

TOURISM COMMISSION
Meeting of December 17, 2013
5:00-6:30 pm
MINUTES of MEETING

Present: Tom Daniel, Karen Ristuben, Pauline Bresnahan, Zack Sears, Laura Dow, Laura Baker, Catherine Ryan, Paul Frontiero, Peter Webber, John Orlando, Melissa Cox

Also attending: Ken Riehl

1. Tourism overviews:

a. City (Tom):

- i. Visitors Center – Kathy Gilson is part-time coordinator, Center funded in part by Essex National Heritage, is in process of redoing map.
- ii. TV Commercial – aired in upstate NY where there is a strong market for Cape Ann, resulting in increased web visits. WBZ radio aired a radio sponsorship spot in May/June for 15 & 30 sec. spots.
- iii. Video library – now available to produce more spots. Videos are thematic, such as beach, dining, whale watching. Craig Kimberley shot the videos, organized through Jim Duggan's office.
- iv. gloucesterma.com – 2nd to Google in hits
- v. Funding for Schooner Festival
- vi. Cultural District support, primarily infrastructure
- vii. FY2014 – 50K for tourism (30K for Sr. Project Mgr. and 20K will include ~2K for Visitors Center expenses)
- viii. Free cash will replenish the 30K to bring it back to 48K in January.
- ix. New budget in July for FY2015 – we will be involved in budget process beginning in March, through May. City Council makes recommendations to Mayor via Budget & Finance Comm.

b. Chamber of Commerce (Peter):

- i. Tourism Council – volunteer group concerned with 1) attractions (water and cultural, headed by Tom Balf); 2) accommodations & restaurants; 3) retail.
- ii. Cape Ann Guide – 80K printed, distributed on Cape Ann and regionally.
- iii. Visitor Maps – 50K printed and distributed Cape Ann-wide
- iv. 2 websites - interconnected, and being redesigned. It will have a Calendar. www.capeannchamber.com
- v. E-Newsletter
- vi. Two Visitors Centers – 20K people annually
- vii. Contract with Warner Communications – will start up again Feb – May 2014

- viii. Peter mentioned PR for Gloucester and the DMO – he will provide a 2012 document that shows all the related tourism groups and what they do.
- c. Cultural Districts – Rocky Neck (designated 2012) and Harbortown (designated 2013) (Karen & Catherine)
 - i. A structure for the City’s otherwise separate cultural organizations to organize
 - ii. Marketing resources – can be shared collaboratively between the cultural nonprofits and with the City (municipal partner) and State (Mass. Cultural Council)
 - iii. City and State agencies – infrastructure, marketing provided by departments and agencies in support of Cultural District initiative.
 - iv. Cultural Data Project – MCC program will provide analytics re visitor trends, occupancy rates, sales data.
 - v. Cape Ann Cultural Districts free mobile phone app – funded through MCC, will launch in February. Tourism Comm’n can be a point of distribution for the QR code and download info.
 - vi. Harborwalk – many awards.
 - vii. Committee for the Arts – national call for public art proposals, 1st one done, 2nd one will be installed in city crosswalks.

We all need to make sure accommodations have brochures. The Tourism Comm’n can help to share knowledge of what is happening. Both print and online resources are important as we are between generations.

Homework: 5 top choices of what TC should do.

Next meeting either Jan 27 or Feb 3, meeting time of 5 pm agreed upon.

Next month’s meeting will include presentations by Linn Parisi for the DMO and Ann Marie Casey for NOBCVB