

MINUTES

TOURISM COMMISSION

City Hall, 9 Dale Avenue, 3rd floor conference room

10/20/2014, 6:00PM to 7:00PM

Present: Tom Daniel, Laura Dow, Carol Thistle, Paul Fronteiro, John Orlando, Melissa Cox, Peter Webber, Catherine Ryan, Karen Ristuben, Pauline Bresnahan

1. Minutes of September meeting approved
2. Chris Pappas of Open the Door, Inc. presented 5-year Tourism Marketing Plan (Part 1: Organizational Structure) for discussion

Process: Tourism Commission will review the proposal and make a recommendation to the Mayor, who will send it to City Council for final approval.

The proposed organizational structure would address Gloucester's year-round economy with a sustainable, inclusive promotional effort.

Recommends a private nonprofit, formed by 1/1/2016, to receive existing public funding & grants. Existing organizations including PR for Gloucester, the DMO, and the Tourism Commission would be subsumed into the new organization, and some of their members may sit on the newly formed Board. Focus will be driving outside visitors into Gloucester, with the Chamber of Commerce focussing on visitors' experience within Gloucester.

City's current provision of 130K will continue, including salary, benefits, office space, but it would go to the nonprofit. Private contributions would augment the budget.

Implementation to take place via the Tourism Commission through 2015 and will include formation, Bylaws, Board structure, and setting milestones.

Open the Door recommends integrating the arts/culture and cooperating with other Cape Ann communities but keeping the focus on Gloucester.

Phase 2 will look to marketing strategies, themes, & events to be developed by the new entity.

Visitors Center would remain under the City's control.

The new Executive Director would collaborate with the head of Community Development.

Salem is role model for this - it has grown from 45K to >200K under Destination Salem, a nonprofit. Now funded by hotel tax.

Tourism Commission can recommend that increases in productivity be re-invested in thenonprofit. TC's 2015 work will include beginning to consolidate existing work flow, visitors guide, etc.

If City offers office space, it will be included in the 130K currently committed.

NEXT MEETINGS: Nov 3 6pm, a public forum in auditorium. Then Tourism Commission will vote on the proposal at Nov 17 meeting