



Resort Advisory Commission  
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES

**DATE:** May 5, 2016  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Virginia Beach Convention Center, Room 1AB

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jim Davis  
Gerrie West  
Bobby Melatti  
Craig Roback

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Bill Reed, BEACON  
Stacey Parker, The Pilot  
Courtney Dyer, VBCC  
Brad Van Dommelen, CVB  
Dallas Stamper, PIN Ministries  
Nilesh Patel, BCF  
Mike Eason, SGA/Resort Mgmt.  
Cece Riddick, SGA  
Robin Hart, SGA/Recorder

Chair Billy Almond called the meeting to order at 3:00p.m.  
**Motion carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the April 7, 2016 meeting as written.**

Alternative Energy Discussion – Senator Frank Wagner  
Senator Wagner begins talking about the various sources of alternative energy and the pros and cons of each.

Offshore Wind Turbines – the Federal Government Dept. of the Interior awarded Dominion the parcel off the coast of Virginia as an area that could support this type of project. The \$350M cost plus contract is to install two 6-megawatt turbines for the 12-megawatt total project. In comparison, a conventional gas turbine plant is about 1200 megawatts, and costs about \$1.2B. They still have to go through the SCC for a rate adjustment clause. Compared to conventional solar projects, which come in at about \$2 to \$3 per commercial watt, the turbines are a less expensive operation. While it sounds good, and the Senator is a fan of this type of energy, with today’s low fuel prices it would be hard to justify that expense. He does not expect to see it go through.

Renewables play an important part in the energy portfolio.

The current administration has put through a Clean Power Plan to be submitted to the EPA by September. It will consist of some coal-fired plants being replaced by natural gas as the base load.

The downside of solar is that it takes up land. Another problem is that we do not have a feasible method of storing it. If a prototype for that can be developed that works, it will be a game changer.

Offshore Drilling – Although Senator Wagner is a proponent of it, he does not feel that this is going to happen for a long time. Where we know that there are proven deposits, all work has come to a screeching halt because it cannot compete in pricing. The same technology, fracking, has caused natural gas (and oil) prices to drop.

Having said that, he feels that we should at least gain knowledge on it.

Switching gears, Senator Wagner discusses that energy is needed for transportation. The Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel is our resort's lifeline. We have released funds only to congestion-relieving road, bridge and tunnel projects. They will widen 64 from Jefferson Avenue to the second 199 exit to the other side of Williamsburg. The Newtown and Witchduck Road interchanges as well as the high-rise Bridge are also projects in the works.

He has tried to change the tax from a percentage system to a per gallon tax for the region in order to get these projects done without having to resort to toll roads. He is trying to get the cash flow up while the prices are low. On the high-rise bridge project, they are grappling with the need for HOT lanes versus waiting to do the projects due to existing agreements with the midtown and downtown tunnels. The timing of the COE process is also affecting a lot of the projects.

## QUESTIONS

Preston Midgett asks about the offshore surveys that were done in the 1970's that they discussed 5-6 years ago.

Senator Wagner says that those were based on technology that was available at that time. Then, it was \$30-\$40M to punch an exploratory well and 1 in 10 actually found a source. Today, the potential is closer to a one in two chance of finding a source.

Preston thought that they were going to try to get the surveys updated during the last attempt at selling leases for offshore drilling. He thought that there was a problem with getting the surveys due to the impacts to the whales and other marine life.

Senator Wagner confirms that the surveys have not been done. It will be a decision from Washington and if it is completed, it will be done for the whole coast. He does not have any further update yet.

Laura Habr believes that we do not need to be inviting seismic testing, having had 75 scientists weigh in on the possible negative consequences.

The Senator understands Laura's position, and he is offering his position at the request of the Resort Advisory Commission. He is a diver, and has had the opportunity to fly over a platform and has seen substantial habitats form around the rigs. When they are through with them, they try to drop them down to the bottom in order to sustain the life that has formed around them. Although he does not discount any accidents, he believes that we have procedures in place to safeguard against them as best we can and minimize any impact. He believes that we ought to know where our natural resources are, and are not.

Laura Habr agrees with Senator Wagner's sentiment, but feels that we should have the technology that can bring the information to us in a safer manner.

Billy Almond says that the building design and construction, especially by our school systems in terms of energy conservation is phenomenal. He wants Richmond to understand what they are doing in terms of energy conservation as opposed to getting new sources of energy.

Senator Wagner says that there is no silver bullet; that it is more of a silver shotgun, using multiple sources: solar energy is one, wind power is another one, and natural gas and nuclear power are others. Conservation is probably one of their biggest concerns and one of the lowest-hanging fruit that they have, but statistically they project a 0.3% increase in demand of electricity each year for the next 10 years. You have to look at the generating capacity, and what can be bought off the grids. Virginia is second to California in buying power off the grid, at 20-25%. Our concerns are that the Clean Power Plan requires that we shut down coal plants. One of the largest is in West Virginia and its shut down would hurt Virginia.

Joe DaBiero asks if the HRBT has been put back in the 20-year plan.

Senator Wagner confirms that it has been put in and they had to submit a supplemental environmental impact statement that will take two years to complete, and they can start the design work after they know what the results are. They know that the price tag is going to be several billion dollars, as the price of the high-rise bridge project alone is about \$600-700M, which includes widening to Bowers Hill. The 64-264 interchange is \$500M. They will however, qualify for State money under the HB-2.

## **Committee Reports**

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

Preston Midgett reports on the new employee parking passes update, and provided an update from HRT. The new trolleys will be here starting May 1, and they are working with selling HRT passes in the lots and garages. They are working kinks out of the parking passes system as they speak.

Mike Eason adds that there is a learning curve on using the resident and employee passes system on both sides. A lot has changed since they last spoke at the TPPC meeting the previous week.

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

Billy Almond reports that PDR did not meet last month.

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

Sam Reid reports on the Rudee Inlet banners program and the Supreme Court ruling concerning signage, and the donation meter program and Lighthouse closing; 2016 Beach Week, continuation of The Block meetings, the possibility of putting a QR code at the law enforcement memorial and former Governor Doug Wilder's induction into the Legends Walk at the oceanfront.

Dallas Stamper reports on the success of the cleanup done recently by PIN Ministries and their anticipation for an event next year due to the positive response. Billy asks Dallas to come back next spring and re-energize the committee about this in advance.

**Resort Investment Committee (RIC)**

Billy Almond reports that the committee discussed the upcoming RAC speakers.

Billy tentatively invites Brad Van Dommelen, present at today's meeting, to consider an appearance in August to discuss his perceptions of the CVB and its future path.

**Oceanfront Strategic Growth Area Committee (OSGAC)**

BJ Baumann reports that they are continuing their discussions with property owners in the Laskin Gateway area. After that, they hope to create a summary of what they have learned over the last few months about what the stakeholders envision and what might be able to happen.

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

Laura Habr requests that the RAC send a letter of support to the ODU Coastal Resiliency Program in order to help them secure funding to support their project.

Billy says that the group is coming to speak to RAC in July, but the letter appears to be critical to their grant writing and research and development, and the sooner they can receive support from RAC, the better. **Motion carried unanimously to send a letter of support to the ODU Coastal Resiliency Program.**

Laura reports that they added more cigarette receptacles between 14<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> Streets and thanks the VBHA for participating in that program. They are gearing up for the storm marker program, which identifies the watersheds. The Great American Cleanup is on May 14. Their recycling collection numbers vary depending on weather and other factors, so they are reviewing that data. She thanks the participants in the Lynnhaven River NOW program's oyster program.

Joe DaBiero encourages the cigarette butt program and wants the program to grow along the oceanfront. Mike says that Virginia Clean Waterways is a major sponsor and he believes that the Surf Rider Foundation is another sponsor.

Currently Christina Trapani empties the containers, and if we expand the program, we would need to find additional people to maintain the program. Joe suggests that hotel sponsors could maintain their areas of sponsorship.

Sam Reid suggests adding sponsorship information to the cans, and Mike replies that Beachy Clean is currently the name on the program. If we wanted to add sponsor names, it might require a trip back to Council, given the Supreme Court ruling Sam mentioned concerning signage and sponsorship.

**Economic Development**

None

**Staff Report**

- Mike Eason confirms that the induction ceremony for Mr. Wilder is May 19 at 10:00am at the Legends Walk.
- The boardwalk lighting Phase I has been completed. Phase II will begin in the fall.
- The LifeguART contact was renewed by City Council.
- They are in the middle of their busy event season and this is a big weekend for the CVB.

- Mike thanks Dallas Stamper for his efforts and he agrees in that making people a part of their community often makes them more respectful of the community.

### **Other Business**

- Billy Almond reports that the ViBe stormwater design competition package has gone out to the landowners in the area. They have grants in place and trying to get that out this summer and hoping to get something by next spring.
- After the presentation on the Fort Monroe project from Glenn Oder in April, Bobby Melatti suggested having a theatrical production on the oceanfront in the summer of 2019 that tells the story of the landing of the first Africans to correlate with the celebration. More to follow.
- Next month Preston's TPPC will hear a presentation on dog etiquette on the beach, brought about by events in the past with loose dogs fighting on the beach.
- Joe DaBiero says that last year they had a presentation from landscaping about cleaning out the stub streets of underlying growth and requested an update.
- Mike says that they are reviewing the boardwalk tomorrow with a group called RAMI (resort area maintenance) and will have an update soon after that.
- Sylvia Strickland asks about sending thank-you notes for speakers' presentations, and Billy requests assistance from the Resort Management Office.
- Laura Habr announces the dates of the operation of the Farmer's Market as well as the ViBe District's upcoming first anniversary block party.
- New CVB Director Brad Van Dommelen looks forward to coming back to the RAC in August.

### **Public Comment**

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:35 p.m.