

Minutes
Kent Narrows Development Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting (in person & via Zoom)
October 24, 2023

Board Members Participating

Jody Schulz, Chair
Joe Pomerantz, Vice Chair
Patricia Worns, Secretary
Jake Boulay
Justin Kiernan
Kelly Phipps
Jason Ruth
Jeff Smith

Absent with Notice

Victoria Hoffman, Treasurer
Mike Foster
Sheryl Jaros
Bill Oertel
Jason Tuel

Commissioner Liaison

Commissioner Phil Dumenil

Queen Anne's County Staff

Steve Chandlee, QAC Director of Parks and Recreation
Heather Tinelli, QAC Director of Economic and Tourism Development
April Plummer, QAC Tourism Marketing Specialist

Guests

Linda Friday, QAC Chamber of Commerce
Kirby Schulz, Kent Narrows Rentals

Call to Order

Chair Jody Schulz called to order the regular meeting of the Kent Narrows Development Foundation at 9:01 a.m. The meeting was conducted in person; no Zoom participants called in.

Public Comment

Linda Friday reported that the Chamber is holding welcome events for residents at the Four Seasons Development once a month and they will give out promotional materials in the Welcome Bags. The Harvest Breakfast is at Chesapeake College on December 1. The Chamber's Holiday mixer will be at the Kent Island Yacht Club on December 13.

Minutes

RESOLUTION

Pat Worns made a motion to accept the KNDF meeting minutes of August 22, 2023. The Board unanimously approved. (The Board did not meet in September.)

Financial Report (Gigi Windley for Victoria Hoffman)

The following balances are from financial reports ending 9/31/2023:
Shore United Checking Account: \$161,759.68.

- QAC/KNDF 570 Fund, due from QAC: \$246,231.00 (does not include interest income for August).
- 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
- Grant Funds
 - \$96,200 Safety First Grant
 - \$1,500 Eastern Shore Heritage

Total net assets \$483,246.34

The cost for Drobox and Zoom was shifted to the company credit card.

Reports from August and September were distributed.

Commissioner Dumenil

Commissioner Dumenil reported that the Commissioners currently are trying to secure dates in November to have a public hearing to hear from citizens on the trial Ramp Closings to alleviate traffic congestion around the Bay Bridge. The closure decision lies with the State MDOT. The trial had to be shortened by a weekend due to a weather situation and because of an accident on the bridge.

The annual MDOT meeting with the Commissioners will be held later this afternoon. The Rt. 18 corridor study is in progress and includes Rt. 18 through Kent Island to Kent Narrows..

The Fireworks at the Narrows will be held on July 4. A contract for \$52,000 was agreed to by the County and the fireworks purveyor. The cost is higher when the event is held on Independence Day

Report from Economic and Tourism Development (Heather Tinelli)

This is Maryland Economic Development Week.

County Economic Development staff visited nine businesses in North County that have a total of \$70 million in the pipeline.

A CyberAg (Cybersecurity and Agriculture) event will be held at Chesapeake College from 9 a.m-1 p.m. on Wednesday. It is co-sponsored by TEDCO (Maryland Technical Development Corporation). The event is free.

A Strategic Assets and Industry Analysis for Queen Anne’s County is underway. It will be done in two phases.

The first phase will look at developable sites in the County that are currently listed and will determine what uses will best work for those sites.

The Second Phase will examine, update, and prioritize which industries the County will focus on developing in the future.

The Bay Bridge run will occur on November 12. 20,000 participants are expected, that up from 16,000 over last year.

The Crab Basket Tree Lighting will be on Dec. 2 from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. Baskets are being sold at the temporary Visitors Center at Queenstown Outlets. Gigi said that the sponsorship and registration packet for the tree and the vendor fair are available in a downloadable format on Kentnarrowsmd.com. The forms were also emailed to KNDF Members and businesses. The basket trees will be erected in the Crab Deck lot between Shore Tackle and Rod and the Watermen's Monument. The vendor fair will be between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. that day. Jay Fleming is expected to be there for a book signing.

The Maryland County Administrators Conference was held at the Hyatt Place with a dinner at Libby's. The QAC staff arranged and coordinated local area business-related tours of County sites.

The State of MD Planning Commissioners Conference was at Kent Island Resort. Conference participants went to model sites in Queen Annes County, including the Boatel at Kent Narrows.

The integrated Crabs and Crushes Campaign is still underway. It includes billboards, online advertising, and some print ads.

April Plumber reported that the County is preparing a new Visitors Guide. It should be available in March of 2024. It has an 18-month circulation life. 30,000 copies will be printed. Along with that, an 18-page culinary guide will be printed in a storytelling format. There will be no ads. An outdoor guide is also being prepared. 10,000 of the three publications will be bundled together.

The deadline for space reservations is Nov. 12; the creative deadline is Dec. 15. A regular full-page ad is \$2875, a half page is \$1275, and a quarter page is \$925. The size of the publications will be 7 1/2 x9 1/4. Gigi pointed out that additional details are in her director's report.

RESOLUTION

Jeff Smith made a motion for the KNDF to purchase a half-page ad for \$1275 in the 2024 Queen Annes County Travel Guide. Pat Worns seconded. The Board agreed.

Jody suggested investigating the possibility of a digital billboard on the QAC side of the Bridge publicizing QAC events. Other members suggested if that wasn't possible, then placing the board in Anne Arundel County at the entrance way to the bridge should be considered.

Report from Parks and Recreation (Steve Chandlee)

An engineer has been hired to look at the damage that occurred to Ferry Point Park in October of 2022. A part of the Chester River shoreline on the eastern side of the park has eroded and needs repair. There is about a 12-15 foot drop over a portion of the shoreline. Funds must be found to pay for the repair. A grant writing company has been hired to help to find funding for the project. He suggested that Ferry Point Park could be closed for another season. He mentioned that James Wood is looking into funding for channel dredging.

The project at the CHVC is on schedule and he expects things to be completed by mid-November.

Director's Report (Gigi Windley)

Administrative Matters

The County will advertise open positions on the KNDF Board. All applications will be submitted electronically through the County website. There are three board slots which expire in 2023. Sheryl Jaros,

Pat Worns, and Jason Tuel. The nominating committee should have its recommendations ready in time for the board to vote in December. The Commissioners are scheduled to confirm the Board's recommendations the first meeting of January.

Business Openings

Sugar Doodles held a grand opening celebration on September 30. They offered free crepes, music, and sample tastings. The event was well attended despite the weather.

Brook and June Bridal will open at the Boatel later this year. The date is not yet set. Kallie German of Centerville is the proprietor.

Familiarization Tours

Hanna Jackson Worsh is the new director of Sales and Marketing for the Hyatt Place. Skip Coleman has moved on to become the general manager of the new Hyatt Place in Lewes, Del. KNDF took Hanna on a familiarization tour of Kent Narrows and other parts of QAC. She was introduced to the Chamber staff and QAC's Economic and Tourism Development staff, local business owners, and CBEC leadership.

Capital Region USA Event

KNDF attended the Global Marketplace in Annapolis, September 18-20.

CRUSA attendees and sponsoring organizations visited the Crab Deck the evening of September 19 for a crab feast hosted by the State of Maryland and partner organizations. KNDF and Queen Anne's County Tourism co-sponsored the event, along with other interested entities. This is a direct result of KNDF's work with CRUSA, the Maryland Office of Tourism, and the Annapolis Anne Arundel County CVB. KNDF met one on one with 38 travel trade representatives over a two-day period to help develop business for the region. Media, trade, and overseas sales reps for key European markets were also there. Follow-up will be coordinated in cooperation with the County, CRUSA and MTOD reps. KNDF will provide liaison assistance with local business reps.

Business Development

Water Taxi and Group Tour Vessel

A well-established provider of services visited Kent Narrows and wishes to explore a partnership with the County like what they have done in several other areas. We have attempted to arrange for a Zoom call or a meeting with Parks and Economic Development and Public Landings to discuss further. This is an attraction that would help the KNDF meet its mission of helping to provide the public with access to the waterways.

Events in Kent Narrows

Watermen's Heritage Event

The Watermen's Association has tentatively chosen September 15, 2024. More discussion is occurring at their end as to what the event should look like.

Watermen's Basket Tree

KNDF will be an in-kind sponsor for the event and provide marketing assistance as needed. KNDF will once again pay to have the event program printed and will be there to help at the build and at the event on December 2.

Concours d' Elegance, Yacht Club. The KNDF welcome letter and ad were published in the program book. The annual event will be held at the Yacht Club for four more years. The sponsors were satisfied with the number of sales they made, which included two Bentleys and the Corvette that was featured in the program book. People came from as far as California, Florida, and Wisconsin. The event had a three-

page spread in the hardbound international Concourse Yearbook, which is distributed globally. Jeff Smith thanked Luke Phipps for all his work on the event.

Boatober Fest

The Boatober Fest is in full swing. It features new and used boats on land and water. Floating docks were installed to connect the waterfront slips from Safe Harbor South to the Hyatt Place. Kelly Stewart of Anchors and Oars has done a great job of attracting local and regional vendors. Most all maritime related businesses in and around Kent Narrows were part of the event.

Trail Map Update

The Trail Map project that was funded by a grant through Eastern Shore Heritage, Inc., is in progress but cannot be completed until the CHVC sign placement plan is updated and substantially complete. An extension was granted.

The pedestrian wayfinding and regulatory sign placement group met and delegated assignments out to the responsible parties. Once the landscaping is in, the sign placement areas can be further developed. Tourism is taking responsibility for the Chesapeake Gateway signs; Parks will need to provide the rules for the shoreline area before the signs can be designed and placed.

Our ad in the Embassy Cruising Guide was placed. Kent Narrows will be on the cover. KNDF provided additional photos and helped edit to ensure the content was correct.

Kent Narrows Travel Guide

Due to the high volume of fall activity here, the supplies of the Travel Guide are almost gone. A reprint of 3,000 with minor updates is recommended for the winter season; a new version with additional pages will be published in spring.

Destination Maryland (Maryland State Travel Guide)

KNDF submitted half-page display ads. KNDF will work with QAC to purchase the ad at the reduced rate, which is negotiated through the County Tourism Office.

Reports to County Roads

Reported the downed crosswalk sign to the County Roads Department. It was repaired.

Legislative Matters

County Level

A public hearing was held July 25 on text amendment 23-02. The public record remained open for two weeks following the hearing. A vote may be forthcoming as early as August 22.

State Level

Eastern Shore Code Counties Alteration of the Maximum Hotel Rental Tax Rate from 5% to 6%

The enabling legislation to increase the hotel rental tax rate in Md. Code Counties will be put forth again next session. KNDF will study impacts, and comment and monitor as needed. The legislation originated through Wicomico County to fund services. All five code counties must agree to the increase for the legislation to pass. Queen Anne's is one of those counties. The bill sponsor is Delegate Hartman. This does not mean that the tax will increase in Queen Annes County, but it means that the County Commissioners may vote to increase the tax. An increase would mean that the tax rate would be 1% higher than the current rate in Talbot County, which would place properties in QAC at a disadvantage pricewise.

Old Business

Denison Mowing Contract

The mowing and landscaping contract will need to be developed for FY 2025. There are several unknowns related to what the mowing and maintenance ends will be at the Heritage Center. The existing contracts will be reconciled at the end of the calendar year, and any service gaps will be identified and addressed. Gigi will check with SHA to see if they have any plans for fall mowing in the WVC.

New Business

Jody Schulz appointed Joe Pomerantz as the chair of the Board member nominating committee. Those who are interested in serving on the committee should contact Joe.

Business Round Robin

The Narrows Restaurant will celebrate its 40th anniversary with a party on October 30 from 2-7. The Board is invited to attend. The restaurant will be closed that day.

Jason Ruth reported that Crab season is ending in and it was not as prosperous as the previous two years.

Adjournment

RESOLUTION

Joe Pomerantz made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The Board agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 10:46 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 November 28, 2023.

Patricia P. Worns, Secretary, KNDF