



Resort Advisory Commission  
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## RESORT ADVISORY COMMISSION MINUTES

**DATE:** March 5, 2020  
**TIME:** 3:00 pm  
**PLACE:** Virginia Beach Convention Center, 2nd Floor, Rm 4AB

### COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT

BJ Baumann  
Bill Gambrell  
Bryan Cuffee  
Chuck Cayton  
George Kotarides  
Lori Overholt  
Michael Levinson  
Michael Ronan  
Randy Thompson  
Russell Lyons  
Tyler Brown

Mike Eason  
Sam Reid

### OTHERS PRESENT

Billy Almond, PDRC  
Gary Ryan MOCA  
Brad Tuggle, MOCA  
Chief James Cervera, VBPD  
Capt. Shannon Wichtendahl, VBPD  
Ron Kuhlman, CVB  
Caryn Thompson, VA Aquarium  
Christina Trapani, KIBC  
Guy Tower, City Council  
Rosemary Wilson, City Council  
Stacy Parker, The Virginian-Pilot  
Kathy Warren, SGA/RAC Staff Liaison  
Sheri Higgason, Recorder CVB/RMO

### COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT

Keith Ireland  
Kristina Chastain  
Laura Habr

BJ Baumann called the meeting to order at 3:00pm. **Motion carried to approve the February 6, 2020 RAC minutes as written.**

### MOCA – Gary Ryan, MOCA

BJ Baumann introduced Gary Ryan, Executive Director of the Virginia Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) to present an overview of the museum. Gary shared maps of the Resort Strategic Growth Area (SGA) that MOCA falls within and the proposed geography as it is being defined in the RASAP Plan. Gary is on the Steering Committee for RASAP. She indicated every dollar invested into the museum goes back into the Resort and to the residents. MOCA is considered the anchor in the ViBe Creative District. Membership of the ViBe includes membership to the museum. Art is currently on display at the Art of the ViBe II at the satellite gallery in Pavilion I of the Runnymede complex.

MOCA is a gathering place for all ages. There are classes and activities throughout the year including an art camp. The museum hosts approximately 5,000 patrons through their self-funding studio school. They also host teacher workshops with art educators at the elementary through high school levels to engage art in their curriculum. The Human Rights Commission holds their meetings on mental health at MOCA and the museum also donates their space to non-profit organizations for their events.

Gary indicated they have partnerships with a variety of groups in the community to include: NASA, VWU, NSU, TCC, WHRO, Neptune Festival, area schools, Achievable Dream, From One Hand to Another, Teens with a Purpose, Human Rights Commission, and Stand up for Kids. Efforts are being collaborated with Something In the Water organizers to be a part of this year's program.

The venue's community gallery features local artists and provides them with the opportunity to mount their first museum show. This helps artists to promote the professional side of the business conversing with curators and learning how to pack their work. Gary shared an image from artwork at First Landing State Park provided by a Virginia artist that was included on MOCA's first holiday card and sent to their entire database.

Recently, MOCA hosted a *Valentines in the ViBe* Event that afterwards encouraged patrons to dine through a special offer in the ViBe. Gary shared slides of an exhibition at the museum that just closed featuring Virginia Beach artist, Michael Kagan. In it, Michael is surrounded by a class from Old Donation School (ODS) which was his first museum solo show. Pharrell Williams wrote one of the introductory essays. The ODS class developed a curriculum around Michael's work. They were able to skype in and do a virtual tour of his studio. His exhibition ran from September through February with a record-breaking attendance of 10,000 patrons. Over half of the attendees were from outside of Virginia Beach.

Gary shared out of market dollars are brought into Virginia Beach through exhibition support from other galleries in the country and world-class collectors who ship and display their art through MOCA, raising the profile of the City.

The Boardwalk Art Show scheduled for June 19 -21 is celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> year. Performer research has shown the show delivers over \$15 million in economic impact to the City. It generates \$50,000 in gross festival funding and after City service fees are rendered, \$35,000 net festival income gets paid to the museum to host the show. The show is funded through sponsorships and is not a ticketed event. Artists pay booth and entry fees. It encourages commercial artists to participate. This year, the show will host artwork from Norfolk State, Old Dominion University and Tidewater Community College in efforts to gain local exposure. Gary noted increased funding requests are going before City Council for the Boardwalk Art Show and for additional marketing for MOCA.

The museum's exhibition attendance was reviewed over the last ten years and is up by 150%. MOCA received \$455,500 from the City last year. Direct City support included the Boardwalk Art Show, exhibitions support, and education and utility grants which accounted for 19% of total revenue in the Fiscal Year 19-20. Contributed revenue is up 2% due to a major donor and a corporate sponsorship.

The Fiscal Year 19-20 included an incremental \$350,000 investment in MOCA's operation which provided funding for numerous programs and initiatives. Gary introduced Brad Tuggle, MOCA's new Director of Audience Development. WHRO is putting together a piece on Healing VB, a partnership between MOCA and EVMS which is an art therapy program launched in response to the May incident. The program is held on the fourth Monday of the month at MOCA.

MOCA undertook their first institutional consumer research last year to determine where the museum stands currently with audiences and stakeholders. Stakeholders included City officials, community members, major donors, and lapsed members. The process involved in-depth interviews and focus groups to gage the museum's strengths and weaknesses. While MOCA is unique, intimate, supportive of local artists and provides the area with fine art instruction at reasonable rates, it also is limited in size and experience, fundraising, marketing and not easily partnered with.

Gary shared MOCA is in the process of wrapping up their 5-year strategic plan. They started out as an art association and became an accredited museum in 2010. The vision is to become a cultural destination for transformational travelers and a brand pillar for the community by 2025. The commissioner meeting packets included a suite of all studio classes and a program guide for MOCA's upcoming exhibition.

### 2019 CompStat Report – Chief James Cervera, VBPD

Chief Cervera stated the Police Department CompStat report was presented most recently to City Council. Council is briefed twice a year in areas of crime report activity, calls for service and organizational updates. The Department is involved in many of the goals set forth by City Council except for infrastructure and IT. Chief Cervera stated the police are engaged in Economic Development, the CVB, stabilizing the neighborhoods and many other areas of the community. Virginia Beach has one of the largest programs in the state for school resource officers. Currently, there are twenty-eight full time officers in Virginia Beach middle and high schools.

Chief Cervera stated it is the beginning of budget season when the department reviews the investments they have in the City. 2019 crime statistics showed an overall increase in violence compared to 2018. Homicide and aggravated assault included twelve homicides and eight aggravated assault victims from one incident on May 31, 2019.

Crime statistic numbers were reviewed over a period from 2010 - 2019. Chief Cervera stated 2010 was the year he was appointed to Chief of Police. Total violent crime including homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assault went down by almost 30% over a ten-year period and almost 40% for property crime. Robberies decreased by 53.5% and burglaries were reduced by 74.7%.

The statistics on aggravated assault fluctuate both in numbers and in certain areas in the City. Chief Cervera indicated there are assaults at the oceanfront. Occurrences are rare in the boardwalk, Atlantic or Pacific Avenue corridors. They have been more likely to occur in other areas of the resort. In 2019, there were twenty-one aggravated assault shooting victims. This was a 16.3% decrease over ten years. Citywide, 769 guns were recovered last year by law enforcement. During the last three years, 500 guns were stolen out of cars in the City. Most of those vehicles were left unlocked.

Last year, officers came in contact with citizens 256,864 times through various means to include traffic tickets, service calls, pedestrian and traffic stops, physical arrest, and other. Use of force is considered any hands-on contact in Virginia Beach. Use of force by the police occurred 733 times last year. There were nine citizen complaints for use of force.

The police department is heavily invested in crisis intervention responses and training. They operate a Mobile Co-Response Team in partnership with the Human Services Division from mental health crisis units. Together they help individuals that need mental health care as opposed to being in the criminal justice system. The Crisis Intervention Team responds to over 3,000 calls per year.

Chief Cervera has had meetings with the Veterans Affairs in Hampton to see what kind of services can be coordinated from Hampton to the Southside. David Collins is the Executive Director of the Hampton VA Medical Center. There will be ongoing efforts to collaborate with the VA in mental health services assistance.

The Virginia Beach police department was the first in the state to begin utilizing the revive opioid over-dose kits, Automatic External Defibrillators (AEDs) and tourniquets, all life-saving equipment. Police force will continue to wear body cameras while on duty.

Discussion led to the future recruitment and retention plan for the police department and goals approved by City Council. Efforts moving forward will focus to:

- Maintain the lowest crime rate in the state with the highest clearance rate
- Have the capacity to deal with mental health issues and needs
- Be prepared for, respond to, and recover from catastrophic events
- Have a well-trained, well equipped public safety staff
- Have community policing that creates a sense of community
- Recruit and retain a top-quality public safety workforce

The Chief shared a rendering of the new mural featured on the parking lot wall of the second police precinct depicting courage and intending to boost morale. The mural was designed by Talent Murals and is the latest to join artistic building designs in the ViBe Creative District.

### CVB Study Update – Rohn Kuhlman, CVB

Ron Kuhlman indicated this CVB Study report update shared at the City Council retreat on February 24 was emailed to the RAC Commissioners yesterday. The consultant recommended the establishment of a community taskforce to evaluate transitioning the CVB to a new organizational structure. The possibilities include the following three approaches:

#### *Remain Within the government*

- A new management approach would be introduced to improve organizational efficiency and performance.
- This requires more government flexibility relative to procurement, employee compensation, marketing and sales programs, Human Relations policies and organizational operations.
- The new approach would encourage new private sector marketing and financial support for the CVB.
- Governance would be shared between the City and a private sector board with specific duties focused exclusively on CVB oversight.

#### *Hybrid Public/Private 501c3 Foundation*

- This structure encourages private sector financial and marketing CVB support to include co-op advertising, partnerships, corporate sponsorships, and perhaps membership dues.

Note -This is similar to the structure the Virginia Aquarium has now with a parallel foundation that helps with the operations of the Aquarium.

#### *Public/Private 501c6 Nonprofit*

- Governance is shared between the City and the private sector, with a new Board of Directors having CVB oversight authority.
- The new structure encourages private sector CVB support, to include co-op advertising, partnerships, corporate sponsorships, and perhaps membership dues.
- This approach allows flexibility relative to procurement, compensation, marketing/sales, HR policies and operations.

Note -This is similar to the structure of the Norfolk Convention and Visitors Bureau. They receive tax funds from the hotel tax appropriated by City Council each year. They do not have the TAP fund Virginia Beach has.

#### *The Taskforce*

- The Taskforce would consider whether the Convention Center and CVB's Resort Management Department should remain under City authority or transition to a new management structure.
- The Taskforce could also review the set-up of the CVB Sports Department and Visitor Information Center to assure their governance structures allow for optimal performance.
- The Taskforce would be comprised of 8 – 10 private sector leaders and government representatives. The private sector leaders would come from the business and visitor industry sectors.
- All members would act as honest brokers on behalf of the City Council to assure a fair vetting of this important topic.
- The Taskforce would convene over a 50-day period and then present recommendations to the Council. The Council would decide on what actions to take relative to the recommendations.

- Regardless of what the final CVB structure would involve...remaining within the government, converting to a hybrid model, or as a separate 501c6 nonprofit...it's an economic necessity that the CVB's governance and management structure be realigned.
- For the City Council, the opportunity cost of not mitigating the current marketing and operational deficiencies is substantial.
- By not addressing the CVB's limits, the City is restricting its long-term economic growth.

Ron indicated at the end of the presentation at the City Council retreat, Vice Mayor Wood made a motion to the Council to form a taskforce looking at the three recommendations that were brought up by Bill Hanbury and conclude their work some time by the end of the summer. The focus moving forward will be to join with the Council liaison to develop a taskforce of 8 – 10 people consisting of private sector, hospitality interests, Resort Advisory Commission and private citizens to review the structures that were proposed. Russell Lyons inquired who the Council liaison is for this Taskforce committee. Councilman Tower indicated he had spoken to Mayor Dyer and expressed interest in becoming involved on the Taskforce committee and was assured he would be.

### **Chairman's Report – BJ Baumann**

BJ stated she attended the City Council meeting on Tuesday and spoke regarding the Resort Advisory Commission's support of the RASAP plan. There was some opposition regarding the development of Rudee Loop. The RASAP plan is a large document with a broad scope with support from the Atlantic Avenue Association (AAA), the Virginia Beach Restaurant Association (VBRA) and the Virginia Beach Hotel Association (VBHA). There was a proposal submitted from Councilman Rouse regarding additional funding for Something In The Water. The proposal was deferred. Questions were raised with concerns for numbers being presented and stakeholder input.

BJ indicated there are ongoing changes throughout Commissions in the City. They are being scrutinized on adherence to bylaws, condition member terms and attendance. She read over the conditions for excused absences. A vacation, business trip, or commitment that was planned would not constitute circumstances beyond a member's control. Unavoidable transportation issues such as a delayed flight or back-up in the tunnel would be excused. Personal illnesses, illnesses of family members or death would be excused. Business trips will count toward the three unexcused absences a RAC member is allowed over a 12-month calendar year. She has been advised to notify the City Clerk's Office of any commissioner exceeding the unexcused absences to move forward with a member replacement. She will send the commissioners a hard copy of the excused absences document and advised them to please email her, Sheri Higgason, or Kathy Warren in the event of an absence.

### **Strategic Planning Session**

BJ indicated a Strategic Planning session is coming up and she has asked Sheri to send out the entire RASAP document for the commissioners to review prior the session. She and Kathy Warren will be meeting with the STIR Office to set up the planning format.

### **Something In The Water**

There will be a community forum meeting tonight at 6:30p.m. in the Convention Center. A concern was raised regarding plans for the City and guests regarding Something In The Water and the impact of the Coronavirus. It has not been discussed at the City Council level yet.

## **Committee Reports**

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

Chuck Cayton stated the TPPC Committee met last week with a presentation from Rob Fries regarding Atlantic Avenue parking and October 2019 statistics. The current parking app VB Events will transition to the VBGo app with additional data for traffic, HRT routes and scooters. Spot Angels is a national app the City is partnering with for public and commercial parking availability.

A letter was reviewed from TPPC member Nancy Parker regarding the RPP residential parking issue. Emily Archer indicated this would be a large part of the Mobility Study. Funding is in place through the SGA Office and Parking to implement Phase 1 of the Mobility Plan. Another funding request has been made through the CIP for Phase 2.

Cavalier Shores will have their permit parking extended a year due to the ongoing hotel development surrounding the area. There was discussion on short-term rentals, parking permits and pending action from City Council. Councilman Tower advised there will be another working session and the approval for more conditional use permits following. Brian Solis provided an update on scooters regarding an RFP out that received four responses and plans are for the scooter vendors to be operational by May 1.

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

Billy Almond stated the PDRC committee met Tuesday morning on discussion of the canopy replacement at the 31<sup>st</sup> street stage. The City engaged HBA Architects who designed the 24<sup>th</sup> Street Park to provide examples of different venue roof structures to get review from the committee. The current canopy will be utilized for another season before a new one is in place.

Lager Heads presented a design with a canopy over their café that can be applicable to boardwalk and side street cafes. They will work with the SGA Office to further the design to be brought back for review to the committee.

Emily Archer provided an update for Atlantic Pints on Atlantic Avenue and their design for an open-air café. There were concerns about ADA accessibility. The architect will come back with a new design that meets ADA requirements through the PDRC Committee.

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

Randy Thompson stated the OEC committee met last week and Nina Goodale of the Cultural Affairs Office provided final renderings and an installation update on the 17<sup>th</sup> Street public art project on Pacific Avenue. The project is low budget and includes a mural on the back wall. It is scheduled to be completed in time for Something In The Water.

There was an update on the projection art project by the consultant Wireframe. The next step was to do a cost analysis to gage needs. The committee discussed 24<sup>th</sup> Street Park and possible aesthetic improvements and funding in place for renovations to the restrooms.

Bobby Melatti presented samples of festoon fixtures for replacement of holiday lights along Atlantic Avenue.

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

BJ stated RIC met yesterday and received an informative presentation on the Disparity Study that was completed for Virginia Beach. As a result, numerous programs have been implemented to improve procedures. Laverna Tolentino of the Finance Office will be invited to present the study at a future Resort Advisory Commission meeting.

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

BJ indicated as a result of the February OSGAC meeting, they will focus on the three area districts at the oceanfront and ongoing development projects. Updates will be given at the meetings each month. A copy can get forwarded to the commissioners as the project list develops.

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

Christina Trapani reported on the G.R.E.E.N. committee for Chair, Laura Habr. She stated that the SGA Office and Parks and Recreation have approved the placement of two fishing line recycle containers at Rudee Loop.

The beach toy recycling box project is still in the works. The goal is to have four boxes in areas on the beach to help curb the number of toys washing up and being left behind. Christina announced this year is the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Earth Day. *Keep It Beachy Clean* (KIBC) will be implementing their straw free campaign in area restaurants again this year.

There has been confusion in the recycling world as to what is recyclable with the market being down. The rule is bottles, cans and paper are recyclable. Plastic bags can be returned to groceries stores to recycling. The City closed a recycling facility at First Landing State Park and another site at the corner of First Colonial Road and Virginia Beach Boulevard due to illegal dumping.

Christina indicated March 28 will be the 24 Hours of Open Campaign and the Great American Clean-up. In partnership with the ViBe District, Waste Management, Parks and Recreation, the Virginia Beach Restaurant Association (VBRA), the Virginia Beach Hotel Association (VBHA), Lynnhaven River Now (LRNow), and *Keep It Beachy Clean* will hold a mass beach clean-up from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. This will include a trash-can stickering event to start in the ViBe District and conclude at the DeWitt Cottage. There will be a post Something In The Water clean-up this year. More details will follow next month.

**Staff Report**

Kathy Warren indicated the SGA Office is reviewing various subcommittee procedures and policies They are currently focusing on open-air café regulations to determine revisions needed to go before City Council in the coming months. They have conducted an audit of the existing open-air cafes. A minor modification was approved by City Council last week to allow corner cafes that have an obstruction from building out to extend building to the front. There will be fourteen café renewals going before review at City Council on March 17.

Kathy announced the Resort Area Maintenance Initiatives (RAMI) group is meeting on a monthly basis with Beach Operations and several Public Works divisions to assess aesthetic issues and improvements at the oceanfront.

**Old Business**

There was none

**New Business**

There was none

**Public Comment**

There was none

Meeting adjourned at 5:06 p.m.