



Town of Surfside

**TOURIST BOARD MEETING
MINUTES**

**9293 Harding Avenue, Surfside, FL 33154
December 6, 2021– 5:30 p.m.**

Opening Items:

1. Call to Order/Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by Chair Herman at 5:33 p.m.

Present: Chair Lisa Herman
Vice Chair Eli Tourgeman
Board Member Diana Gonzalez
Board Member Ian Mavorah

Absent: Board Member Robert Lisman
Malarie Dauginikas, Community Services & Public
Communications Director

Also Present: Vice Mayor Tina Paul
Roger Pou, Town Attorney
Andrew Hyatt, Town Manager
Frank Trigueros, Tourism Manager
Mayor Charles Burkett

2. Agenda and Order of Business

Tourism Manager Trigueros spoke regarding Barbara Cohen and the passing of her husband.

Vice Chair Tourgeman wanted to send something on behalf of the Board to Mrs. Cohen.

Chair Herman advised the public of the Farmer's Market, and the new SIGAL pop-up store where Sara Liss's cookbooks are also available. She also spoke about the upcoming historical tours and COVID testing at Town Hall.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that all the information is on the Town website.

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes: November 18, 2021

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tourgeman to approve the November 18, 2021 Tourist Board Meeting Minutes, seconded by Board Member Gonzalez. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote with Board Member Lisman absent.

4. Discussion regarding the Downtown Business District and Parking

Mayor Burkett discussed the Downtown Business District and its lack of parking. He also spoke regarding the construction workers from the Bal Harbour project using Town parking lots. He suggested doubling the price for parking spots or increase them substantially. He also suggested giving the merchants coupons that can be used as discounts. He suggested coming up with a creative solution to solve the parking problem such as these merchant vouchers that could potentially be funded by the Tourist Board.

Chair Herman asked if this would pertain to every lot on every street in Surfside.

Mayor Burkett stated that he will present it to DVAC as well and he would like for the Tourist Board be part of this. He stated that this is something that is necessary. He stated that it could be directed to a certain area that they want to provide the service. He spoke regarding the different lots in Surfside.

Vice Chair Tourgeman asked what the Town is currently charging for the lots.

Mayor Burkett stated that what they are charging now is not impacting those that are parking and they do not want people that are working in Bal Harbour coming to park here all day.

Vice Chair Tourgeman spoke regarding the parking problem in Surfside and that it has been a problem forever. He stated that Mayor Burkett has a good idea and believes there are alternatives that have been used in the past. He stated that in the past they would open the Abbott Avenue lot at 9:00 a.m. He spoke regarding the problem which is that employees from Bal Harbour are using the lot and taking up a lot of spaces. He stated that Mayor Burkett is requesting support from the Board.

Board Member Gonzalez spoke regarding the cost to park in the City of Hollywood and she stated that what Surfside charges is very cheap.

Vice Chair Tourgeman stated that there are others lots that should be increased which should also be Harding Avenue because all the parking spaces are taken. He stated that this time of the year it has always been a terrible problem and people coming to Surfside get discouraged because they have to drive and are unable to find parking. He suggested the coupon idea or closing the lots.

Vice Mayor Paul thanked Vice Chair Tourgeman for his thoughts and ideas. She stated that they did change the rates to increase them and they put a cap of the number of hours. She stated that her concern in raising the rates is that you then discourage individuals from coming.

Board Member Mavorah agrees with possibly increasing the rate or closing the lots. He asked if the problem with the parking is that the employees from Bal Harbour are parking in our lots and does not understand why their own workers will not park in their lots.

Chair Herman stated that they could also have them park in Haulover and bus them to the construction site.

Board Member Gonzalez stated that anywhere you go to park is expensive and believes that increasing the rate is a good idea. She stated that it is cheaper to park here than anywhere else.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke regarding the parking rates in Miami Beach and when she discussed increasing the rate, you do not want to discourage people from coming.

Interim Police Chief Healy spoke regarding the issue with the construction workers parking and the employees from Bal Harbour Shops parking in our lots is because our rates are cheaper. He provided the number of spots in the parking lots with their rates.

Vice Chair Tourgeman asked Interim Police Chief Healy regarding the weekend and week day rates.

Interim Police Chief Healy spoke regarding the 20 people he had to kick out today and stated that it is cheaper to park in Surfside than in the Bal Harbour shops. He spoke regarding the construction workers parking in our lots as well.

Further discussion took place among the Board and Interim Police Chief Healy regarding the individuals that are parking in the Surfside lots, the different lots, the different ways to rectify this, including signage to prevent them from parking and raising the rates.

Vice Chair Tourgeman asked Interim Police Chief Healy based on his experience since they are charging the low rates, what does he recommend to send to the Commission for approval.

Interim Police Chief Healy stated it is hard for him to make a recommendation but as long as you keep the price under the Bal Harbour Shops prices it will be a problem.

Vice Mayor Paul asked how the pilot program the Town Manager has of a drop off area is doing. She stated that she also saw that areas have limited parking and they have signs that states they can only park if they are patronizing certain businesses.

Interim Police Chief Healy stated that will require an employee to be there all the time and if they have a receipt that they patronized the business then they can park in the lots.

Vice Chair Tourgeman stated that assigning parking would be a disaster.

Board Member Gonzalez stated that they should have the same price as Bal Harbor and not less than Bal Harbour.

The following individuals from the public spoke:

George Kousoulas
Marianne Meisheid

Mayor Burkett summarized the discussion and spoke regarding the rebate and coupon option. He also suggested charging as much as hotels charge for parking and come up with a formula.

Further discussion took place among the Board members regarding the increase of the parking rate and options.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tourgeman to recommend the immediate closure of Abbott Avenue lot as in the past has proven effective and open the lot at 9:00 a.m., together with looking at the immediate increase on meters for the hourly rate which is presently at \$2.00 and raise to \$3.00 and to recommend for the Commission to look at the coupon system that would allow some discount to the perspective buyers in the business district, seconded by Chair Herman.

Board Member Mavorah asked if that the Abbott Avenue lot is the lot with the problem.

Interim Police Chief Healy addressed the comments made regarding the lots and the price that Bal Harbour is charging with and without a validated ticket. He spoke regarding the construction workers and as long as it is cheaper you will have the problem. He stated that if you choose to close the lot you have to determine the time you will close the lot.

Town Attorney Pou advised the Board that this Board can only recommend but does not have the authority to close the lot.

Board Member Gonzalez asked to modify the motion to increase the rate from \$3.00 to \$4.00 and weekend rate from \$3.00 to \$4.00.

Vice Chair Tourgeman agreed to amend his motion to the new rate.

Interim Police Chief Healy stated that you have to take into account the Harding Avenue lot.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that if you keep Harding Avenue to \$4.00 an hour it should not have a renewable option.

Mayor Burkett stated that what he is looking for is support of the concept and they can then move forward with the idea.

Vice Chair Tourgeman rescinded his motion and Chair Herman rescinded her second.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tourgeman to recommend to the Town Commission to increase the rates on the Harding Avenue and Abbott Avenue lots, look into the possible closure of the lots, increase the hourly rate on the meters, issuance of coupons look at the coupon system that would allow some discount to the perspective buyers in the business district, seconded by Board Member Gonzalez. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote with Board Member Lisman absent.

5. Resort Tax Collection and Vacancies Report

Tourism Manager Trigueros provided an update on the item noting the collection this year is at a record level, showing few signs of slowing down.

6. Turtle Sculpture: Student Designs

Tourism Manager Trigueros shared the designs prepared by students from the Miami International University of Art and Design with the Board members. He provided a presentation of the different options for the turtle designs separated by concept: Architecture and Tequesta/Sustainability. Because the design was so specialized, the painting would require an additional cost by the vendor which was listed on each design.

Chair Herman asked if they will be able to see the top and bottom.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that yes, viewers would be able to see the top and bottom once the sculpture is erected.

Chair Herman prefers the Tequesta concept over the architectural option and likes the design with the skeletons and bones.

Tourism Manager Trigueros spoke about the benefits of the Tequesta/sustainability concept which would enable staff to tie it to a broader green initiatives campaign.

Board Member Gonzalez likes the turtle design and the one with the sun, palm trees and the ocean.

Vice Chair Tourgeman stated why don't they do the Town seal.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that would mean going in a completely different direction given that they were looking at the designs and concepts they had requested from the students.

Chair Herman stated that the full concept had been explained in detail at a previous meeting.

Board Member Mavorah stated he likes the turtle with the green tones which plays into Surfside's overall brand and essence.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that design is a subtle nod to the Tequesta while being better suited to the sustainability portion of the concept.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that design is pleasing in the surface and asked what color the base would be.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that the base will be more of a sand base. He stated he likes the first green and blue turtle Board Member Gonzalez mentioned, but that one lacks any Indian references in its design.

Board Member Mavorah asked if there will be a plaque explaining.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that if they move forward with the Tequesta design, they will have a sign or plaque to provide context which would also credit to the student who designed it.

Board Member Mavorah recommends the Chaparro green turtle design.

Board Member Gonzalez recommends the one with the palm trees.

Vice Chair Tourgeman recommends the bold pattern native design.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that the colorful one looks too much like fabric and should fit better the form of the turtle.

Chair Herman recommends the green turtle, but also likes the colorful design one.

Discussion took place among the Board members regarding the design and size of the turtle.

Tourism Manager Trigueros recommends the green one because it brings in the sustainability portion of the concept and is more elegant.

Board Member Mavorah agrees with Tourism Manager Trigueros with the green one

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tourgeman to entertain the colorful Tequesta turtle design (number 13), seconded by Board Member Gonzalez.

Board Member Gonzalez stated that if they are between the two, she prefers the green Chaparro turtle.

Board Member Mavorah asked if they could do a poll for the community to vote between the two turtles.

Vice Chair Tourgeman withdrew his motion and Board Member Gonzalez withdrew her second.

Board Member Mavorah proposes to take the top two designs, the green turtle and the colorful Tequesta turtle to put a survey out with the two choices to the community, seconded by Vice Chair Tourgeman. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote with Board Member Lisman absent.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tourgeman to approve the additional cost of either \$3,200 or \$2,500 for the painting of the turtle sculpture chosen, seconded by Board Member Mavorah. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote with Board Member Lisman absent.

7. Surfside Small Business Recovery Fund Update

Tourism Manager Trigueros provided an update on the item and stated that they have sent out the information again and reminded the businesses to apply. He provided the deadline date.

Vice Chair Tourgeman asked when they sent it out and if they have received any interest.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated he sent it out last week. He stated that they do not know the information of who has applied since the foundation is handling all applications.

8. Social Media

Tourism Manager Trigueros provided an update on the item. He provided a presentation which began with a reminder from when the accounts were inactive for several months due to COVID-19. He explained that the Town Commission wanted it dormant to avoid bringing people to Town. He also noted that in previous years, the Tourist Board would invest upwards of \$50,000 towards social media advertising which had been reduced to \$0.

Tourism Manager Trigueros presented updates across different channels, noting the type of content they produce including destination imagery, highlighting local businesses, Surfside hotels, Town events and amenities, as well as target audiences.

He provided the insight statistics for audiences, top performing hashtags, as well as an update in follower numbers. One of the main takeaways was that organic content, which is not boosted by any promotional dollars, is up more than 60 percent.

Vice Mayor Paul stated that the Farmer's Market is mentioned in the Costco magazine this month.

Board Member Gonzalez stated that the work quality is good and representative of the Town.

9. Hotel Outreach

Tourism Manager Trigueros provided an update on hotel outreach noting he hadn't met with all the senior executives yet due to holiday schedules, but he had dropped off important reminders with front desk teams and concierges. These include the upcoming Winter Wonderland event, the new Third Thursdays series, checking in on Surf's Passport Adventure and more.

Board Member Gonzalez suggested recommending that hotels develop neighbor-friendly offers.

10. Third Thursdays Feedback and Street Banners

Tourism Manager Trigueros provided an update on the item and a presentation with the different designs.

Chair Herman asked when they have to decide on the theme.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated that the themes presented by Sara at the November meeting are the themes that would be moving forward.

Chair Herman likes them all.

Board Member Mavorah likes the designs. He likes version 1, he stated that version 2 has a lot going on in a good way and likes the incorporation of the turtle. He stated that his least favorite is version 3. He stated that version 4 is contemporary but does say much about the event. He prefers the red on version 2.

Board Member Gonzalez stated that some elements might not be visible at night.

Board Member Gonzalez likes version 2 and the colors.

Board Member Mavorah suggested changing the name.

Tourism Manager Trigueros stated they needed to keep the theme names given that the events are weeks away and Sara had carefully curated each idea. The Board; however, is welcome to throw in any ideas and suggestions about how to enhance the themes.

Sara Liss spoke to provide context into the thinking behind each theme.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Tourgeman to move forward with version number 2 as the banner design for Third Thursday, seconded by Chair Herman. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote with Board Member Lisman absent.

11. Discussion Items:

A. Next Meeting: Monday, January 3, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.

Consensus was reached to hold the next meeting on January 3, 2022 starting at 5:30 p.m.

12. Public Comment – 3-minute time limit each, please

Vice Chair Tourgeman stated that Commissioner Velasquez wanted to bring up more art on the beach. He spoke regarding past events on the beach and he would like to look into bringing that back. He wanted to remind them of the past activities the Tourist Board had that was very successful. He would like to propose to look at having art on the beach like Bal Harbour.

Tourism Manager Trigueros agrees with a desire to have more art and noted that DVAC has been trying to come up with art in public places for some time.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke regarding the events that occurred in the past which were halted due to the beach renourishment and then COVID, and commented on

previous art exhibitions on the beach. She spoke regarding some of the beach events she attended in the past.

Chair Herman commented on who pays for the ones in Bal Harbour because they are big and find out how they do theirs.

Vice Chair Tourgeman stated that the idea is to bring it back and activities on the beach.

Tourism Manager Trigueros will look into the information provided by the Board.

Vice Mayor Paul spoke regarding art in public places and some of the artists that participated.

There were no public speakers.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss before the Tourist Board, Vice Chair Tourgeman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:35 p.m., seconded by Board Member Gonzalez. The motion carried with a 4-0 vote with Board Member Lisman absent.

Respectfully submitted:

Accepted this 3 day of Jan, 2022.



Lisa Herman, Chair

Attest:



Evelyn Herbelto
Deputy Town Clerk