

OTTDA Meeting Minutes

2/4/19

1:00pm

Ocracoke Community Center

Present: Martha Garrish, Amy Howard, Helena Stevens, Jeff Dippold, Greg Honeycutt, (via phone), Daphne Bennink, Tom Pahl (came in via phone at 1:17pm)

Note: There is a board vacancy. Wayne Clark resigned from the OTTDA board in January 2019.

Start Time: 1:05pm

1. Review and Vote on Past Minutes

- Changes
 - Date should be changed to Oct. 15
 - Jesse Davis' name is misspelled
 - Corrinne Gibbs' name is misspelled
- Following these changes, Daphne motioned to accept the minutes. Martha provided a second motion.

2. Follow Up on Old Business

- Amy talked to Bob about 2% and 3% boards; the two boards will work together
- Bob is trying to anticipate any issues on deadline meetings; he will coordinate with Martha on OCBA meetings
- All budgets from requesting organizations are due March 1, 2019

3. New Business

- Financial Record/ How to Disperse Funds
 - OTTDA financial commitments are considered by the Board on a yearly basis
 - Discussion took place on having discretionary income (possibly in the fall) to support other community projects. Most of the budget supports OCBA, but the Board anticipates having additional funds to support outside projects. Because the Board will be allocating certain totals to OCBA and Island Inn, it will have a better idea of "leftover" funds in the Fall to support smaller projects.
 - The Board agreed to commit to support the Island Inn project for \$20,000. The way the project was proposed to the Board was that it was almost put up against a wall and forced to support it.
 - It is assumed that rest of discretionary income outside of OCBA will go to the Island Inn. That being said, there are other TDA needs to be addresses, including office space. The board may accept suggestions later but need to focus on OCBA for the short-term future.

- Within confines of required expenditures, the Board would like to fund projects that are more needed on the island.
 - Annual Total Estimate for Fiscal Year 2018-2019, OTTDA is projecting \$280,000 + 55,000 = \$335,000
 - Set a point in time after the budget has been executed and allocate for entertaining requests
 - By fall, a lot of places may have a better idea of where they are lacking in funding.
 - Then it should work where people are asking OCBA for funds rather than OTTDA. Does it muddy the waters? \$670,000 worth of requests last year. The OTTDA will piggy back off the requests the Occupancy Board receives and help fund the smaller projects.
 - It was decided that if there is extra money to disperse/fund projects, OTTDA will help projects/cases after priorities have been supported.
 - OTTDA needs to meet a second time this month to address budget
 - No need to vote on procedures today. It is the OTTDA's discretion to entertain requests from the community. Requests will continue to go to the 3% board for right now.
- Island Inn/Public Restrooms
 - Work has been completed to dress up the outside of the building for now. For now, they are grinding up all the concrete so that it can be usable material.
 - Once the grinding of the concrete is complete, the project is on hold until Island Inn committee and OPS can do some serious fundraising. Tom Pahl estimates that \$500,000 needs to be raised.
 - There are no intentions to go to OTTDA and ask for money. The plan is to go to other sources.
 - What is the fundraising strategy and timeline?
 - No timeline but meeting has been set up this month (February) to discuss timeline and fundraising strategies
 - Could be several years that the inn is sitting still
 - Board member asked question: In the past, it has been very difficult to raise capital for real estate. Has it changed?
 - Tom responded: The committee has had conversations about fundraising. Ed Norvell and Bill Rich are both on the Island Inn committee and have done lots of fundraising. Ed has particularly done fundraising in restoration projects. Tom has had some conversations with funders.
 - Public Restrooms: OPS, with Tom's urging, has set out to employ a project manager for the restrooms project. Tom believes the plans of selecting a contractor at the end of February have been delayed due to the hiring of a project manager. Volunteers can do so much but when it comes to overseeing a specific project, it needs to be a hired person to make sure the whole project is done correctly. The hope is that bids will be received around the middle of March. Construction should probably not take more than a month (4-6 weeks);

it is a very basic building. The hiring of a project manager has been posted around the island, and the committee is open to hiring a contractor either on or off the island. It will just need to fit within the budget. The other issue relative to the restrooms is the cleaning and maintenance contract. Tom had a meeting with the OCBA Board prior to holidays. The conversation had to do with where money would fall within their budget, who would be responsible for management of maintenance and who would “receive the phone call” with problems. Tom’s understanding is that OCBA will include in its budget request from OTTDA for maintenance and operation of restrooms, which indeed OCBA did include this figure in its budget. Daphne asked if anyone has talked to NPS about their restrooms and what it takes to keep them cleaned/maintained. They’re a perfect model.

- Bob wanted to interject a couple comments with his attendance at OCBA. The fact that it is in OCBA’s budget means that it is interested in moving forward in that direction but the debate centers on who will manage it and what kind of support the county can give. The budget for the restrooms is an estimated guess (\$40,000). More research needs to be done. It also needs to take into consideration expenses such as plumbing and repair. OCBA is further along in this process.
 - Daphne: The plumbing job needs to be subcontracted out to a third party. It is not within the responsibilities of the restrooms contractor.
 - Bob: This project needs county support. Insurance, processing money, putting out bids, getting contracts ready.
 - Martha: Have NPS come to next meeting to discuss what is needed to run bathrooms, water usage, toilet paper, how many times a day they visit.
 - More discussion needs to take place among the Public Restrooms Working Committee (Tom Pahl, Justin Leblanc, Scott Bradley, Donnie Shumate, Library, Ken Debarth)
 - Running through Hyde County sanitation department. Is that an option? Tom has had conversations with Kris, and the county would like to support this project. However, the county cannot add this position because it would add to the county cost because it would be an actual employee and not a contract (security, benefits, 30% additional costs). Kris is having another conversation with a third entity that would be willing to be part of this discussion.
- Jesse Davis has designed letterhead and business cards. OTTDA has both materials now.
 - Visit NC Conference March 31-April 2 (Sunday-Tuesday). OTTDA has allocated funds such as this conference. OCBA is to send Amy and Daphne invoice for conference, tickets and rooms. Amy will have Corinne cut check to OCBA.
 - Loopshack – gotten into private fundraising mode

- It has raised up to \$45,000 in fundraising, \$115,000 from private donor
- Planning to go to Community Foundation in 3rd quarter
- Planning to ask 3% for \$50,000. Greg does not anticipate there being enough money in OTTDA to ask for money
- Construction to take place late 2020
- OCBA's budget request
 - Page 2 – general assumptions used to create budget
 - Ocracoke promotional items
 - Support for travel writers
 - Event costs that are specifically identified for advertising
 - Hardware for displaying brochures
 - Occupancy Tax Board
 - 100% of fireworks costs
 - Net amount of event expenses, revenue OCBA would be generating (ex. merchandise) against that expense
 - Impact of campaign for contributors each year. Revenue from web site and banners online, walking maps
 - Expenses from TDA/OTB/OCBA
 - Event sponsorship, splitting at local level
 - Page 1
 - Total request of \$311,335 from OTTDA, which is \$60,000 increase from the \$251,000 granted last year
 - \$40,000 is requested for the public restrooms
 - Other items that have contributed to the increase are rent for visitor's center (which has gone up), furnishing the visitor center, insurance, conferences
 - Staff and professional costs (total increase is \$2,268 or 4%), bookkeeping hours increase and increase Executive Director salary
 - \$40,000 is completely towards restrooms – salary and maintenance. Cost may even go down after speaking with NPS. There is also a contingency fund for bathrooms. The contingency fund could be put towards construction or unforeseen costs. Whichever board submits numbers for the restrooms project, need to include maintenance, water meter, landscaping/cutting grass.
 - Visitor rent and furnishings: budget shows increase amount. A couple years down the road once the Island Inn is complete, there probably will not be a need to be renting the visitor's center or office space.
 - Conferences: Are we extrapolating \$7,000 from it?
 - Helena went to NYC Travel Show. The conference hosted 600 other vendors. Helena shared a booth with VisitNC, which provided exposure for Ocracoke to VisitNC's and one-on-one time with consumers. Ocracoke also received great exposure from travel writers. Some takeaways were the need to have a current asset brochure that provides key messaging about what makes Ocracoke unique. For next show,

Ocracoke can also attract conference attendees through video and giveaways.

- Proposed conferences in budget: VisitNC365, New York Times Consumer Travel Show, Travel and Adventure Show (Washington, DC). Budget counts participation in show, collateral, giveaway. Maybe pick 1 or 2 each year and alternate.
- OTTDA does not have enough money to fund the whole OCBA budget. It's going to be give-and-take because there are other projects that have to be funded. What can be cut or reduced in price?
- Local Advertising: sponsorships, youth baseball \$400, WOVV scallywag \$2,000 (signage and t-shirt), scholarship for one graduating senior, waterfowl festival \$2500, VisitNC advertising, milepost magazine \$800, Outer Banks this Week
- Promotional Items: letter opener/staple remover with VisitOcracoke logo, insulated mugs with VisitOcracoke logo
- Staff/Professional costs: Part of the increase is in-line with inflation rate, Part of it is because the bookkeeper's hours have been more needed than originally anticipated.
 - Executive Director proposed salary is \$56,633, reflecting a 2.9% increase
 - Health insurance is separated out of the salary. In the past, it was higher when included in her salary. It's less expensive for her to go in the open market. Last year the budgeted salary was \$60,000. Today the way her budget is laid out with the insurance added but separate, it is increased in the budget.
 - Is the best time now for OTTDA to be absorbing the cost of these increased expenses?
 - The budget is a bit too vague. For example, get an estimate from contractor on cost of public restrooms.
 - Next step: Modify budget by comparing it to last year's budget.

TDA:

- Do we agree with what's going on in budget?
- Looking at the little things, do we want to support this?
- Would 3% consider an extra \$10,000-\$15,000 if OCBA moved some of the items from OTTDA to requesting it from OTB. The problem with 3% board is they could receive a large request from left field.
- How much was OTTDA under budget last year?
- OTTDA is setting precedent. Not trying to micromanage but have general idea of how funds are allocated. Mandate how funds are spent.
- Rough estimate from funds remaining with receivables included should be around \$383,000 total.
- OTTDA needs to scrutinize requests and know what budget is for allocating funds.

Next meeting: Budget and OTTDA board member: 3/4/19 at 11:00am

Meeting Adjourned: 3:20pm

Motion to adjourn: Martha

Motion seconded: Daphne