



Resort Advisory Commission  
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RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION  
MINUTES

**DATE:** October 6, 2016  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Virginia Beach Convention Center, Room 4AB

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT**

Billy Almond  
Sam Reid  
Bill Gambrell  
BJ Baumann  
Tyler Brown  
Craig Roback  
Randy Thompson  
Preston Midgett  
Bobby Melatti  
Laura Habr

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT**

Gerrie West  
Nancy Creech  
Joe DaBiero  
John Hawa  
Bryan Cuffee  
Sylvia Strickland

Michael Cloud-Butler  
Kristina Chastain  
Jim Davis

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Dave Hansen, VB City Manager  
Matt McInerney, VBPD  
John Uhrin, Council  
Emily Archer, Planning  
Brad Van Dommelen, CVB  
Kathy Warren, SGA  
Diana Burke, VBHA  
Bernice Pope, HRB  
Tiffany Russell, CVB  
Bill Reed, BEACON  
Stacey Parker, The Pilot  
Cecelia Riddick, SGA/Parking  
Mike Eason, SGA/Resort Mgmt.  
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 August 4, 2016 meeting as written.**

City of Virginia Beach Update - Dave Hansen, City Manager

Dave Hansen has served in the City Manager capacity for nine months so far and he has learned that we have three economic centers that are held together by suburban neighborhoods and corridors throughout the city.

His focus today is on the resort and also the neighborhoods in the resort area and how critical the balance is between service delivery and financial support in incentivizing the growth.

The future is dependent on our ability to grow. The City Manager is tasked with maintain that expected quality of life and how to fund that quality of life. The infrastructure, education, and public safety need growth strategies to support them and without it, he

believes that the revenues required to preserve that quality of life will be shouldered by property owners – homeowners and businesses. How we continue to repeat as a world-class resort involves several projects. One is the renovation at Pacific Avenue, and 17<sup>th</sup> Street and Virginia Beach Boulevard as it comes in to the ViBe to develop a cultural entity.

He has confidence in our new CVB Director's analysis for the resort area. He mentions spreading out the entertainment in the area and analyzing the quality. He is committed to improving the quality of our beach, as well as its landscaping.

The incentive program has generated a lot of conversation. He feels that the tourism financing program offered by the state is the best return on investment of any incentive program anywhere. The competition for tourism dollars from Ocean City and Myrtle Beach will always be there. Being able to leverage that towards other policies provides opportunities for people that want to pull together to improve our product. We must remain competitive in the revitalization of our beach.

He senses the opportunity of their Victus sports marketing study and he urges hoteliers to preserve the dollar per night in order to create a \$22M project capability.

For the arena, he says that the developer has an agreement in hand valid through November 8 and if the arena does not materialize under the current construct, he believes that there is still an opportunity to make that happen.

Dave believes that we are at an inflection point for the future of the city. We have the advancement of light rail in the west, and we need to connect the two commerce centers of the two largest cities in the commonwealth to determine whether that fixed rail transit system works. He feels that with it, we are going to be able to incentivize activity between the two cities. The activity will be in the form of new investments, which are the revenue-generating taxable items that allow the city to continue to grow. If we want to compete for the workforce for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have to bring it in.

He couples the increase in investment with city hall, a community that he believes is about to fail. Air quality monitoring is occurring in several buildings, and buildings that were designed in the 1960's are not suitable for our city now. He believes that we need a new city hall in Town Center, which would be connected to the other city hall in the other city by extending light rail from Newtown Road to Town Center. He feels that they need to be approachable for government in the future so the citizens can more easily interact with their city council and their senior staff.

Both city hall and light rail are happening and he wants to make it all happen together and get synergy out of that. He wants Virginia Beach to be on the map for the best place to come, work, and live in a quality of life environment. The corridor of strategic growth areas that was designed to do that years ago happens to fall along the light rail line.

He says that light rail is not only about ridership; it would serve as the backbone for that growth. The environmental impact statements that the opposition to light rail point to do not comment on the economic value of a project but they do analyze whether a project will cause damage to wetlands, water, or unfairly influence populations. He points to the other cities that have implemented a like transit system and experienced the success of that growth. He says that the future GenXers and future Millennials are leaving for cities where their career ambitions can be met. The city is in a highly competitive environment in that situation.

He says that we need to capitalize on the incentive programs that exist. We need to have a fair distribution of CIP projects so we can preserve the beach and we need to continue with innovative ideas while preserving the rich neighborhoods that exist and support the beach.

## QUESTIONS

Preston Midgett asked if there was going to be an increase the advertising budget, and Dave says that they are walking back into a pre-recession scenario. His job is to repay many of those cuts they agreed to make during the recession, and repaying the advertising fund in one of them.

Laura Habr asks about working with other cities and sea level rise and how preparing for it may affect insurance rates.

Dave says that are working toward becoming a member of the Community Rating System (CRS). They want everyone to understand the requirements before we join that. He thinks it will take about a year to get through the process. It involves the city putting together a mitigation plan and then they can move forward with the application process.

Sea level rise is a big deal, and estimated to be about a foot in the next 50 years. They are working on solutions to better secure the severely affected areas which involve berm, pond and pump solutions. The recent flood proved many of their internal systems, but they are going to have some recommendations next summer for the Lynnhaven Watershed.

John Uhrin mentioned the discussion that the RAC has had about making the Sense of Arrival project at the Visitors Center area a water feature to assist with and incorporate stormwater management.

Billy Almond echoes John's suggestion, and mentions the subcommittee that has been talking to property owners in the Laskin Gateway area to try to spur development in that area given the city's \$40M in public infrastructure.

He agrees that the aesthetics of the resort beach is important, but the fact that it is well kept is also important.

He agrees that development is needed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Street area and talks about the efforts and suggestions of the 19<sup>th</sup> Street subcommittee over the years.

He thanks Dave for his time and closes the discussion.

## **Committee Reports**

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

The TPPC did not meet this past month but the meeting before that had an update from Emily Archer on the ViBe District on the upcoming projects.

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

PDR reviewed improvements to the DoughBoys Pizza at 24<sup>th</sup> Street, They also discussing revising the café guidelines to reflect the change sin FBC and ORD, with the purpose of creating a guideline for the ViBe District.

They reviewed the RAC nominating committee.

They reviewed vendor sites during the events along the beach and on the boardwalk, as well as the parking program.

They will be reaching out to RAC members concerning attendance and that all RAC members are to be serving on one of the subcommittees.

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

Sam Reid reports that Dannette Smith, with Department of Human Services spoke with them about homeless issues and services offered.

They discussed the Sense of Arrival concept and tying it to branding.

**Resort Investment Committee (RIC)**

Billy Almond reports that they reviewed the speaker for RAC through the end of the year.

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

They spoke with another property owner in the 31<sup>st</sup> Street corridor and they are close to wrapping that segment up.

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

Laura Haber reports that they had a good water testing season this summer.

They are looking at expanding the recycling program with Beachy Clean to Chick's Beach and the Sandbridge area under the Three Beaches marketing program.

**Economic Development**

None

**Staff Report**

Mike Eason reports that the Neptune Festival was successful.

The season is not over and the 12 events permitted for this weekend are being postponed, rescheduled or canceled. They have the same amount for the upcoming weekends through November.

The positive responses he has been receiving about Hillier Park are coming from as far as Sweden and he will share that with RAC as well as other comments.

**Other Business**

Scott Wichtendahl shares that they are working with a Navy Chaplain program and looking for Navy volunteers that will watch for someone in the Navy in the resort area that might be in a condition where they cannot care for themselves or in danger of being arrested who will assist with getting them to a safe place.

Law Enforcement will be coming to RAC in a few months for a presentation and requesting their endorsement. The goal is to roll it out by April 1 so they can test it before College Beach Weekend. They do have a commitment from the Navy to join, but they have to iron out details.

**Public Comment**

None

Meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.