



Resort Advisory Commission  
2101 Parks Avenue, Suite 302  
Virginia Beach, VA 23451  
(757) 385-4800  
FAX (757) 422-3666

RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES

**DATE:** May 7, 2015  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Volunteer Rescue Squad, 17<sup>th</sup> Street

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Billy Almond  
Bobby Melatti  
BJ Baumann  
Kristina Chastain  
Laura Habr  
Sam Reid  
Craig Roback  
Sylvia Strickland  
Michael Cloud-Butler  
Randy Thompson  
Preston Midgett  
Joe DaBiero  
Tom Brown  
John Hawa  
Nancy Creech  
Bryan Cuffee  
Bill Gambrell

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Gerrie West  
Jim Davis

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Bill Douthat, Patriotic Festival  
Brian Soils, SGA  
Diana Burke, VBHA  
Matt McInerney, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prec.  
Harry McBrien, 2<sup>nd</sup> Prec.  
Stacey Parker, The Pilot  
Bill Reed, BEACON  
John Uhrin, Council  
Cece Riddick, SGA Parking Mgmt.  
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 2, 2015 meeting as written.**

Light Rail Transit Presentation – Brian Solis

Brian begins with an aerial of Town Center, as that is where the project is currently headed.

He reviews demographic shifts that have been occurring around the country as far as transportation, urbanization, the workforce, and the aging population as a whole.

He reviews challenges that include current limited transportation with a 4-mi light rail, bus system and access to senior population by about 70%.

Opportunities include the development Connect Hampton Roads, where we are trying to move people over to public transportation. The goal is a 1-5% shift, which would make a huge difference.

The six pillars to enhance transportation include increased bus service, light rail, TDM (transportation demand mgmt. – carpooling, telecommuting, park-and-rides), active

transportation (bicycle and pedestrian connectivity), and infrastructure involved with all that.

Brian reviews the recommended routes for the light rail and other major corridors where high capacity transit can be developed to carry the most people.

The pros of developing public transportation include an opportunity to enhance economic vitality, increase the opportunities for a younger workforce and an older population to have more mobility options. The cons of not developing public transportation risk focusing only on the segment of the population that is transit-dependent, which is a missed opportunity for the other options.

Virginia Beach has been involved in the study of light rail off and on since 1987, and most recently, since 2009 we have been studying extending it into Virginia Beach. The study ended in March 2015 and public comment ended on Tuesday.

The study is married to land use, and they are trying to grow the Master Plan with its Strategic Growth Areas in the most efficient manner. The goal is to redirect 50% of the growth that will occur in this city over the next 25 years into the two largest land areas in the city, being the resort area and the Pembroke area. By doing that you encourage efficient land use, discourage suburban sprawl, which is not efficient for infrastructure, and decrease traffic congestion.

Transit is the most efficient way to get around in those corridors. Our major travel areas are I264, Virginia Beach Boulevard and the former Norfolk Southern railway between those roads. The Council's options to vote on May 12 will be (1) No Build (which is to do nothing), (2) choose light rail, or (3) choose bus rapid transit, and then chose one of the four line alternatives. The staff's recommendation is to extend the Tide to Town Center.

Brian reviews the light rail route alternatives, corresponding costs and opportunities for shared use pathways. More information can be found on the [Virginia Beach Light Rail](#) link of the city's website. The bottom line is overall, they see a shift from light industrial activity and uses to modest commercial and office space and residential development in and around the areas where transit is developed.

Upcoming milestones include the Vote, and the Record of Decision. The City of Virginia Beach would manage the light rail project.

### *QUESTIONS*

Preston asks if the transit study will make any recommendations, and Brian replies that it will not; the study only provides data from which Staff can make recommendations.

Billy says that because light rail is not coming to the oceanfront, it might be a good idea for us to hear where it is now until such time occurs where it might require a position from the RAC.

### ETS757 – Nichole Malbon

Billy says that they initially came to them last year with one site, and have since found

another site. This is a one-year pilot program, was approved at PDRC and met with approval by the RIC, so she is here today to present to the RAC.

Nichole provides the basic plan of the site at 712 Atlantic Avenue (8<sup>th</sup> Street and Atlantic). Their goal is to bring a food truck park to the oceanfront, as fun for locals as well as tourists. The whole point of their project is to assist small local businesses in creating a loyal customer base.

They will have a stage with local artisans and artists. They will have four taps with local draft beer and will sell wine. They are working with the CVB in marketing their business, 96X, local businesses like Whole Foods, and the creative ViBe District.

Hours of operation and specials are as follows: closed Monday; Tuesday 5pm-9pm is a local Famers' Night, Wednesday is 11am-10pm with a Local Night, Thursday is Mother Trucker night with specials for ladies, with all-female vendors, and Friday will feature a Tap Takeover featuring a local brewery in Virginia. Saturday will feature a food festival, which corresponds with what is happening at the boardwalk that weekend. Sundays is their brunch with the only requirement being that the vendor has to feature a breakfast item all day long, closing early, probably 7-8pm.

In the fall, they have ideas in mind, which include an oyster roast, a food truck war, a blues event, etc. They hope to install televisions for sporting events. They want to extend into the front building, which is a bathroom, but they will have indoor seating, and eventually hope to keep this open year-round.

Billy Almond adds that Bill Gambrell might say something about the restaurants wanting some sort of policy or ordinance with this, but the pilot may help to do that, and maybe even parallel that process.

Nichole says that they are behind what the restaurant wants, and she hopes to level the playing field within the food truck community as well. She is also considering the regulations regarding mobile boutiques.

### *QUESTIONS*

Nichole says that customer capacity will be determined by the fire marshal.

Kristina Chastain asked if the ABC gave them any capacity at all, and Nichole replies that her estimate was 100 seated people. ABC gave them the license for the entire park, not just the structured seating area.

### Patriotic Festival – Bill Douthat

Bill will provide a summary of the Festival and some board members will provide financial data on the Festival.

Lee, the Controller for the Festival, and gives the Commission an overview of the budget. They are no longer doing the airshow, primarily just concerts, which will generate about \$1M with another half million in discounted services or donated services. In addition, there are a lot of costs for activities that are set up and rolled in, another donated cost of approx. a half million. About 75% of their costs are entertainment, in either talent or production.

Bill says that there are five components of the Patriotic Festival, one is the 5<sup>th</sup> Street stage which will hold various artists over the weekend, and going through the

website, he points out the corporate sponsors on 17<sup>th</sup> Street. The Military Expo is moving from 31<sup>st</sup> Street to 17<sup>th</sup> Street, where the US Fleet Band will perform, with other artists.

Paula reviews the party for the USO, which begins on Monday, with the Ride to Recovery, from D.C. and ending at the GEICO building in Virginia Beach. In addition to the standards, such as the concerts, they have the Walk of Gratitude on Friday afternoon. All their participants will walk from 17<sup>th</sup> Street to the 5<sup>th</sup> Street stage in the USO Chalet, next to the stage.

Kelly, representing GEICO, speaks to the Commission from the sponsor standpoint. She represents the VA/NC Regional Marketing Event Manager, and is the National Motorcycle Events Manager for GEICO motorcycle. GEICO has participated in the Patriotic Festival for the last five years. They support the city and the event with their company assets and their advertising agency promotes Virginia Beach and the Festival out as far as Richmond.

John Uhrin ask about how many Wounded Warrior they hosted last year. Paula replies they had about 225, and expects it to be larger this year, as they are adding Navy Gold Star Families.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

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

Preston Midgett reports that they met last Thursday and had a presentation about a new sewer system. The sewer line east of Arctic Avenue has been replaced. There is a new pump station in this (oceanfront library) parking lot. They are going to tie in the new system at Arctic Avenue with this new pump station. This new pump station will be able to handle the new dome site and any future development. They will try complete 19<sup>th</sup> Street from September through Christmas, and keep accessibility for the businesses. Along 20<sup>th</sup> Street should be completed around January or February. They are not completely sure yet what will be done with the arena site, but that is under consideration as they move along with this project. John McDonald is the point of contact.

They had an update from Mike Tippin on the Pacific Avenue project. Phase I is wrapped up. This year was the toughest part of the construction. Most of the work was done ahead of schedule and under budget. They will run the same schedule next year with all utilities going in. There will be some street or lane closures, but nothing like this past year. The following year will involve light poles and sidewalks.

### **HRT**

Last year they had one of their bus lines, known as the Shoppers Express, change their route to service MOCA. Due to resident complaints and concerns, they are looking at trying to remedy that and service both locations without having to run it through the neighborhood. HRT is visiting again next month and we are trying to get a solution.

There is a Trolley Grand Opening set up. Three of the new trolleys should be in place at the end of this month. Invitations will be sent to RAC Members along with the

### Ribbon Cutting for Rudee Walk.

They received a picture of the trolley with a bike rack. They will have two trollies with the racks, and if they are being used, they will order all of them.

Other business included the bike path being restriped, and will have the new bike symbol. Boardwalk lighting is still scheduled to start this winter.

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

Billy Almond says that the PDRC met earlier this week and reviewed five projects.

The first was the Beach Place II apartments, which is a second building on 29<sup>th</sup> Street. That was reviewed and approved.

The Grand Ocean Hotel project had an update. They had come to an earlier meeting and there were questions about access, and how 11<sup>th</sup> Street was going to be treated. It is an older hotel and the restaurant and service backs up to 11<sup>th</sup> Street. The architect had redone the entryway, taking out the curb cut. They put in a fair amount of landscape and site improvements along the corridors with arbors and screening. The committee asked them to consider a couple more options toward the east side of that. They were still trying to consider resurrecting a plan between previous owners to see what they can do to improve the pavers in the street.

They also received a briefing on the Home2Suites hotel. The Belvedere hotel is coming down, but going back up with the Belvedere café being replaced in the exact location that it is now, except it is a modern hotel. The 36<sup>th</sup> Street pedestrian way is untouched. They will come back to the committee with the café design for review and approval, but the project was approved based on the design presented.

They had the first of the three briefings this week on the ETS757 food truck park and that went over very well.

There was a CUP request for amusements at what is currently a commercial parking lot at 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. The plan is for a zip line and a slide. That lot is no longer a commercial lot, so it is a private venture. They supported that, so it has to go through the CUP process. This is just on the west of the old library on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

They had a connector park streets discussion and it was the opinion of the PDRC that they support the regulation that John Uhrin submitted on Tuesday, that the review of that and any curb cuts that would be required on one of those connector park streets go through the City Council review process.

The planning department and SGA are looking at those stub streets, or connector parks. It is one of those areas that was not discussed enough during the form-based code development because they were just considered beach streets. There are opportunities on those beach streets that are not applicable from Atlantic to the boardwalk. It needs to be more pedestrian in nature.

Ashby Moss is reviewing that and there will probably be an amendment to the form-based code to address those streets in the future.

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

OEC did not meet.

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

The trolley ceremony conflicts with next RIC meeting, and they will need to reschedule.

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

Kristina Chastain reports that the OVC did not meet this month.

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

Laura reports that she has an update on the Beachy Clean Program. They dovetailed on the VBHA's cigarette butt program, and Laura shared the logo with the Commission. They are still talking to Public Works about putting stickers on the trash cans.

The first testing by the VDH is May 13 and she hopes we can keep a clean beach. The Earth Day Clean up at Lake Holley on 16th Street recovered 425 lbs. of trash. Clean the Bay Day on June 6.

### **Economic Development Report**

None

### **Staff Report**

Mike Eason reports that they are working with Christina Trapani with the cigarette butts program, placing the recyclable containers on the boardwalk. They will have four or five placed around 20<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> Street and are working on the agreement.

Cirque du Soleil is coming together. They are working on water, sewer, lease agreement, final details. Mike wonders if Kooza can come to RAC maybe in July for a presentation. Billy mentioned some banners will be going up on 64 with the logo and artwork from Kooza. No wording, just pictures.

Bill Gambrell comments about the loss of the Belvedere Hotel and wants us to be careful about the structures we are losing. He also says that the building on 22nd street that has the zip line going by it is another historic structures and he wants us to be cognizant of that.

### **Old Business**

Last month they had the presentation on the offshore exploration with pro and con presentations. We had deferred the stance until this meeting and asked Joe DaBiero about the VBHA's stance.

Joe says that on Monday the Board met, and Duane sat in his position. The Board decided that after much discussion, they are opposed, but are open to it after more years of research. Currently their stance is that they are opposed to offshore drilling.

Billy says that this is the second go-around with this. Frank Wagner spoke a number of years ago, and they were in the same situation. With that in mind, Kristina restates the motion from last month that the RAC votes to oppose offshore drilling exploration in Virginia. Seconded.

Bill Gambrell says that the VBRA says they oppose it recreationally.

Bryan Cuffee abstains due to lack of information.

Preston has the same reasoning as Bryan, and abstains  
Sam Reid says that the CCO has not discussed it, so he abstains.  
Randy Thompson also abstains.

**Motion carried. All other RAC members voted to oppose offshore drilling exploration in Virginia, with four abstentions.**

**New Business**

None

**Public Comment**

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:26pm.