

KENT COUNTY, MARYLAND
Office of Tourism Development
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Tourism Development Advisory Board Meeting Minutes
June 17, 2020

Board members in attendance: Greg Waddell (Chair), Sandy Scott (Vice Chair), Casey Carroll, Suzanne Einstein, Ingrid Hansen, Dolores Jones, Chikki Shajwani

Tourism Office: Bernadette Bowman, Jana Carter

Others in Attendance: Jamie Williams

Chairman Greg Waddell called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. December, January, and February minutes were approved.

Board members discussed the Commissioners' directives to the Tourism Office and the Tourism Advisory Board. In regards to advertising, no tourism advertising may be placed until the Tourism Board submits an advertising plan to the Commissioners. In addition, the Commissioners asked that print advertising be shifted to more of a digital platform, and that advertising be reduced until a COVID-19 vaccine is approved. As well, a SWOT analysis was requested to help guide the process. The Board felt strongly that advertising should not be stopped or reduced, but rather that advertising should continue with a modified message which tells potential visitors that when it is safe and they are ready, we are here. It was discussed that we should keep pushing and reminding people to come to Kent County and that consistent advertising is proven to be effective. There was some confusion about what led to the Commissioners decisions about advertising and that knowing why certain decisions were made will help the Board in preparing to give the Commissioners the information they need for future tourism advertising decisions. All agreed that the Board will need sufficient time to review and adjust tourism's ad plan. The Board believes that they should be able to have a plan by November. In the meantime, it was suggested that we continue with the current plan and not put the brakes on. All agreed that they would like to meet with the Commissioners to discuss their thoughts and get feedback before proceeding. The Commissioners upcoming meeting schedule will be made available to the Board. All members agreed to put in extra time to put a plan together and to add an addition meeting per month to get the job done. Greg agreed to facilitate the discussions. Another noted how fortunate the Board is to have Greg's expertise in this field. Although there were specific topics raised about how and what to address to accomplish the plan, it was agreed that all of these things like, social media, co-ops, print, digital, staff time, a SWOT analysis, google analytics, etc, would be addressed in subsequent meetings. Bernadette and Jana will continue to collect information in preparation for the Tourism Board's ad schedule review.

NEXT BOARD MEETING: Tuesday, July 21st from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m.; Virtual on TEAMS.
Adjournment: 10:15 a.m.