



Resort Advisory Commission
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION
MINUTES

DATE: October 3, 2013
TIME: 3:00 pm
PLACE: Virginia Beach Convention Center, Meeting Room 3C

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

Preston Midgett
Billy Almond
Jim Davis
Bobby Melatti
Sam Reid
Gerrie West
Bryan Cuffee
Nancy Creech
Tom Brown
Randy Thompson
John Hawa
Joe DaBiero
Kristina Chastain
Laura Habr
Sylvia Strickland
Michael Cloud-Butler

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Ken Taylor
Art Webb
Craig Roback

OTHERS PRESENT

John Uhrin, City Council
Bill Reed, BEACON
Diana Burke, VBHMA
MPO Matt McInerney, 2nd Prec.
Lt. Harry McBrien, VB 2nd Prec.
Mike Eason, SGA / Resort Mgmt.
Robin Hart, SGA / Recorder

Chair Preston Midgett called the meeting to order at 3:07pm

Motion carried to approve the minutes from the September 5, 2013 meeting as written.

Law Enforcement Department Proposal for Crisis Intervention Position – Lt. Harry McBrien

Mike Eason provides the background information on how Lt. Harry McBrien and the law enforcement department want to assist the homeless population at the oceanfront.

Although law enforcement officers receive certification in Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), they experience a problem of perceived intimidation when they approach those on the street who appear to be homeless. Since part of that problem is probably due to the uniform, Harry is asking for the support of the police department hiring a civilian person to work on the street, alongside law enforcement to both assist individuals, and gather intelligence on the types of people that are in these communities.

The goal of the position is to push the homeless toward Wounded Warrior of Virginia (not the same organization as Wounded Warrior Project) and other services, such as affordable housing, and other nonprofit organizations.

Mike says that Harry's position would help fill the void between the efforts of the Housing and Neighborhood Preservation group, Hope In The Upper Room, and the law enforcement group.

They are asking for support from RAC. Law enforcement will put it in their budget for approval, and then it will probably come back to RAC through the Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC), and then OEC can recommend that RAC endorse the position.

Motion carried that the Resort Advisory Commission support the Homeless Outreach Worker position for the law enforcement 2014 budget.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)

Preston Midgett reports that there was a presentation and discussion on allowing fat-tire bike riding on the beach. The committee did not take a position either way, because ridership was not large, and instead asked people that were interested in doing so to go to the civic leagues.

There was an update given by HRT on the low-floor trolley vehicle. There was discussion on whether or not to go with an Altoona-tested vehicle or explore other options that could provide the desired open-air feel, low floor and back porch, at almost half the cost. An Altoona-tested vehicle would allow for federal money for the vehicle, and potentially break even on costs, but vehicles that were not Altoona-tested could last 20 years with proper maintenance. The committee wanted to explore other options.

They also looked at the newly wrapped old-style bus number 1400, used on Atlantic Avenue. The ridership results for that vehicle measured 14%, compared to the others at 8%, indicating positive results.

They have not agreed on which vehicle they can get. If they cannot meet the timeline issues from the Altoona testing, they might just request more of the wrapped vehicles.

They continued discussion about the paid parking at the resort in the off-season. The VBRA and VBHMA were going to meet with the law enforcement group and see if they can work out a compromise. John Hawa requests that the retailers be a part of the decision-making process, and he will organize the Retailers' Association.

Law enforcement supports a valet in the trolley lane in front of businesses, but not the paid parking, for safety reasons.

Planning Design Review Committee (PDR)

Billy Almond reports that Bobby Levin is in discussion with the Red Cross about combining the Lifeguard program and their water safety program to help get the word out about water safety and have it be associated with the stands, and help generate sponsors.

There was an update on the light rail from Mark Shea, SGA Transportation Planner. The comments were primarily about budget and ridership.

Billy reports that the resort public restroom project on 20th Street will be represented by a single facility with a storage area. Duff Kliewer offered to redesign for an optimal architectural look.

Billy also mentioned that the 19th Street Redevelopment group met to discuss the upcoming Oct 10 Public Safety Meeting at 6:00pm.

They also discussed the look of the 19th Street development on a short-term and a long-term basis. There will be street section that would have two travel lanes (east and west); the sidewalks would be widened to 13 feet. In the center would be a 28-foot wide median that will serve as the future alignment of a transit system (if needed). In the meantime, the area will be a well-manicured linear park that could serve as a venue for an art market or farmer's market.

Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)

Jim Davis reports that one of their discussions at their last meeting was on the differentiation between bars and nightclubs in relation to some of the behavior issues in the resort area.

Rather than adhering to a food to alcohol sales ratio, the committee wondering if there are more applicable controls that can be applied to the establishments.

There was discussion on adding that idea to their legislative packet, and Councilman Uhrin asked the restaurant association to take it to a state level for more clarification and guidance.

Jim noted that they are asking a member of VBRA to take the lead on this on a state level, and Kristina Chastain has verified that the restaurant association is aware of the discussion.

Resort Investment Committee (RIC)

Preston Midgett deferred the report to Mike Eason. Ken Taylor was not available for the RAC meeting.

At the committee's request, Mike worked up some cost numbers for special events and they had a general discussion about a fair and equitable way to incentivize event organizers to look at some ways to support their events, other than using city services, and also what impact the event has on creating income for the city.

Preston mentions considering the contribution of goodwill as well as return on investment that an event might bring to the city.

Mike says that they are focusing on running events, which require police and traffic flow coordination.

Communications Committee

Sylvia Strickland reports that they did not meet last month.

G.R.E.E.N. Committee

Laura Habr reports that their next meeting will be October 30, 2013 and they will be discussing recycling updates, reviewing strategic goals, and promoting the VA Green program (who is having their statewide conference here this summer).

The Old Beach Green Market and Farmer Markets are open and successful.

Staff Report

None.

New Business

Preston mentioned the 31st Street roundabout and the new art, which will be revealed on Oct 12.

Nancy Creech expressed thanks for successful Neptune Festival participation, and announced the last big celebration for the 50th anniversary.

Kristina Chastain asks if anyone has seen or knows whom the advertising people are riding around on segues with sandwich boards and those hauling the bicycle trailers.

No one had any comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:25pm.