



Resort Advisory Commission  
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES

**DATE:** May 1, 2014

**TIME:** 3:00 pm

**PLACE:** Virginia Beach Convention Center, Meeting Room 4AB

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Billy Almond  
Ken Taylor  
Jim Davis  
Bobby Melatti  
Randy Thompson  
Preston Midgett  
Joe DaBiero  
Bill Gambrell  
Laura Habr  
Sam Reid  
Bryan Cuffee  
Kristina Chastain  
Gerrie West  
John Hawa

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Nancy Creech  
Tom Brown  
Sylvia Strickland  
Michael Cloud-Butler

Craig Roback

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Greg Ward, BCF  
Bobby Levin, Strategic Art Solutions  
Emily Labows, COVB Cultural Affairs  
Cindy Pennybacker, Chartreuse  
Charles Powell, Optics  
Capt. Sean Adams, VBPD  
Ken Spivey, VBPD  
Lt. J. E. Wilkerson, VBPD  
John Uhrin, Council  
Bill Reed, BEACON  
Stacey Parker, The Pilot  
Henry Ryto  
Mike Eason, SGA/Resort Mgmt.  
Robin Hart, SGA/Recorder

Chair Billy Almond called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.

**Motion carried to approve the minutes from the April 3, 2014 meeting as written.**

First Friday ViBe – Emily Labows, Director of Cultural Affairs, City of Virginia Beach  
Laura Habr and Andrew Fine have discussed the possibility of having a creative industries district. The area would run from approx. 16 ½ to 21<sup>st</sup> ½ streets (including MOCA), with the goal of improving the area, increasing the tax value of the land and improvements, increasing positive activity, providing a positive experience for residents and tourists, and building community relationships.

Cindy Pennybacker, of Chartreuse, and Charles Powell, of Optic, held their first event in April, called First Friday ViBe. They had musical entertainment from 4:00pm until 6:00pm, and it was very successful. They are looking forward to holding more events. Their next event is tomorrow, from 4:00pm to 8:00pm.

Project LifeguART Update - Bobby Levin

Bobby Levin brings the Commission up to date after he appeared at PDRC on Tuesday.

Recent developments are discussion of a Pop-Up Art Park that is under discussion, which will allow for the art to be visible in the area throughout the year, instead of just during the tourist season. The park is hoped to be located at 19<sup>th</sup> and Pacific Avenue. It will extend the sponsorship from a 100-day event to a year-round sponsorship/

There is a Plan B on sponsorships, to include shorter, discounted sponsorships that will be available for the 2014 year, in addition to the larger, longer-term sponsorships initially proposed for Year 2015. He hired a salesman last Friday, and the sales period will extend into the season.

The lifeguard stands will stay where they are, instead of being rolled up to the boardwalk, and they will be lit from 9pm-2am.

#### Law Enforcement Week 17 Update – Capt. Sean Adams, Second Precinct

Sean Adams reports that the message that they wanted to convey was to let the community know that the management of the weekend was a community issue and should be a community partnership.

The other thing was to take the message to the 18-25 year old age group. They went out to the higher education institutions in the area, gave presentations to their administrators and, partnering with the CVB, came up with something called “The Sticky App”, which is on the city website. It was a slideshow presentation that you can download to your phone which talks about rules and the fun things you can do in your area. They also came up with: the PSA with Regent. The information was well-received.

They also tried something that they tried at the Boston Bombing, which was that all the law enforcement officers wore yellow fluorescent vests. Nicknamed the Yellowjackets, they were highly visible and were told they had a calming effect. They had a very good labor approach, and good plan (because planning began a year ago with key stakeholders’ involvement).

In general, issues such as flash mobs along 21st-18th-17th streets, an impromptu New Orleans-style band that moved around in the area, a lot of unconcealed carry at the resort, on business owners as well as on civilian personnel. That may or may not always be okay, as some weapons were not always secured properly. They are working with the City Attorney’s office on that. They arrested twice as many this year as last year, as they were being more proactive on the front end. They were welcomed by the State Police on the interstate, which was helpful with traffic flow.

On cooperation in general, law enforcement reports that onsite security assessments were offered, businesses shared their site plans and security plans with law enforcement, and took advice. The 7-11 stores were on their game; they had a consistent plan all along the oceanfront. There were also a number of ABC agents at the oceanfront with a good security plan. They met with the same people this year that had problems last year, and helped them plan so it did not happen this year.

The talk has already begun as to what will happen in 2015. The key is to start the discussions early. They are expecting it to occur next year, and probably be larger than it was this year.

Joe DaBiero says the communication level was outstanding, and thanks all law enforcement. All hoteliers that they spoke with were satisfied.

John Uhrin says that we need to recognize that this will be an ongoing situation. We need to set up a follow-up action item meeting to talk about Best Practices, and what we need to adjust, and continue.

Sam Reid notes that all residents from Old Beach and south end were positive.

## **Committee Reports**

### **Transportation, Parking, Pedestrian Committee (TPPC)**

Electric Vehicles - Preston Midgett says that we need to prepare for service for electric vehicles. Comparing Myrtle Beach and the oceanfront, we have four sites, Myrtle Beach has ten charging stations (up from six last year) and Ocean City has none. Preston says they are looking for places for a pilot program, such as Whole Foods, Hall Nissan, etc., and they are looking at Visitors Center for a trial station.

HRT Update – we have been trying to get HRT to look at an open-air trolley vehicle that is more old style. TPPC approved a motion to do whatever they could to fund these trolleys, and he puts forth a motion for RAC to write to Council to express the need for these trolleys as their ridership is down and they need something to get the ridership back. In order to get a new vehicle they need to get it in the budget for this year. It needs to be recognized that 50% of the cost of these vehicles is being borne by the Federal Government and if we do not act this year, we risk losing their support. **Motion carried to support a letter to Council requesting to do what is necessary to fund the trolleys to increase ridership at the oceanfront.**

The other topic from HRT was the Park & Ride in the garages. They will be able to sell the trolley passes at the lots. Mike Eason also notes that they met with HRT and are looking at multiple options on how to promote this parking lot concept, including getting the sales back into the hotels.

### **Planning & Design Review (PDR)**

ProjLifeguART- Billy Almond refers to the presentation already reviewed by Bobby Levin.

PDR discussed locations for relocation of the 34th Street Art Pylons at the new 34th Street stage. Possibilities included Rudee Loop, Winston Salem, and 13th Street, with 13<sup>th</sup> Street being the most likely location to direct traffic to the Legends Walk. It is pending closer review.

The Old Coast Guard Station will be surrounded with fencing. They are trying to parcel off what is historic and what is park, and will mark the private from the public side. They will review a site plan to see what the alignments might be.

They held a meeting with owners at what is being called The Block, which is the west side area between 21st Street and 22nd Street. Architecturally, look at the side of the buildings, to see what can be done there. The people representing the Sandbar, the

Edge, Chemistry are participating so far. George Kotarides is also involved now. They met this morning for kickoff, they have mapping and they are trying to make some incremental changes to hopefully change the environment there,

Kristina Chastain asks if it could carry over, and Billy says that they don't want to homogenize, but the generic changes could be prototypical to another block.

### **Oceanfront Enhancement Committee (OEC)**

Jim Davis distributes the OEC summary of the problem-solving statement and recommendations so far concerning oceanfront behavior, along with a letter sent out by the RAC in October 2013.

He thanks the participants for their participation in the process so far (the good news is that they have made progress and the bad news is that they are not finished yet).

Jim reviews the OEC Recommendations to RAC for May 2014, stating that the Strategic Problem Focus is the safety of stakeholders and visitors. They identified safety for our residents, locals and tourists as the number one concern, and the committee identified three focus areas deemed contributing factors to the issue. The factors were (1) A level of community tolerance for inappropriate/criminal behavior, (2) Low accountability for inappropriate/criminal behavior, and (3) Enabling on the part of providers who offer goods and services to members of our homeless community.

After discussions with law enforcement and business owners regarding practices, policies, and homelessness, the committee reviewed change strategies to counter these contributing factors. The following prioritized recommendations are offered as resources and actions to effect change in the first two focus areas. Action strategies for the third focus area will be address at subsequent meetings.

For Strategic Action Focus 1, Increase Community involvement in response to inappropriate/criminal behaviors, the following Action Recommendation is to "Continue and perhaps expand VBPD's presentation 'True Perspectives' to businesses and retailers to offer a bigger picture perspective of oceanfront issues and increase their knowledge of effective response strategies."

For Strategic Action Focus 2, Increase Accountability for criminal/inappropriate behavior, the following Action Recommendations are as follows:

1. Funding for the Law Enforcement Social worker (Outreach worker) position.
2. Funding for Law Enforcement task force positions at oceanfront (desired number is 10) which is inclusive of a combination of officers, undercover, and fire marshal.
3. Installing floodlights at the parks.
4. Installing bench armrests (which some hoteliers indicate they can purchase in front of their sites.)
5. Expanding the surveillance cameras to 45 and then to 90 at the boardwalk.
6. If feasible, installing restroom cameras with placement that doesn't invade privacy.

Strategic Action Focus 3, Improve methods, processes, and coordination on the part of providers who deliver goods services to members of our homeless community, is

in ongoing discussion and it is hoped that Action Recommendations will be forthcoming.

Jim related to the committee that two problem areas were so closely tied together that by resolving the biggest concern due to the inappropriate/criminal behavior, the safety issue, we could also take care of those two items. The committee identified:

1. A level of community tolerance for inappropriate/criminal behavior
2. Low accountability for inappropriate/criminal behavior
3. Enabling on the part of providers who offer goods and services to members of our homeless community.

As a result of the discussion, the OEC comes to the RAC to make the seven recommendations to the Commission for support.

#### QUESTIONS / COMMENTS

Mike Eason makes a correction in the number of surveillance cameras at the boardwalk. He believes that there are now currently 13 cameras, and Harry confirms that there are 19 existing cameras that are old, and 13 that they just tapped into for traffic, but the goal is to get to 45 and then expand to 90 cameras.

Preston asks if the Homeless Outreach Worker position for law enforcement was denied in the budget. John Uhrin is under the impression that Outreach Coordinator will come from Human Services. Preston asks how that person will be trained. Harry McBrian says they will be trained as "a football player with a social worker's degree."

Jim Davis clarifies that they will also interact more than that, to get them into available resources.

Harry explains the Veteran Program, and says Norfolk is doing a great job with theirs. He suggests doing a program similar to that.

John Hawa mentions item number three, enabling. He is member of Star of the Sea Catholic Church, and he asks if they have been in touch with the providers and obtain their input and kept them informed.

Jim says that they have not done that yet, as it is a sensitive area and they want to approach it correctly. John suggests it be done sooner than later.

John Uhrin says that they have contacted these people, but they need them sitting right down with us.

Sam Reid asks if we have anyone working in the city on those federal grants for the veterans' programs.

Mike Eason thinks it may be multiple people with different skill sets coming from different people in Human Services.

Billy Almond asks Jim what he is requesting of the Commission. Jim says that they are presenting these seven items for the RAC to provide support.

Jim Davis makes a motion that these six recommendations be adopted by the Commission support and recommended to City Council for approval. Seconded by Sam Reid.

## DISCUSSION

Bill Gambrell asks about the floodlights and whether or not they should they light up the whole area.

Billy asks to rewrite number three (floodlights) to read "Install Security Lighting at the parks as required". Mike says that the lights exist, but they are broken. They would repair the lights and turn them on from 10pm to 6am, and they are no stronger than 2-ft candles.

Joe DaBiero suggests checking with the appropriate connected facilities.

Billy also recommends looking at the new technology other than floodlights, and Sam replies that they didn't get into the details, it was just to light the parks up.

Joe says with that said, you do have to talk to the neighboring areas.

Mike reviews the 24th and 17th Street properties and explains how the lights would not bother the neighbors due to their positioning.

Bobby Melatti says that a holistic approach is good; however, he does not think that lighting will help. These people you are trying to rid the area of may not respond to lights. He recommends closing the parks.

Billy says that the minute you light a park, you have to control it. If you light the parks on the same schedule that Parks & Recreation does, from dawn to dusk operating hours, and then close them at night, you avoid having to regulate them.

Jim Davis withdraws the motion, subject to a new motion.

Jim makes another motion, with the OEC committee recommending that the Commission takes for action these recommendations: Recommendation number 1 in the first focus area, and recommendations 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6, in the second focus area, with number 3, the installation of the floodlights at the parks, taken out to be reworked. Sam Reid seconds.

## DISCUSSION

John Hawa thinks that item number six (restroom cameras) needs rework also. He agrees with Bobby Melatti that creating a safe environment in and around these areas is what we are after. On top of that, the homeless do tend to find nooks and crannies; they are not lying out in the parks in the open. They are in and around the bathrooms and around the tourist information booths. He recommends taking another look at item six so that it is not misconstrued.

Jim says that they expected this discussion on item number six and proposes that we are looking to make the areas around public restrooms and parks secure. He asks the Commission for discussion on how to do that. Mike says that this will probably have to be vetted through the City Attorney's office, and cite case law as to whether or not we can actually do that. The key word is "feasible".

Ken Taylor agrees to accept item numbers 1,2,4 and 5; with item numbers and 3 and 6 to go back to the committee to reword to potentially say, "Install security lights and/or closing restrooms after hours". Review the list for lighting and/or closure back at OEC.

Jim Davis withdraws the motion. Sam Reid agrees to withdraw the second.

Jim makes a new motion. He proposes the RAC recommends for action the following: Action Recommendation Number 1 for Strategic Action Focus 1 and Action Recommendation Item Numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5 for Strategic Action Focus 2. Seconded.

**Motion carried for the Resort Advisory Commission to recommend for action the following: Action Recommendation Number 1 for Strategic Action Focus 1 and Action Recommendation Item Numbers 1, 2, 4 and 5 for Strategic Action Focus 2, as noted in the above discussion.**

### **Resort Investment Committee (RIC)**

Ken Taylor reports that they did meet this week and focused on two items. He distributes copies of the RAC Subcommittee guidelines and reviews the RAC subcommittee items for membership.

- Each RAC Commissioner must be an active voting member on at least one subcommittee, which will meet once prior to RAC and report on the meeting.
- The subcommittee will not exceed 13 members, and the total being the responsibility of the chairman.
- The subcommittee member must qualify to be eligible by attending six consecutive meetings. Once they qualify, it is at the Chairman's discretion if they qualify to be put in place as a voting member of the subcommittee.
- Every effort must be made to post voting issues on the agenda so that voting members will be made aware in advance.

Please review those items, and if the Commission is in agreement, then we adopt these as guidelines for the subcommittees.

### **DISCUSSION**

Joe DaBiero asks where the maximum of thirteen members came from.

Ken says that they discussed it, and based upon certain committee structures, and not to have an even number for voting, 13 was a suitable maximum. The requirement is not a minimum of 13 members.

John Hawa asks if the committee chair should be the one to set a quorum for voting, like it was done for Bill Gambrell in the Resort Area Parking Committee. Billy Almond agrees. Once you have established the number of voting members, you need to establish a quorum.

Ken clarifies that the subcommittee membership voting requirement does not apply to RAC membership. The six-month requirement is only for non-RAC members who are members of a subcommittee

Kristina Chastain asks about a brand new committee. Can she choose the voting members, or does she have to wait six months for her members to vote? Billy says that hers in a unique situation, a brand new committee.

Joe DaBiero wants to be able to send a voting member that can attend in their absence.

Ken agrees that is the way it is done in professional associations. There is a Voting Member spot, to prevent people from showing up when there is an issue at stake to vote. The question is that if the substitute hasn't attended the meetings, can they still cast (an informed) vote?

Joe wants to be able to nominate a member of VBHMA to go to all of the subcommittee meetings to be better informed. Ken wants to have continuity. Joe says if we treated the position if it were a person, would it preserve the idea?

John Hawa says no matter who attends the meetings, VBHMA agrees with this idea, not Andy, or Joe, or who would vote for themselves personally. Kristina Chastain suggests being required to attend only two or three consecutive meetings to get familiar with the meeting topics, in order to familiarize themselves with the subject matter.

Joe DaBiero says that no time requirement should exist for "replacement" members. It is different between the regular community member versus the professional association member.

Nancy Creech agrees that the professional association member stays abreast of subcommittee issues by reading minutes from the group, and asks about a proxy.

Jim Davis says that he believes that we are asking for the professional association (i.e. VBHMA) to be treated as a Member.

Ken Taylor notes that it needs to be determined which organizations can be represented in that manner.

Mike Eason restates that the purpose of the subcommittees is to serve as working groups who are at the will of City Council to do the background work, study it, and make the recommendation. You would think that the committee members might change slightly according to who is impacted by the subject at hand.

Joe DaBiero wants to take the subcommittee guidelines back to VBHMA and they will review.

Preston believes that we should not get hung up on the six-month requirement.

Ken says that he has already drafted words to fix that. He says that the focus of this is attendance, and consistent attendance. If you don't show up, you lose your seat, just like RAC.

John Hawa thinks that one of Joe's concerns is that if time is of the essence on certain voting matters. Preston cautions him on that because sometimes they have things in these subcommittees that come up in one month's time. If the association member is not comfortable voting on an issue that they have not cleared with their association, then they might not vote. That's why they need someone who is familiar with the topics. They want to make sure that decisions that are made are cleared with hotel, retail, restaurant, etc.

John Uhrin says that he wanted to make sure that people are encouraged to participate in the subcommittee meetings and that they quantify that participation, so no one person or group can sway the meeting. Also to Mike's point, the only recommendations from the subcommittees that will be forwarded to Council are the ones that are



formalized by the RAC. The time to set rules is in a time of peace, and that is what we are trying to do.

Billy Almond would like to vote on it next month. He asks to have the revised guidelines sent out to the subcommittees. He would like for it to be an agenda item next time.

**G.R.E.E.N. Committee**

Kristina Chastain updates for the G.R.E.E.N. Committee.

Earth Hour event was successful. Laura Habr is still trying to recruit Virginia Green members.

**Oceanfront Visionary Committee (OVC)**

Kristina Chastain reports that they did not meet last month.

**Economic Development Report - none**

**Staff Report**

Mike Eason reports that the Parking Operations are running smoothly since April. They are very busy with Special Events.

Billy notes that they are adding a Public Comments section for anyone who wants to address the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:47p.m.