

Minutes
Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting (in person & via Zoom)
July 25, 2023

Board Members Participating

Jody Schulz, Chair
Victoria Hoffman, Treasurer
Patricia Worns, Secretary
Jake Boulay
Sheryl Jaros
Justin Kiernan
Kelly Phipps
Jeff Smith

Absent with Notice

Joe Pomerantz, Vice Chair
Mike Foster
Bill Oertel
Jason Ruth
Jason Tuel

Commissioner Liaison

None

Queen Anne's County Staff

Steve Chandlee, QAC Director of Parks and Recreation
Heather Tinelli, QAC Director of Economic and Tourism Development
Nancy Scozzari, Independent Consultant

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 9:00 a.m. The meeting was conducted in person; no Zoom participants called in.

Public Comment

Linda Friday announced that the Chamber is forming a welcoming committee for new homeowners at Four Seasons. The handouts will include Kent Narrows information.

On behalf of the Chamber, she presented Jody Schulz with a framed photo from the Hyatt ribbon cutting.

Minutes

RESOLUTION

Pat Worns made a motion to accept the KNDF meeting minutes of May 23, 2023. The Board unanimously approved. (Note: The June meeting was canceled.)

Financial Report (Victoria Hoffman)

The following balances are from financial reports ending 6/30/2023:

Shore United Checking Account: \$118, 219.35

- QAC/KNDF 570 Fund, due from QAC: \$183,840.06 reflects \$40,000 that was withdrawn from the 570 fund to cover expenses until the County Funds come. It appears that the interest was included.
- 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 \$377, 314.55

Commissioner's Report

None provided.

Report from Parks and Recreation (Steve Chandlee)

The Independence Day celebration and fireworks display was a success. The board offered complements on the event.

There are new projects going on in the Northern part of the County. The recreation division is in the middle of their summer program offerings. Preparations are being made for high school sports to begin.

Jody Schulz expressed concern regarding children throwing the river rocks from the Wells Cove Landing into the water and questioned if a sign prohibiting rock throwing into the water.

Report from Economic and Tourism Development (Heather Tinelli)

The EDA-funded Ferry Feasibility Study -- managed by Visit Annapolis and Anne Arundel County in cooperation with a consortium from the counties of Queen Anne's, Somerset, Calvert, and St. Mary's -- was awarded to Cambridge Systematics in late March. Representatives from the consulting firm will be looking at 18 locations around the Bay. A site visit to QAC and Kent Narrows is being planned for late August.

The County is working with two government groups to set up the following tours during their visit here. Both groups range from 50 to 100 people.

- The County Administrators Group will be visiting in mid-October and staying at Hyatt Place.
- The Association of Planning Boards also will be visiting **this fall** and staying at the Kent Island Resort, (Kent Manor Inn).

The QAC hotel tax receipts haven't been recorded for June. At the end of May the report showed that \$860,000 was collected from hotels in Queen Anne's County. She predicts that the total by the end of June will be \$997,000. It should be noted that as of December 29, 2023, new rooms were added to the room supply because of the new Hyatt Hotel's coming online. (2022's total was \$860,000 (June-July).

Tourism Budget

QAC's Tourism Marketing Budget was \$263,000 last year. This year the state has granted \$47,000, so the total ad budget is much reduced from last year and is at \$175,000.

New Ad Campaign

An ad campaign to promote QAC restaurants and dock bars offering Crabs and Orange Crushes is in the works. A "Crabs n' Crushes" website, crabsncrushes.com, and billboard advertising has been developed. (It is slightly different in wording from Phillips Seafood's well-known "Crabs & Crushes" promotional campaign for their \$85 annual event in Baltimore.

Washington Post Advertising

A video piece featuring destinations in Queen Anne's County was produced by the Washington Post. Kelly Phipps and the Narrows Restaurant were featured.

Position on the proposed Chesapeake Bay Recreation Area

The QAC Commissioners have not taken a stance on the CNRA (Chesapeake National Recreation Area). They have had a meeting with representatives from the Watermen's Association and from Senator Van Hollin's office. He is one of the bill sponsors.

A temporary Visitors Center has opened at the Queenstown Outlets. The foot traffic into the new center is slow; the office will be making efforts to increase it. Staff is working with the Outlets to reach the bus businesses that visit the center.

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

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

Director's Report (Gigi Windley)

Planning and Zoning Update

The Planning Commission has hired a project consultant to work with the Planning Office to update the zoning and subdivision regulations in the QAC Code. Gigi Windley handed out copies of the first proposed subdivision regulations as an example of how the process will work. Deficiencies, ambiguities, or contradictions will be identified in the current zoning and subdivision regulations and code. This will include items identified in the Kent Narrows Community Plan that will affect the properties in the WVC and the KNSTD.

The consultant will provide the Planning Commission with a series of proposed code and map changes over the next year in the form of code updates. Each one will address a new goal or objective in the 2022 Comp Plan. Ultimately, the County Commissioners must vote comprehensively on the updates.

Citizen Sponsored Text Amendment

As a reminder to the board, Gigi distributed the May 23 memo from Rob Tracy re: text amendment 23-02. As it stands now, the revised amendment authorizes the Commissioners to "consider and grant a maximum density of 25 dwellings per acre in the WVC Zoning District under certain circumstances; and generally dealing with density and dwellings in the WVC Zone." This amends chapter 18:1-26. The proposed change to the ordinance will be heard by the County Commissioners.

Businesses Openings

Sugar Doodles and Hyatt Place

Sugar Doodles Sweet Shop has opened at the Boatel, 100 Piney Narrows Road. Offering coffee, crepes and Vanderwende's Creamery Ice Cream.

The Hyatt Place Grand Opening Celebration was held on June 21. More than 200 people attended. A proclamation from the Maryland Secretary of Commerce was presented and read aloud.

Business Enhancements

Terrace at the Hilton

The new Terrace is on the second-floor deck at the Hilton Garden Inn, overlooking Wells Cove Marina and the Eastern Bay. It is open Monday-Thursday from 4-8 p.m. Light dinner fare and drinks are available. KNDF attended the opening event and posted it to social media.

Vintage Photo Mural at Fisherman's Crab Deck

A new photo mural depicting the history of Fisherman's Inn and Crab Deck has been installed at the Crab Deck. It's a nice backdrop for photos.

Outreach and Promotional Efforts

Kent Narrows Travel Guide

5,000 copies of the Guides were recently delivered and are being distributed. The updated electronic, downloadable version is posted on our Kentnarrowsmd.com. This updates the December Guide. This edition includes an update in the "What's New" section and adds new businesses and updated photos. It gives notification of the temporary closure of the Chesapeake Legacy Museum, Observation Towers, CHVC waterfront area, and Ferry Point Park, including mention of the QAC Visitors Information Center relocation. The map inside was updated to reflect new businesses.

Electronic Media

New Kent Narrows website pages and Social Media postings were produced to redirect visitors to nearby alternative attractions.

A new flyover video was posted on social media and on the KNDF's Vimeo Channel.

Kent Narrows Postcards

1,000 Kent Narrows postcards were printed and are being distributed. The QR code on our postcard directs people to Kentnarrows.com.

MAP TECH Embassy Cruising Guide

Kent Narrows was chosen to be on the cover of the Map Tech Cruising Guide. The guide is published every two years and covers ports and waterways from the Chesapeake Bay to Florida, including the Intracoastal Waterway. The ad rep for the publication will arrange for a co-op page featuring Kent Narrows, if she can get enough participation. Gigi has forwarded to the editor technical corrections to the existing map. The ad rep will contact those who wish to purchase listings and photos for \$500 each and those who wish to do display ads.

RESOLUTION

Victoria Hoffman made a motion to allocate \$1,500 for a half-page ad in the Map Tech book. Jeff Smith seconded; the Board unanimously approved.

Destination Maryland (Maryland State Travel Guide)

An email was sent to Kent Narrows attractions regarding the opportunity to be included in the guide for free in the listings section. Paid ad opportunities are also offered. KNDF will work with QAC to purchase advertising. The copy for KNDF's listing was submitted.

Travel Trade Development:

CRUSA Event/ Site Visit

A site visit was held with CRUSA staff, Maryland and QAC Tourism, and key Visit Annapolis staff to plan for the CRUSA Global Marketplace Travel Trade event that will be held in Annapolis September 18-20. The plans include a September 19 visit to the Crab Deck by all CRUSA attendees.

KNDF is registered to attend the Global Marketplace in Annapolis September 18-20. KNDF received and responded to an important lead generated by our attendance at last year's CRUSA marketplace. A site visit was arranged for an overseas tour producer from the European Markets.

Familiarization Tour:

Plein Air Artists

KNDF conducted a familiarization visit for two accomplished plein air artists who cover subject matter from the Delmarva Peninsula. Both have had showings in accredited museums. They scouted for sites and will be back to paint when the weather is cooler.

Event Development:

Watermen's Day Event

KNDF met with the Yacht Club, the QAC Watermen's Event Planning Committee, and QAC Tourism to begin to formulate the Watermen's Day Event for Kent Narrows. They have tentatively chosen the date of September 15, 2024.

Watermen's Basket Tree Event

A planning meeting will be held on August 1 to discuss this year's Tree Lighting and Holiday Vendor Fair. The committee met and made suggestions for improvements. A proposal is to move the trees to the grassy area next to the Watermen's Monument.

Concours d' Elegance on the Chesapeake Bay (Yacht Club)

Jeff Smith said the event will be bigger than anticipated. This is the 70th anniversary of the Corvette, so more Corvettes will be included, attracting additional people. Jeff Smith noted that the event could not have come to Kent Narrows had the Hyatt not been built.

QAC Tourism is working with the event promoters to have the 404/50 billboard promote the event. KNDF will arrange for the Commissioners to write a Welcome Letter for the event program.

Event Follow-up

Jeff Smith noted that The Chesapeake Motoring Festival was a huge success. The public event was spread over two days and attracted people from out of town and out of State. KNDF operated a visitor info and welcome table for both days of the event.

District Maintenance and Improvements

Mowing Contract

The hillsides and roadsides are looking much better. The amount of trash is reduced, and the mowing seems to be going smoothly. We have asked Dennison for a bid to increase the mowing on the hillsides on the south side of the Kent Narrows Bridges. Dennison indicated that they could cut more frequently

but different equipment is needed due to the thick, woody nature of some of the growth and the steep slope. More handwork is needed, and this type of work is more costly.

Administrative Matters

KNDF sent a letter of appreciation to the Commissioners and the County Administrator for the funds for the mowing contract and for help with improvements to the parking lots in the Kent Narrows Special Tax District.

KNDF downloaded and updated a Certificate of Good Standing from the State of Maryland's Department of Assessments and Taxations on June 22, 2023. This shows that KNDF is up to date with our Maryland Tax Filings.

Condolences were expressed to the Oertel, Harris, and Ruth families upon the passing of Pat Harris. KNDF sent a sympathy card.

Old Business

CHVC Project Work

KNDF will coordinate a meeting with the project team that will be replacing the benches and signage around the CHVC. This meeting is scheduled for August 22.

Parking Study

The board discussed the need to update the Kent Narrows Parking Study. The most recent study was done by Kimley-Horn, but it covered a short time frame.

Hotel Tax State Legislation

The hotel tax enabling legislation to increase the hotel tax to 6% did not pass. It may resurface next legislative session. The board suggested that a letter articulating the potential negative impacts of the increase, especially on group business, be sent to Commissioners.

New Business

Update of Kent Narrows Economic Impact Study

Gigi will work to identify funding and vendors for an update of the Kent Narrows Economic Impact Study.

Boat Tours

Jody noted that there has been an increased demand for charter and head boat trips as a result of new customer groups coming into the Hyatt. They are working closely with the local boat captains.

Adjournment

RESOLUTION

Jeff Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Board agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:20 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 August 22, 2023.

Patricia P. Worns, Secretary, KNDF