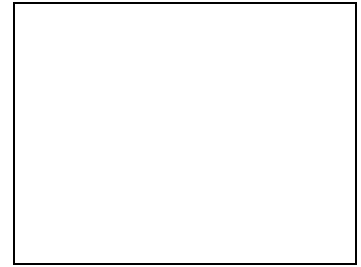




MINUTES TEMPLATE



COMMITTEE: Visitor Services Advisory Committee Time Meeting called to Order: 8:03am

MEETING DATE: November 14, 2023 Time Meeting Adjourned: 8:58am

MEMBERS PRESENT via ZOOM: Garison Beale, Sarah Bois, Liz Holland, Mary Malavase, Peter Morrison, Niles Parker and Matt Peel.

ALSO PRESENT: Philip Scudder, Managing Director and Betsy Rich, Marketing Director, Hy-Line Cruises

STAFF PRESENT: Shantaw Bloise-Murphy, Director of Culture and Tourism, David Sharpe, Visitor Services Coordinator

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	VOTES / ROLL CALL
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1 Welcome VSAC Members	David welcomed the members of the committee to the meeting. He then reviewed the meeting rules. The Visitor Services Coordinator then asked for a roll call of all members present. He also reviewed the ground rules and script for remotely conducted open meetings via Zoom.	
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2 Approval of Minutes from October 10, 2023	The minutes from October were approved 6-0 with Garison Beale abstaining.	
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3 Conversation with Philip Scudder	Philip began by reporting that Marketing Director Betsy Rich and Nantucket Terminal Manager Liz Holland will be given service awards in December. Betsy has worked 25 years and Liz has worked 10 years for the company. Philip noted that now that the pandemic is over, the boat line had 2 great years and in trying to understand/ study the market, Nantucket is the most stable route the ferry company has. There has been an increase in ridership especially after the Steamship Authority had staffing issues with its night-time fast ferry. The Hy-Line also has staffing issues especially with the kitchen/ Landing restaurant at the Ocean Street dock, but can borrow staff from other areas such as the fishing and sightseeing divisions of the company. On the Martha's Vineyard service, day tripper numbers have dropped off. It is getting expensive for a family of 4 and the service is only seasonal. Many more people are using the SSA year-round service between Woods Hole and the Vineyard. Phillip then reported that the trips to Nantucket for the upcoming Christmas Stroll weekend have been sold out for weeks.	
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Hy-Line Cruises is always thinking about the future and are working with shipbuilder Gladding-Hearn on building a vessel that size wise would fit in between the Grey Lady III and Grey Lady IV. It is a 2 - 2 1/2 year planning process. There are also challenges with current ships especially the size of the smaller Lady Martha (f/k/a Grey Lady II) when sailing between the islands in weather. Shantaw asked about the possibility of staying longer on Martha's Vineyard on day trips from Nantucket as the current schedule only allows 4 hours on the bigger island. Philip suggested keeping the Lady Martha docked at Nantucket overnight so that islanders can visit the Vineyard earlier in the day. Currently, there is only 1 trip a day between the islands until October 22. Philip also added that there are also challenges when a ship goes into maintenance and the replacement has difficulty meeting passenger demand.

The committee and Mr. Scudder then discussed the changes to the worker commute to and from Nantucket. The early morning trips from Hyannis are often sold out as more and more people commute to the island as housing has become scarcer and more expensive. Would it be possible to add a 5:30am run? Philip explained that it may not be possible but will be looked at.

The group also discussed partnerships/ travel packages between Hy-Line and bike rental companies, tour groups and restaurants. Each is a good way to market the island. It was also noted that the Culture and Tourism website has about 40 or so day trip suggestions for Nantucket. Marketing Director Betsy Rich added that pushing out social media and e-mail has been very successful.

Matt asked about sea level changes and if that is impacting the docks. Philip reported that at this time there are no issues. Liz added that the new gangway on Nantucket allows for that flexibility.

Chair Malavase thanked Philip and Betsy and noted that the committee is happy to help the Hy-Line in any way.

Philip and Betsy signed off at 8:45am

4 Director's Report Shantaw reported that the Placer A.I. stats for October were as follows. There were 137,800 visitors to the island, with a return frequency of 2.82 or 49,000 unique visits. That is a decrease of 1.3% from 2022, 21.3 % decrease from 2021 and 23.8% decrease over 2020 numbers. The Brotherhood of Thieves restaurant and the Native Shoes store were the most frequented locations. Most planes travelers came from JFK, Boston and Hyannis airports. The Hy-Line was busier than the SSA in Hyannis. Visitors were here more often between Saturday and Monday between 10am and 6pm which indicates they were day trippers.

Shantaw also reported that the Nantucket Cultural District logo will be showing up more over the next few months.

5 Visitor Services Coordinator Report David reviewed the statistics for October. They were up over last year. He then observed that the office is currently slow but will pick up soon with Thanksgiving and Christmas Stroll weekends. The office will be closed Thanksgiving Day and will close early at 3:00pm that Friday so staff can attend the tree lighting with enough time to go thru security. The office will also be open both days of Christmas Stroll weekend.

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