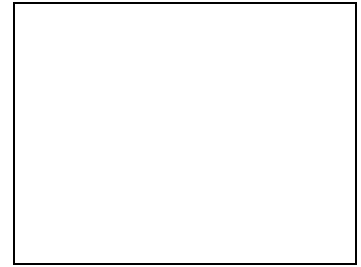




MINUTES TEMPLATE



COMMITTEE: Visitor Services Advisory Committee Time Meeting called to Order: 8:02am

MEETING DATE: January 10 Time Meeting Adjourned: 8:50am

MEMBERS PRESENT via ZOOM: Mary Malavase, Chair, Shantaw Bloise-Murphy, Director of Culture and Tourism, David Sharpe, Visitor Services Coordinator, Liz Holland, Vice Chair Peter Morrison, Niles Parker and Matt Peel.

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sarah T. Bois

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	VOTES / ROLL CALL
1 Welcome VSAC Members	Shantaw welcomed the members of the committee to the meeting. She then reviewed the meeting rules. She then asked for a roll call of all members present. The C&T Director also reviewed the ground rules and script for remotely conducted open meetings via Zoom.	
2 Approval of Minutes from November 8, 2022	The minutes from November were unanimously approved.	5-0
3 Director's Report	Shantaw reported that over Christmas Stroll Weekend, there was a stranded passengers issue. It was an eye-opening experience and helpful in developing protocol for a plan that is being developed. Shantaw noted that she has met with Liz Holland to develop a communications plan. Liz and Shantaw met with Barry Rector who runs the island's Red Cross. Barry is planning to request enough cots for a large group stranding. The Director then reported that she will be attending a Nantucket Cultural Council meeting today. A \$15,000 grant will be available from January 28 to the end of February through the Nantucket Cultural District. This grant will help a number of island organizations that are underfunded. A press release and e-mails to the organizations will be sent out.	
4 Visitor Services Coordinator Report	David reviewed the statistics for November, December, Christmas Stroll Weekend and for all of 2022. Overall visitor numbers are moving back to pre-pandemic levels. The numbers would have been slightly higher at Straight Wharf and the Airport which were not open on certain days/ hours because of staffing issues. It is planned to have extra staff at the airport on Mondays in July and August to help with departure lines. Airport Manager Noah Karberg will be invited to an upcoming VSAC meeting to discuss these issues. David is looking into other hiring options including the Town's Senior Tax Work Off program which has been used before. David then noted that winter office hours which are Monday-Friday 9am to 5pm. The VS Coordinator added that the Travel and Lodging brochure will be out by the end of February. David then reported that the download stats for forms including the Weekly Open Restaurant and Daily Room Availability lists are still unavailable and he will have an update at the next meeting.	
5 Stranded Passengers Plan Update	Liz reported that on Saturday, December 3 rd during Christmas Stroll, the high winds caused boat cancellations in the afternoon and evening. In the morning, passengers buying	

tickets in Hyannis were warned that the boats might cancel. Both boat lines sent out e-mail and social media warnings. However, about 250 people did not heed the warnings. Eventually most of them were able to find overnight lodging. On the following Tuesday, December 6th, the Stranded Passengers Group got together for a previously scheduled meeting. The Steamship Authority had 3 representatives at the meeting. Communication was one of the main topics. A list of names and phone numbers was drawn up. Liz added that she also spoke with outgoing Nantucket Airport Manager, Tom Rafter who recommended the Virtual Emergency Operations Center or CEOCI.com It is a new age phone tree. Liz added that she also knows someone from Puerto Rico who is aware of another organized alert system. The Group plans to meet again this month. The meeting will include representatives from the Airport and Nantucket Inn. One of the key items in the plan is a Hold Harmless Release form which will provide protection for the host building in case of damages incurred by a stranded guest. The committee briefly discussed the communications aspect of the stranded passengers plan. A presentation should be planned to let people know about it. It is hoped that there would be a central way to communicate with the public when the situation arises. The Steamship and Hy-Line send out e-mails, texts and social media updates but not everyone is signed up for them. On the day of the expected cancellations, Visitor Services and Chamber of Commerce will send out updates about how to find/ get to the location to stay for the night when lodging establishments are sold out. There would be a central location in town such as St. Paul's church where people will stage and then be transported by Nantucket Island Tours or Cranberry Transportation vehicles to overnight locations such as the Westmoor Club, Nantucket Inn or VFW Hall. Liz added that she has talked to Mark Manchester at the Nantucket Inn which could be central location for airline cancellations and a backup for ferry passengers. The Inn also has multiple vans to transport stranded passengers. Peter suggested posting info a local Facebook page to get the word out and ask people to help. Peter added that the Nantucket Civic League and its neighborhood associations could partner with the committee. Of the 2,000 CL members, potentially 20 could help when the call goes out which would help with volunteer coverage. A final version of the Stranded Passenger Plan should be available in May.

The next meeting will take place at 8:00am on February 14 via Zoom.

Signature _____