



Resort Advisory Commission  
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES

**DATE:** February 5, 2015  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Virginia Beach Convention Center, Meeting Room 3AB

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Preston Midgett  
Jim Davis  
Bryan Cuffee  
Gerrie West  
Bobby Melatti  
Laura Habr  
Nancy Creech  
Sam Reid  
Bill Gambrell  
Randy Thompson  
Tom Brown

Kristina Chastain  
Sylvia Strickland  
Michael Cloud-Butler  
Craig Roback  
John Uhrin

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Greg Ward, BCF  
Stacey Parker, The Pilot  
Bill Reed, BEACON  
Matt McInerney, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prec.  
Cecelia Riddick, SGA Parking Mgmt.  
Mike Eason, SGA/Resort Mgmt.  
Robin Hart, SGA/Recorder

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Joe DaBiero  
John Hawa  
Billy Almond

Chair Preston Midgett called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.

**Motion carried to approve the minutes from the December 4, 2014 meeting as written.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Preston reports that their main topic last week was the trolleys at the oceanfront. Council approved the budget for 14 old-style trolleys. The plan is to have eight in place by July 1 and the other six delivered in July and August. If the schedules are not met, then the warranties for the trolleys do not start until next season. The front half of the trolley is enclosed and the rear half can be opened for the summer.

They received a summary of activity for the trolley routes last year. The Route 30 experienced a 7% decrease, the Route 31 bus that goes to the campgrounds and the science museum decreased 6%, and the Route 32 (aka the Shoppers Express) runs toward MOCA, going through the shopping centers at Laskin, to Lynnhaven and back, had a 37% drop. One of the things they change for that route is that it used to run down Atlantic Avenue to 31<sup>st</sup> Street. Counts recorded for the routes did not seem to explain

the decreases, and they are hoping that will change with trolleys.

Mike Eason reports that the ticket vending machines (TVMs) offer to HRT to install them in the parking garages is still on the table. They could do it at the beginning of the season but they have not responded on how they want to manage that. He will request Mark Shea to report to TPPC next month.

Central Parking's contract has expired and Republic Parking won the contract for this year. Republic also has the contract at Town Center.

They are trying to find a better way to get better use of the three-day passes. They will reintroduce the passes at the Super Host program for the hotel desk clerks. If they can talk to the CVB about marketing the passes to the convention attendees, they can use the trolleys from May through September.

### **Planning and Design Review Committee (PDRC)**

Gerrie West reports for Billy Almond. The committee heard presentations for two projects.

One project involved the new hotel going up adjacent to the 27<sup>th</sup> Street connector park. There was discussion about having the access drop off down the 27<sup>th</sup> Street connector park road toward the oceanfront. They presented a very schematic plan on how they are going to use the alley to get in and out with cars dropping people off. The long and short of it is that they asked them to report back with better renderings. They will come back in the future with more information.

The second project they reviewed was the Golden Sands Hotel at 13<sup>th</sup> Street, scheduled for demolition. Clark Nexsen presented a very nice design with the first floor slated for retail and the second floor has a nice balcony overlooking Atlantic Avenue and Legends Walk. They had positive response, and the only comment was maybe next time they would like to see a site plan showing the actual components of Legends Walk, where it ends, and where the potential outdoor café might begin, to make sure that they all fit together.

Mike Eason commented on the canopy discussion. They did complete the RFP to replace the canopy at 17<sup>th</sup> Street that a storm destroyed two years ago. The responses were double the price they thought they were going to be. They are now looking at other options, other manufacturers, and possibly going back with the same canopy that they had, weighing the advantages and disadvantages of doing so. They will come back to the PDRC with other recommendations but they are trying to keep the appearance with what the PDRC has already seen and approved.

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

Jim Davis reports that they had Lt. McBrien brief the committee on what they thought were outstanding preparations for Week 17 in 2015.

They also continued their discussion on the homeless services in the neighborhoods, and issues at 24<sup>th</sup> Street. Fortunately, law enforcement had attended the Resort Beach Civic League meeting just prior to the OEC meeting, and Lt. McBrien laid out a number of initiatives in which they were actually engaging the civic league. It

turns out that it was a good idea and a good plan that was still hopefully moving forward.

The committee also discussed some of its priorities for the upcoming year. One, the Sense of Arrival will continue to be on their radar. Another item involves how what is happening down at the oceanfront can affect and include other residents. An additional priority for 2015 had to do with anticipating the halo effect of new development, especially the dome and arena sites. We want to start looking at what possibilities there are for us and try to stay in front of that as it moves forward. We will hopefully start looking at other places around the country that have had developments to see what happens around that, and how the development affect the people around it, etc. The other item for 2015 will be the impact of homeless services and homeless behavior dynamics on our tourism industry at the oceanfront.

Bill Gambrell attended the Resort Beach Civic League and listened to Lt. McBrien and he made it a point to tell the neighborhood that the number of calls they had from that area on 16<sup>th</sup> Street, and from PIN Ministries in particular, was a fraction of the calls they had to deal with. But the civic league did vote overwhelmingly to ask the city to remove the power at the 24<sup>th</sup> Street and 17<sup>th</sup> Street park when the parks weren't operational, and asked if that came up in the OEC meeting.

Both Jim and Mike Eason verified that it did come up at the meeting. Mike says that he has already contacted building maintenance to make sure that those electrical panels were locked. Mike says that there is a safety issue with having those outlets hot, with no one around, and we don't know what's getting plugged into them, and from a public safety perspective, it'd be better that they not be energized. Bill concurs.

Gerrie asks if that park is back open, and Bill defers to Mike. She thought that the park had been under construction for a long time, and was wondering if it was back open. Mike says that the park will not be open until April 2015.

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

Preston says that the Resort Investment Committee did not meet this month.

### **Oceanfront Visionary Committee (OVC)**

Preston reports that the OVC did not meet this month.

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

Laura Habr reports that the G.R.E.E.N. committee did not meet this month.

### **Economic Development Report**

None

### **Staff Report**

Mike Eason reports on the two committees developed to work on the arena.

The booking committee reviews issues regarding booking events in both the arena and the VBCC, and decides how they will interrelate as far as a master calendar and term sheet are developed.

The operating committee reviews resources needed to manage parking, shuttle

operations, security, day-of-event concerns for both the arena and the VBCC, and how all that impacts the neighborhoods. There is a lot of work, staff time and coordination with SMG in getting those items worked out.

Mike also touches on the continuation of the Holiday Lights. He notes that this does not have to be discussed today, but wants to bring it up so we can be thinking about it. The Holiday Lights program on the boardwalk is 20 years old, with fixtures that probably should have been replaced 12 years ago, due to the toll that the salt and harsh environment have taken on them.

They need to consider how many more years of life the display has, how comparable shows around the country are faring, and how it will be supported financially. The city put \$800K in 20 years ago, and currently the revenue for the majority of the program is covered by ticket sales, not by city funding. He and Bobby Melatti are trying to determine the next steps, and gather input, and ultimately they will come to the committee with a briefing and ask for a recommendation.

Bobby said that this came up at one of their recent meetings and questions were asked, such as whether or not the display is and/or important for business, and what sponsor commitments are still to be filled. They do know that they will go forward next year, 2015, but they will have to retire some of the fixtures, because they are not electrically sound and pose a risk to his employees and others.

Mike says that the attendance has been dropping. They had 90K people this past year. Long-term projections and forecasts for this idea have to be reviewed, as is done for any other business. Mike requests recommendations from the committee, and they will be contacting people around the country for information and recommendations for alternatives.

The Pacific Avenue Project schedule is on time, with the completion date set for the end of April for 2015, for Year One.

We have funding for replacing the boardwalk lights, and we are again looking at options with our consultant. There are about 329 lights on the boardwalk and they are reviewing the connector parks. The money will come in year by year, so they are trying to figure out what strategy for the lights is best for the funding they will be receiving in the CIP. The driving force will be the poles' and the fixtures' ability to survive the elements.

There is a yellow light on the boardwalk now. Changing to LED lighting, a true-color light, will reduce operating and maintenance costs and be more energy-efficient.

Mike says that the new LED throws the light more downward, where the yellow lights throw light everywhere, including the beach. They did elect to retain the bollards on each of the sets of steps, so they will still have some light on the side of the boardwalk and some out onto the beach, but they are looking at changing them to LED.

The ice rink project ended February 1, with about 10K people having used the ice rink. He is in discussion with Rich Cuban to discuss coming back next year. There was a lot of support from the hotel community, but the weather was not their best friend this year.

Two personnel changes in the SGA Resort Management office:

Bill Kelly moved to the CVB Sports Marketing group on the fifth floor. Jamie Files, who has been in his office for about five years, replaced him. They also have a new person, Cecelia Riddick, who joined them as an Accountant II.

Mike congratulates Randy Thompson on another successful Wine Festival attendance at the VBCC. They had about 6500 people.

Preston says that the Sense of Arrival Committee met last week and one of the things they are looking at is how to make the best use of the money for the project. On the Visitors Center side of the expressway, coming down 21<sup>st</sup> Street into the resort, four poles display tall, narrow, flowing silks. Between Parks Avenue and the expressway, we have posts (that essentially look like a light pole) with a banner on one side. The committee felt that the one-sided banners were not enough of a display, and last week, landscape management added the same banners on the other side of the poles. As you drive down 22nd Street, he asks the committee to check to see if it noticeable enough. They are looking at adding more poles, or getting taller banners, and /or adding poles leaving the resort. Email any comments to Mike Eason.

With this trolley, HRT is scheduling a trip out of state to look at the details. One of the details under review is the exterior color. The rendering that the RAC has seen is the green, with a white top and the wood. Preston asks if the RAC has any suggestions, or if they were happy with this design.

Sam Reid says that we had the red color on the trolleys in the past, and it fades quicker. He thinks the green is a friendly color. No comments on the blue color. Greg Ward of BCF says that we were with the green selection, but he got a call today to regroup with that committee to *make sure* that the desired color is green. Greg thinks we need two people from the committee out to the plant to see the actual color and verify the selection. Greg will be at that meeting.

### **Other Business**

Laura Habr announced that the First Friday VIBE will be happening this weekend, and the Old Beach Farmer's Market will be this Saturday, February 21.

Bill Gambrell mentions that there will be discussions with VBRA and VBHA concerning offshore oil drilling projects and possibilities.

Meeting adjourned at 3:43pm.