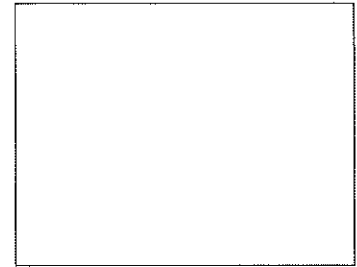


MINUTES TEMPLATE



COMMITTEE: Visitor Services Advisory Committee Time Meeting called to Order: 8:00am

MEETING DATE: May 14, 2024 Time Meeting Adjourned: 8:53am

MEMBERS PRESENT via ZOOM: Mary Malavase, Chair, Matt Peel, Vice Chair, Garison Beale, Sarah Bois, Liz Holland and Peter Morrison

MEMBERS ABSENT: Niles Parker

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

ANTICIPATED SPEAKERS: Michael Cranson, Chief, Nantucket Fire Department

OTHERS PRESENT: Kathy Baird

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION	VOTES / ROLL CALL
1 Welcome VSAC Members	Shantaw welcomed the committee members to the meeting. He reviewed the remote meeting info and updated the committee about the new Agenda Protocol/ Public Comment rule. The Director then asked for a roll call of all members, guest speakers and staff present.	
2 Approval of Minutes from April 9, 2024	The April minutes were approved 5-0. Chair Malavase abstained citing her absence at the last meeting.	
3 Conversation with Fire Chief Michael Cranson	Mary Malavase welcomed the Nantucket Fire Chief to the meeting. Chief Cranson started by observing that the last 10 days the island is picking up in activity. The Chief said that he has been on Nantucket since October 1, 2022. He loves it here and the people are great. The Fire Department is set up with the chief, 2 deputy chiefs, 2 office administrators, 2 prevention officers and 4 shifts of 8 firefighters each. Starting in June each shift will be led by a captain and a lieutenant and 6 fire fighters. Chief Cranson added that the island has grown at a faster pace than the department which is catching up. Multiple calls come in at the same time. They are trying to make sure that the department has enough personnel on duty. At the recent Annual Town Meeting, voters gave approval to hire 4 more firefighters. The Chief compared that most Cape Cod towns have between 10-16 people on shift. The 2 nd deputy chief will start at the end of May. He is from Bridgeport, CT. The other deputy chief was originally from Easton, MA. Chief Cranson also reported that 3 firefighter recruits graduated from the firefighting academy in Stow, MA last Friday. They need to be certified and then tested on fire apparatus. It takes a year for a person to become a full firefighter. The Fire Chief continued by noting that they have hired 1-15 people since his arrival and only 1 person has left. There is also a core group of on call firefighters who are paid a small hourly rate, They have to go thru physical and mental tests but only work in non-emergency settings. In addition, the department runs a call drill on Wednesday nights which makes the personnel better and helps support the mission. Some of the current firefighters have come	

from the volunteer groups. Chief Cranson also discussed the mental health aspect of the EMTs. He said that the firefighters deal with people every day and they have been training/ working with the Nantucket Police Department and the Fairwinds Clinic. After a brief discussion about brush fires and grant funding, it was agreed that Peter Morrison will create a project for the WPI students he helps with in the fall. Mary thanked the chief.

Chief Cranson disconnected at 8:34am.

4 Director's Report Shantaw began her report by reviewing Placer A.I. numbers for Daffodil Weekend. 15,00 came for the weekend, Thursday thru Sunday and was a 120% increase over last year. 306% over 2022 and 266% over 2021. 3,000 travelled over by ferry on Saturday. The median age was 51. The median household income was \$150,000 and the White Elephant was the top hotel. The overall April figures were 29,300 visitors arrived not including daily commuting workers. That is 14.4% over 2023, 12.2% over 2022 and 4.3% over 2021. 25% flew in by plane and 75% travelled by ferry. Day trippers are spending longer hours arriving around 9am and going back at 6pm.

The Culture and Tourism Director continued by noting that the Cultural District grant cycle just closed. \$30,000 was awarded to various island non-profits. ReMain Nantucket provided \$78,000 to help with future programming. Meanwhile, a bid went out for companies to replace the visitor center windows. Only 1 company from off-island came to look at them. Hopefully some local contractors will apply. The NCD interactive kiosk has been installed at the Greenhound Bus Station. People can see what is on the Cultural District calendar. Shantaw reported that she is partnering with the Nantucket Historical Association, Museum of African American History and Nantucket Public Schools to award an honorary diploma to Eunice Ross at this year's graduation. The NHA is also partnering with C&T for the Juneteenth holiday. There will be a block party on York Street between pleasant and Orange Streets. The NRTA will reroute the Mid-Island Loop bus that day. The office is also in the middle of planning for the Fourth of July. The Director added that the passport processing will continue into the summer and by July, she plans to hire a Special Event Coordinator to help with passports.

Kathy Baird reported that the link to the Nantucket Lodging Association webpage is broken on the C&T webpage. She is with a group called Nantucket Together has been formed to help visitors find housing for the evening at private homes when the inns and hotels are sold out or stranded by bad weather. She asked if a link could be put on the C&T webpage. Shantaw explained that could not do that as it presents a liability to the Town placing people in private homes. Peter asked Kathy to send info to him so he could share with the Nantucket Civic League.

5 Visitor Services Coordinator Report David reviewed the Visitor Services statistics for April and Daffodil Weekend. He then reported that staff are returning and that by Memorial Day Weekend, the office will be open 7 days a week.

Chair Malavase reported that on Daffodil Weekend, 600 people came to the flower show at Bartlett Farm on Saturday and 1,300 people attended overall.

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at 8am.

Signature _____