

Minutes for Board Review
Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting (in person & via Zoom)
May 23, 2023
FOR BOARD REVIEW

Board Members Participating

Jody Schulz, Chair (via Zoom)
Joe Pomerantz, Vice Chair
Pat Worns, Secretary

Jake Boulay
Sheryl Jaros
Justin Kiernan
Kelly Phipps
Jeff Smith

Absent with Notice

Victoria Hoffman, Treasurer
Mike Foster
Bill Oertel
Jason Ruth
Jason Tuel

Commissioner Liaison

None

Queen Anne's County Staff

Steve Chandlee, Director, QAC Parks and Recreation
Beryl Eismeier, Project Manager, QAC Parks
Heather Tinelli, QAC Tourism and Economic Development

Guests

Linda Friday, QAC Chamber of Commerce

Call to Order

Chair Jody Schulz called to order the regular meeting of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation at 9:04 a.m. The meeting was conducted in person and via Zoom call.

Public Comment

Linda Friday announced that the Chamber of Commerce will hold a mixer in conjunction with the Grand Opening Celebration and ribbon cutting at the Hyatt Place on June 21 at 5:00 p.m.

Minutes

RESOLUTION

Pat Worns made a motion to accept the KNDF meeting minutes of April 25, 2023. The Board unanimously approved.

Financial Report (Gigi Windley for Victoria Hoffman)

The following balances are from financial reports ending 4/30/2023

- Shore United Checking Account: \$93,091.50
- QAC/KNDF 570 Fund, due from QAC: \$220,308
- KNDF Amenities Fund, due from QAC: \$67,191.36. No projects that would contribute additional monies to this fund are in progress or planned.
- Chesapeake Charities Fund: \$8,063.88

Total net assets \$388,654.88

Report from Parks and Recreation (Steve Chandlee)

Steve introduced Beryl Eismeier, the new Project Manager for QAC Parks. Beryl transferred from the Public Works division.

The ranger program has expanded training for full-time rangers to include working toward the designation of Master Naturalist. This will allow Parks to expand interpretative programs at P&R sites throughout the County.

The division is working on a Bike and Pedestrian Plan and has hired Kimley Horn to work with the Department of Public Works to assist with its development. It's expected to be complete by the end of the summer.

Summer Camps are in full swing.

The Skateboard Park at Matapeake is progressing. It's currently in the Engineering Phase.

Pickle Ball Courts have been added to Roundtop Park.

New lights were installed at the Basketball Courts at Pinckney Park.

Work continues on South Island Trail northward extension. A crossing from the west side to the east side of Rt. 8 is being considered. It has been determined that the optimal place for the trail to cross over Rt. 50 and connect to the Cross Island Trail would be near Cracker Barrel.

Fireworks will be on July 4 (rain date is July 5) on the north side of the KN drawbridge. There will be parking, food vendors, and a DJ offered at the Kent Narrows Center (Jemal Property),

since the CHVC and Ferry Point Park are closed for construction. The holiday traffic management plan will remain similar to years past.

Economic Development (Heather Tinelli)

Heather reported on Economic Development and Tourism Programs.

The Ferry Feasibility study will kick off on June 8; it's projected to be completed by December. KNDF will be asked to participate in stakeholder meetings.

A temporary visitors center will be established at the Queenstown Prime Outlets until the CHVC is reopened. Front desk greeters will work from the outlets.

The Tourism Office placed ads in the Washington Post to promote Queen Anne's County. The Narrows Restaurant was featured. Kelly Phipps served as the spokesperson for the Kent Narrows area in a video feature

The State Office of Tourism Development, in cooperation with CRUSA, brought four travel writers from Canada and six writers from the UK and Scotland. Both groups visited Kent Narrows. QAC and KNDF worked together to host the writers.

KNDF will be offered a free one-page ad in the upcoming County Travel Guide. The goal is to produce it by the beginning of 2024.

The County Tourism budget is projected to be \$175,000 in fiscal 2024.

Director's Report (Gigi Windley)

Businesses Updates

Kent Narrows Rentals has added the Cass-N-Reel houseboat, a 432 sq. ft. luxury getaway in the Kent Narrows -- one bedroom, one bathroom, living room, kitchenette, and a covered, rear-facing deck. The Cass-N-Reel is available for bookings starting 5/22/23 with a two-night minimum, and can be booked through AirBnB and VRBO.

Michael O' Brien is the new general manager of Hyatt Place. The hotel is now hosting weddings and other events. A fireworks display was set off on Saturday evening as part of a wedding celebration there.

Big Owl's has added B.O.'s BBQ Pit and will offer brisket, pulled pork, pit beef, and pit ham.

A FIN Bike Rental Kiosk is now available on the Holiday Inn Express property. FIN is a platform that enables members to access a network of outdoor recreational equipment via a smart phone application. Bikes are for those 16+. Riders supply their own helmets. Equipment is placed where they need it and is available when they want to use it. Equipment must stay in a specific geofenced area and can be rented at 17 cents per minute plus a \$10 unlock fee.

Patrons may download the app and sign up for a free membership. The start-up company also offers kayak rentals in Elk Neck State Park, North East, Perryville, and on the Bohemia River. Cycling Kiosks are in Chesapeake City. FIN's Central Office is located in North East, Md.

District Maintenance and Improvements

New informational kiosks are on the docks around Harris Crab House and Harris Seafood.

The parking lots under the bridges were milled and paved. The job was done with minimum disruption.

RESOLUTION

Pat Worns made a motion to send a letter of appreciation to the Commissioners for the parking lot resurfacing and also for what they have allowed KNDF to do with the maintenance. Joe Pomerantz seconded; the Board unanimously approved.

KNDF reported graffiti that was painted under the bridge in the small lot closest to the Jemal Property. It was promptly removed. This is the second incident this year.

The CHVC is now closed due to construction. Staff is still working from the building and are using the KNDF entryway for access. Staff is parking at Piney Narrows Marina. The project is moving along according to schedule.

Upcoming Events

The 7th Annual Chesapeake Bay Motoring Festival will take place on Saturday and Sunday, June 10-11, on the Kent Island Yacht Club lawn. It showcases a unique grouping of antique, classic, hot rod, and sports cars, surrounded by antique and classic speed boats, yachts, and more.

Jaguar Land Rover of North America will present the 15th Annual St. Michael's Concours d' Elegance, September 22-24, at the Kent Island Yacht Club.

National Tourism Week

KNDF and QAC Tourism were active this year in supporting the National Tourism Week effort, which is initiated through the U.S. Travel Association and supported by the Maryland Tourism Coalition and State Tourism and tourism-related entities.

As part of the Tourism Week Celebration, the Maryland Tourism Coalition initiated a program called "Maryland in a Day," to highlight places along the Chesapeake Bay. Maryland Tourism Development Board Member and MTC member, Chris Riehl had his car decorated, and stopped at and filmed Chesapeake Bay-related destinations. Chris broadcast live from key locations throughout the day. He stopped in Kent Narrows for lunch, took photos, and did a live FaceBook feed with Gigi, Heather, and April from Harris Crab House. Thanks to Bill and Sherri Oertel for hosting him for lunch at Harris.

Marketing and Outreach

The Kent Narrows map was updated again; 2,000 pieces were recently delivered. The maps are circulated to area visitors centers, the Chamber of Commerce, and to hotels, restaurants, and marinas in and around Kent Narrows. With more visitation to the area requiring additional copies, and higher costs for design updates, the amount the Foundation is spending on this piece has increased.

The Kent Narrows Fishing rack card is being updated with new information.

KNDF hosted the CRUSA Familiarization Tour and spent about \$450 to sponsor the UK writers' lunch, which included five giveaway items. The visit was arranged through CRUSA in cooperation with the Maryland Office of Tourism Development and QAC Tourism. The theme of the tour was wellness and fitness. Sites visited included the Wells Cove area -- Bridges, the Jetty, and the Cross Island Trail. The group also visited Dessert First and had a briefing on Chesapeake Bay Oysters and the Oyster Recovery Project.

The Kent Narrows Travel Guide update will be finished soon. Final proofs will come back in early June. The new books will be available in July. The cost will be about \$6,000 for a quantity of 5,000. A more extensive update, with additional pages, is scheduled to be released in January 2024. This publication cycle is in sync with the schedule for Destination Maryland (The Maryland State Travel Guide).

KNDF placed ads in both the Rotary Outdoor Guide and the Bay to Beach Guide, Summer Editions. Both feature editorial copy on Kent Narrows. The Rotary Guide has more of a local business circulation pattern, while Bay to Beach is inserted in newspapers throughout the peninsula and distributed at key business locations.

The content and artwork for the trail map is being compiled; the project was delayed due to the Visitors Center construction. The new site plans for the center have now been received by KNDF, so the project can move forward. A time extension was granted.

Designing the wayfinding and regular signs continues. Parks and Public Landings will approve all signs before they are manufactured. Many can be placed on existing posts and surfaces. Some placements will have to wait until the CHVC project is completed.

Gigi is working on updating the Kent Narrows logo and a new design for the Kent Narrows rack card.

RESOLUTION

Jeff Smith made a motion to print 5000 additional copies of the Kent Narrows Travel Guide; Pat Worns seconded; the Board unanimously approved.

Budget Request

Gigi illustrated how the KNDF's revenue from the Special Taxing District was growing. Last year it was up to approximately \$52,000. She worked with the budget office to update the way KNDF line items were presented.

The tax generated from the hotel rooms in the County will grow this year because of the increase in supply. A discussion followed related to the fact that – unlike the other counties -- QAC does not reinvest the tax to improve the places that are impacted by visitors.

She recommended a draw of \$40,000 from the 570 Fund to cover non grant-funded expenses until the new County funding is available.

RESOLUTION

Jody Schulz made a motion to write a letter to the Commissioners requesting a \$40,000 draw from the 570 Fund to cover operations until the new funds are made available in July or August. Pat Worns seconded; the Board unanimously approved..

NEW BUSINESS

Jeff Smith briefed the group in more detail on the Concours d' Elegance. Historically, it has attracted both domestic and international visitors.

Jeff thanked the Foundation for its support and assistance re: the expansion of RV parking at the Yacht Club.

Adjournment

RESOLUTION

Sheryl Jaros made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Board agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Georgeanna (Gigi) Windley,
Executive Director
Kent Narrows Development Foundation

Certification:

I hereby certify that this is a true and correct copy of the Minutes that were adopted by the Directors of this Foundation on June 27, 2023.

Patricia P. Worns, Secretary, KNDF