Randy Thompson reported that there was discussion on the feasibility of a route-based and/or person-to-person pilot project for the late spring/fall of 2022. Patrick Dye of GEST Carts offered to come to the City to view the area and develop a pilot proposal for review.

Lisa Bleakley updated the committee with issues noted about the need for resort receptacles for cigarette butt containment and dog waste. There was also concern for the proliferation of newspaper stands at the resort. The committee recommended that she proceed with exploring solutions.

An update on the Atlantic Avenue Pilot Project was provided by Kathy Warren.

Randy reviewed the FY22 RAC priorities assigned to the OEC, which will remain a recurring agenda item for new discussion.

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

BJ Baumann reported that the RIC reviewed and approved the RAC FY22 Strategic Priorities (which were brought forward at today's RAC and approved).

They reviewed speakers under consideration for future RIC and RAC meetings.

The required reports per the RAC Bylaws were reviewed for content and eventual submittal to the City Manager as well as plans for a brief to Council at a future informal session.

G.R.E.E.N.

Michael Mauch reported that they received a Water Quality Update from the Virginia Department of Health's Brad DeLashmutt. The committee requested that the city's excellent water quality results be promoted to locals and guests. EPA links were sent to Lauren Townsend and Diana Burke for the CVB, and VBHA and Joel Rubin.

There were discussions about how businesses could incorporate Windsdays into their promotions and products to spread the word about the Offshore Wind Program.

They heard an update on the Atlantic Avenue Pilot project and are hoping that it gets extended for a year to be able to collect maximum data.

Michael reviewed the FY22 RAC priorities assigned to the G.R.E.E.N. committee, which will remain a

recurring agenda item for new discussion.

**Staff Report**

Emily Archer updated the Commission on the Temporary Outdoor Dining Area (TODA) program status. Although the VBRA was not in favor of extending the program another time, they were in favor of TODA permit holders who qualified for the resort outdoor café program to apply for a franchise agreement.

Kathy Warren provided an update on the Atlantic Avenue Pilot Program, how they are moving some of the table locations, and making suggestions for Halloween events to engage kids.

Lisa Bleakley advised that Virginia Beach Horseback has been in operation from July 2, 2021 and will continue through May 2022. The Boardwalk Art Show and Wicked 10K events are coming up. She advised of the working plan in progress for Holiday Lights and will be able to share more at a future RAC meeting.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

Mike Eason announced that Lynn Hightower of the Virginia Beach Wildfowl Museum is now holding events on the museum grounds and encouraged the public to consider their location for their next event. BJ Baumann encouraged a promotional campaign to highlight the museum.

**Public Comment**

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.