

Maryland Tourism Development Board Business Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 15, 2016 @ 11:30 a.m.
Six Flags America
13710 Central Avenue, Upper Marlboro, MD 20721

Call to Order/Roll Call

MTDB: Donna Abbott, Delegate Pamela Beidle, Judy Bixler, Alan Friedman, Trish Heffelfinger, Cara Joyce, Rick Howarth, Alice Lloyd, Erin McNaboe, Matt Neitzey, Vira Safai, Dan Spedden MDMO: Lisa Challenger, Laney Solomon EDC: Terry Hasseltine, Wini Roche COMMERCE: Liz Fitzsimmons, Rich Gilbert, Brian Lawrence, Chanda Miller, Cynthia Miller, Marci Ross, Lucy Chittenden

Welcome – Rick Howarth, Six Flags America

Rick Howarth, Six Flags Park President and Board Chair, welcomed everyone to the amusement park and gave an overview of new and exciting attractions the park has added which include Superman: Ride of Steel with virtual reality. Video was presented depicting the new features.

Meeting minutes approval

The board unanimously approved meeting minutes from the April 21, 2016 board meeting.

Board Member Comments/Highlights (not all inclusive)

Vira Safai – All is well in Montgomery County. The Comfort Inn Montgomery County is undergoing a million dollar renovation.

Trish Heffelfinger – The SoccerPlex had a tough spring with all of the rain, they just opened the final two fields and they are now a 24-field soccer complex.

Alan Friedman- All is well in Anne Arundel County, a budget being finalized today will provide \$3 million to their Destination Marketing Organization.

Judy Bixler- Things are good in Talbot County. There is a lot going on this summer-the Plein Air Festival is July 9-17. MATPRA will be held in Talbot County September 13-15.

Dan Spedden- Washington County just wrapped the 21st Annual Western Maryland Blues Fest. Dan will meet with a hotel developer interested in developing a hotel at the airport with a conference center. The bureau is hosting tourism day at the Hagerstown Suns on June 30. Shopping for a new owner for the Hagerstown Suns. Just started twelve weeks of PA softball. Finished Mason-Dixon Cup Soccer Tournament and just under 100 teams participated.

Donna Abbott- Busy in Ocean City-high school graduates are in town. The Air Show is this weekend and the Thunderbirds will participate. Memorial Day weekend was great. The Maryland Farmers Convention returns next week, later in July they will host the USSA softball series which is a three week event. The Ocean City Boardwalk was voted number two in a USA Today reader's poll. TV spots are running now, and radio spots will run later this summer. Mayor Meehan recorded spots last week-one reminds people that there is still time to take a vacation and it will air in MD and PA markets. A different strategy was taken this year with the ad that will run in NJ and NY where schools start after Labor Day. The message will be specific to those markets about how they can practically have Ocean City to themselves the last part of August-impact is already being seen. Mayor Meehan asked Donna

to discuss the attempt to get legislature to mandate a Post Labor Day start date. They would like to give it another try and not give up.

Cara Joyce- Urban Pirates has pirate adventures in Baltimore and now National Harbor since April and they have signed a contract with Gaylord to combine hotels and pirate ship deals.

Matt Neitzey-Six Flags is hosting a Mr. America competition and shortly thereafter, a Miss World America pageant will be held at the Gaylord. Happy to have Urban Pirates at National Harbor, MGM is scheduled to open in December and there is now a National Harbor Convention and Visitors Association operating as Visit National Harbor.

Alice Lloyd-Bartlett Pear Inn is going into their 8th year of business. Plein Air is an exciting week in Talbot County as Judy mentioned. The Ruth Star Rose exhibit is in Easton. This is Alice's last meeting with the board.

Delegate Pamela Beidle- There are 28 hotels in AA County the Maryland Live! Hotel will make 29. Delegate Beidle mentioned she would love to find a way support post Labor Day school start.

Erin McNaboe-In Rams Head world they are well into the concert season-at Pier 6 Pavilion specifically. Looking forward to great summer in Baltimore. A 5th restaurant location has been purchased in Glen Burnie- the grand opening is next month. Visit Annapolis launched new websites May 1st. A formal emergency action plan has been developed and is listed on their corporate site.

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

Terry Hasseltine-There are several tournaments on the books this summer. Just submitted a bid for a four-star event with the Maryland Horse Industry Board in Fair Hill. There are only six of them in the world right now. The bid enhances all potential developments at Fair Hill. Through the International and Preakness Incentive Act, Maryland Sports was granted funds for its sports program.

Lisa Challenger-It is the National Park Service's 100th anniversary. Assateague Island had an unveiling of a forever stamp. Berlin was named one of the top 20 small towns to visit in 2016. A first paddling festival is this weekend in Snow Hill.

Laney Solomon-Summer is underway in Queen Anne's County. Laney encouraged folks to stop in QA County on the way to Ocean City and mentioned there are some nice trails next to the Visitors Center.

Wini Roche-Things are busy with MTC- they had their first Spring Expo which went very well. They are responding to the many requests to have a year-round advocacy program. The legislative committee has put something together. Wini will follow up with everyone and send something out after the board meeting. Will soon start to send letters in support of next year's budget.

Chairman's Report

Rick gave an update on Six Flags stating that they are off to a good June and hopeful that the new attractions and Holiday in the Park will provide a boost.

Executive Update

Liz gave kudos to everyone who worked on pushing school start date up the ladder further than it has gone before and said that it should still be pushed.

Liz gave a budget overview, discussed the staying longer, spending more mantra and the 5 senses campaign. In primary trade markets people didn't find Maryland exciting. Liz went through a year in review via her presentation which included advertising efforts in markets old and new and advertising

in Philadelphia's 30th Street Station. The initial 25,000 investment with Adara revealed a \$142,000 return just on hotel bookings which is only a portion. The Insights from the data will be culled during the summer and will influence media purchasing for 2017. OTD has four TV spots which feature culinary, outdoor adventure and two general spots and there is one sizzle reel which can be taken to conferences and conventions. Included in new assets are four new byways videos and still photography. A new scenic byways website was launched. Maryland welcomed 40.5 million visitors up six percent from 2014. As of February, tourism tax revenues have increased 9.4 percent all other tax revenues have increased 3.3 percent. OTD's PR contract expires at the end of July 2016 a new RFP has been written with more deliverables. Social media programs are being developed. Blogger Bash will continue to continue to amplify the marketing message.

Staff updates:

Cynthia Miller- Cynthia introduced herself as the new Director of Strategic Partnerships and gave some insight into her background and what she will be doing at OTD to foster strategic partnerships.

Rich Gilbert- Rich gave an update on IPW 2017. To date there are 180 appointments at the trade show booth plus all of the other activities.

Marci Ross-This is a busy time of year for grants. The first major deadline is on June 27 for reimbursement requests. Marci gave an update on Destination Next and advised five workshops were conducted-100 to 110 surveys have been completed. The goal is 600 surveys. The report findings will be presented at the board retreat.

Brian Lawrence- Part of the past year has been looking at expanding the brand onto other platforms. There has been ad placement in Food Network magazine and OTD is continuing expansion into other magazines. Brian went through main objectives in his presentation, provided an update on progress of Destination Maryland Guide 2017 edition, and showed regional feature videos to the group.

Lucy-On the website all images depict the outdoors and water. Events are still big throughout the state. Seasonal sweepstakes for Frederick Festival of the Arts just wrapped. One in Washington County will be next. Matt suggested a Fall/Winter sweepstakes around National Harbor and Six Flags Holiday in the Park.

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.