

Maryland Tourism Development Board Business Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, December 5, 2012
Delaplaine Visual Arts Education Center, Frederick, MD

Call to Order/Roll Call

MTDB: Wendell Beitzel, John Fieseler, James Grube, Patricia Heffelfinger, Dave Meloy, Matt Neitzey, Ray Nelson, Heather Renz, Wini Roche, Khaled Said, Christopher Schardt, Kathy Sher, Greg Shockley, Linda Westgate. EDC: Kevin Atticks, Briana Berg, Mary Presley, Marshall Weston. MDMO: Rachelina Bonacci, Catherine Carroll, Sarah Duck, Marjorie Hampson, Carolyn Laray, Linda Lyons (Wicomico), Tom Riford, Sandy Turner. DBED: Margot Amelia, Hannah Byron, Bryan Barnes, Catherine Batavick, Lucy Chittenden, Liz Fitzsimmons, Rich Gilbert, Denise Reed, Marci Ross.

Board chair Greg Shockley introduced John Fieseler, MTDB Member and Executive Director, Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc., who welcomed all in attendance and provided an update on Frederick County tourism activities.

Greg Shockley then introduced/welcomed our newest board member, Ms. Heather Renz, Director of Marketing, Big Steaks Management (Ruth Chris Restaurants) and called on Board Members to report out.

Board Member Comments/Highlights (not all inclusive)

Delegate Wendell Beitzel: Wisp Resort went through bankruptcy process and, as of this coming Friday, will have new ownership. Hurricane Sandy dumped 30 inches of snow in Garrett County. Garrett County Commissioners paid off the debt for the Adventure Sports Center facility, which will be hosting the 2014 World White Water Canoe and Kayak Championship. He indicated that any help promoting that event would be greatly appreciated. Margot indicated that Marci Ross is already involved in assisting with promotion of that event.

Jim Grube: Reported that St. Mary's County is seeing quite a bit of growth (great waterfront vistas!), much in response to the opportunity to host Naval Air Station Patuxent River.

Trish Heffelfinger: The Maryland Soccerplex had a good year with 8 soccer tournaments consisting of 200-250 teams each and 3 lacrosse tournaments averaging 200 to 300 teams each. Just completed collecting data for their first economic impact study – hoping to release results in February 2013.

Dave Meloy, Khaled Said and Linda Westgate: all indicated that business in hotel industry was down in 2012. They are looking forward to 2013 and hoping it will be a better year.

Matt Neitzey: thanked Margot for her comments at the groundbreaking ceremony for the new Tanger Outlets in National Harbor. Looking forward to entertainment/shows/gambling at the county's casino, due to the successful passage of Question #7. Prince George's County is important to Maryland's tourism economy due to the revenue generated from admissions and amusement tax from venues such as Fed-Ex Field, Six Flags and from events held at the University of Maryland in College Park.

Wini Roche: attended the dedication/ribbon-cutting ceremony for the 3,200 seat Howard Community College Arena, which will enable Harford County to host larger sporting events in the future. Also 30,000 sq ft Water's Edge event and conference center is slated to open in the spring of 2013.

Kathy Sher: The National Aquarium had a \$319 million impact, providing 3000 jobs and \$12 million direct & indirect tax revenue to the state and \$6 million to the city of Baltimore. Visitors totaled around 1.5 million with two-thirds of those visitors coming from out of state.

Christopher Schardt: Harborplace in downtown Baltimore is under new ownership effective as of November 20, 2012.

Greg Shockley: indicated that Ocean City really dodged a bullet with Hurricane Sandy. There was some beach erosion and the boardwalk is currently being renovated as a result of damage from the storm. However, considering damage suffered further north, Ocean City fared well. Ocean City had a great season – probably the best in the past five years.

Chairman's Report

Greg referred everyone to the draft Strategic Plan document in folders, the result of this year's MTDB Strategic Planning Session in September. Please take time to review prior to our next board meeting in March. Do not hesitate to ask questions/provide your input on this document. We would like to vote/finalize the document at our March board meeting.

This year's Maryland Tourism and Travel Summit was a great success. Greg noticed that the legislators who were in attendance were speaking our language and using our numbers in support of Maryland Tourism. Greg reminded everyone to please continue to contact your legislators and meet with them if possible to tell them the tourism story and emphasize tourism's economic impact statewide.

Two important legislative events coming up in Annapolis include the "Taste of Annapolis" and "Tourism Day". Please try to attend at least one of these events, which provides a great opportunity to network and meet with legislators in support of tourism in Maryland. He went on to indicate that the Governor's budget numbers will not be known until early January.

There continues to be discussion related to the school start date shift between tourism advocates, legislators and the education community. This will be a long process with plenty of issues to consider. At the very least, we are pleased to have a seat at the table for discussions on this topic.

Greg mentioned a recent conversation he had with Delegate Conway regarding the passage of Question #7. Delegate Conway indicated that, now that Question #7 has passed, he would like to see some dialogue between tourism and the casinos so they can now move forward and work together in the future.

Executive Director's Report

Margot greeted all in attendance indicating that it was great to be in Frederick. She asked Marshall Weston if he could briefly talk about the upcoming Taste of Maryland Legislative reception. Mr. Weston encouraged everyone to attend stating this annual event is a great opportunity to meet with and educate lawmakers on the impact the hospitality and tourism industry has on the State economy.

Margot then called on Wini Roche to give an update on status of preparation for Tourism Day, to be held on February 8, 2013. Wini indicated that this year's format will be the same as in the past. She is currently working on MDMO advocacy projects and the tourism industry information card.

Margot referred to the Annual Report, contained in the binders/folders and went over some of the metrics and stats contained in the report indicating that the tourism industry is the 10th largest private sector employer in the state. OTD has seen increased visits to its web site, partly due to Sailabration, which was a great success in 2012. Thanks to the additional funding received from the Scenic Byways grant, OTD was able to spend more in advertising in 2012 and, for the first time in four years, was able to advertise on TV.

She also mentioned that the Advertising Effectiveness Study results are included in the Annual Report. She then asked Bryan Barnes to run the video that was prepared for the Maryland Tourism & Travel Summit.

Following the video, Margot referred to other items in the binders/folders such as the Marketing Plan, which serves as a great reference tool that provides a snapshot of OTD priorities, accomplishments and goals; and the FY13 New and Priority Projects sheet. Two new TV ads will be produced this spring – one highlighting the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad Byway, and the other highlighting the Star-Spangled National Historic Trail and the Chesapeake Campaign festivals. OTD has also reentered the Canadian market, and has contracted for sales and marketing support in Ontario and Quebec. The current advertising providers' contracts are up at the end of this fiscal year. Hannah and Liz will be actively engaged in procurement of new providers to handle our advertising, creative, media buying and web design. OTD is recruiting for a new market research person. OTD is continuing to develop new video content for its YouTube Channel and new content for the VisitMaryland.org website. OTD would like to double participation in Maryland Green Travel this year.

Staff updates:

Liz – Communications & Marketing Update – Calendar of Events is going to printer early next week. Delfest, Ocean City Air Show, events that drive hotel stays are featured. Working on getting spring creative finalized. Camila just returned from doing a Harriet Tubman FAM tour. Looking forward to some great press in anticipation of the centennial next year. New Harriet Tubman ad included in binders -- will be featured in the spring issue of Preservation Magazine. Additional information in folders/binders.

Lucy – Interactive Services - Just conducted second seasonal sweepstakes, partnered with Arundel Mills and Prime Outlets. Promotion ran for three weeks in November. Prizes included: certificates for dinner/gift cards/overnight stay. Additional information in folders/binders.

Marci Ross provided an overview of the Tourism Development update included in binders/folders. PBS plans to feature Harriet Tubman and Underground Railroad of Maryland in an upcoming series on that network. We are 94 days away from groundbreaking and opening of byway. All documents are out for county grant program, getting info back as we speak and reimbursement process will begin. Conducting some workforce training activities at OTD in early 2013. Additional information in folders/binders.

Executive Directors Council and DMOs (brief summary – not all-inclusive)

Kevin Atticks – 62 wineries in state – many new ones in Western MD. Currently working on some new events for coming year. National Wine conference – Drink Local Wine -- coming to state in April.

Rachelina Bonacci – she is the new chair of MDMO for coming year.

Catherine Carroll - looking forward to developing amateur sporting events in Charles County.

Sarah Duck – Wisp has been making snow but weather has been pretty warm so far.

Marjorie Hampson – gearing up for Baltimore County restaurant week.

Mary Presley – Sent 5 full buses to Crisfield area with supplies to help the residents living in that area. Turf Valley was host for this year's annual Motorcoach Marketplace which was very successful.

Tom Riford – visitors to White Tail ski resort stay in Washington County which helps during what is generally a slow time of year. 2012 was busiest year ever for Washington County due to

commemoration activities. October was biggest month of entire year. 24th annual memorial illumination at Antietam Battlefield just took place.

Sandy Turner – reporting for David Reel (MTC) who is out of town. He wanted to thank everyone for all their efforts at this year's MTTS, which was a great success. Kudos to Rachelina who was this year's MTTS chair. Next year MTTS will be held Nov 6-8, 2013 at the Hotel at Arundel Preserve in Hanover.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Board, upon a motion duly made, seconded and unanimously approved, the meeting was declared adjourned.

Next Maryland Tourism Development Board meeting will be held March 13, 2013 at The Hotel at Arundel Preserve in Hanover, MD