

WILLIAMSBURG AREA DESTINATION MARKETING COMMITTEE

April 18, 2016

4:00 PM Greater Williamsburg Area Chamber & Tourism Alliance

Meeting Notes

1. **PRESIDING:** Walt Zaremba, **CHAIR**

PRESENT: Doug Pons, A. J. Patel, Karen Riordan, David Cromwell, Kevin Onizuk, Ron Kirkland, Phil Emerson

NOT PRESENT: Andrea Sardone, Rita McClenny

OTHERS PRESENT: Dave Potter, Corrina Ferguson, Bob Harris, Jody Puckett, Kristi Olsen

2. Walt Zaremba established a quorum was present, and called the WADMC meeting to order. First order of business was to ask if anyone would like to make a public comment. No non members wished to speak.
3. Walt Zaremba asked if everyone had reviewed the March 21, 2016 meeting notes. Phil Emerson motioned for approval of the minutes, Kevin Onizuk seconded, all members unanimously approved.
4. David Cromwell, presented on the [Finance Report](#) through March 30, 2016 stating the revenue is down YTD driving a negative variance projection through the end of the year. The projected carryover is higher than the \$1.1 million goal. It is too soon to be concerned, however, if necessary, there are areas identified to reduce expenses without affecting the campaign.
5. Corrina Ferguson began the [Destination Marketing Report](#) with a Social Media update reporting very health engagement rates with the travel posts on Facebook and Instagram through March.

Corrina will be traveling to Toronto this week for the first ever desk side media visits. Preset appointments are with some of Canada's top print publications.

The results of a comprehensive food audit done in Williamsburg for "Farm to Table" by one of the nation's premier food editors, writers and authors will be available soon. Two stories that will be used on the Visit Williamsburg website will be developed from this effort.

Corrina just returned from the US Science and Engineering Festival held this past weekend. Busch Gardens and Historic Jamestowne partnered with us in our booth presenting "The Science of Williamsburg". Our booth is part of our partnership with Meredith publications as content marketing.

The Williamsburg page for BuzzFeed was shared featuring "11 Reasons Every Parent Should Add Williamsburg, VA To Their Summer Plans" and "10 Things The Founding Fathers Would Be Doing In Williamsburg, VA Today.

Corrina provided an update for the Booking Engine RFP. The RFP process has followed the procurement procedures and time line presented. Companies were invited to provide a proposal and advertising was done to solicit addition companies. Thursday April 14 was the deadline for submission. Most of the Booking Engine RFP committee has picked up their packets.

The WADMC members agreed the procurement procedures had been followed. Doug Pons motioned for the Booking Engine RFP committee to continue with the existing process, Kevin Onizuk second. The members approved on a 9 to 1 vote.

Corrina shared the website metrics for Visit Williamsburg with a continuing shift in devices used by visitors to mobile. The website is scoring very well lower bounce rates, increase page visits and longer time on the site. Several of the area partners have reported double digit increases in referrals from the site.

6. Before presenting the website improvement recommendations, Corrina recognized the following committee members and thanked them for their work with the website;

Susan Bak – Co-Chair	Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation
Skip Ferebee – Co-Chair	Colonial Williamsburg
Rachel Bridger	HMP Hotels
Renee Dallman	James City County
Robert Jeffrey	Jamestown Yorktown Foundation
Lisa Jones	Williamsburg Premium Outlets
Rich Keurajian	Kingsmill Resort
Billy Scruggs	Fife & Drum Inn
Joanna Skrabala	GWCTA
Natalie Sims	Busch Gardens
Linda Williams	National Park Service

The Committee recommends the following summary: The detailed recommendation can be found [here](#).

Every qualifying tourism business in the destination receives a listing on VisitWilliamsburg.com.

A business can choose between a Basic or a Featured listing (no cost for either).

Basic listings will only include name, address and link to website.

Featured listings are required to have photos and will be prioritized over basic listings.

We will commit to offering quarterly training sessions as part of our ongoing outreach to the tourism community.

Kevin Onizuk motioned to adopt as policy with a change in the wording from Basic or a Featured listing to Basic or a Photo listing. Phil Emerson second, with members unanimously approving.

The issue of businesses taking advantage of photo and more complete information is not unique to our area. Area partners (WHMA, WARA and municipality EDA's) will be asked to encourage their businesses to take advantage of this free marketing opportunity.

A. J. Patel asked that the following recommendation submitted by the WHMA by e-mail and replied to by Kevin Onizuk be included in the meeting notes:

Greetings Ron!!!!

I doubt we can share usernames and passwords with anyone other than the company contact associated with the site. If the WHMA wants to assist individual owners you may need to contact them directly.

And yes, I agree it is not the WHMA's responsibility to build out the sites. That responsibility relies on the individual site owners to complete and maintain their information. But as an organization I'm sure your members would appreciate any efforts to help them along.

A big thanks to AJ for bringing this up at our last meeting. It was an important discussion. The WADMC team, along with the local Economic Development offices have done a great job rolling this out and providing training/information, we must now see what we can do to get the "late adopters" on board to get better participation. I know I will be chatting with our JCC Economic Development folks to see what we can do to further encourage and assist our JCC partners.

In addition Corrina and I are working to find a local web and marketing partner who may be interested in reaching out to the many companies who have not yet responded. I think this would be a great way to get additional participation and get more pages completed.

Thanks for the e-mail, the information, and your ongoing support!

Kevin

Kevin D. Onizuk
Jamestown District Supervisor
James City County Board of Supervisors
Phone: 757-608-8414
E-mail: kevin.onizuk@jamescitycountyva.gov

From: Ron [ron.kirkland@widomaker.com]
Sent: Friday, March 25, 2016 9:43 AM
To: 'Walt Zaremba'; Kevin Onizuk; Kevin Onizuk; 'David Cromwell'; ajredlines@gmail.com; Doug Pons; dpons@williamsburgva.gov; Rita McClenny; asardone@cwf.org; philip.emerson@jyf.virginia.gov; Karen Riordan; Scott.Ostrander@crestlinehotels.com; chris canavos
Cc: Corrina Ferguson; dave@visitwilliamsburg.com
Subject: VisitWilliamsburg.com

Chairman Zaremba and members of WADMC,

After approving hundreds of thousands of dollars on staff and sub-contractors to develop, administer and maintain the visitwilliamsburg.com website it would seem the business of whose job it is to update web pages is clear. It is clearly not the responsibility of the WHMA.

However; recognizing that if this work is going to get done, someone will have to take responsibility for doing so and the WHMA has decided to take action.

Attached is a list of our members that have not been able to update their pages. Please advise staff to forward the username and passwords for each property and we will task ourselves to assist them in updating the webpages. To do this in a timely manner we will also need administrative level access so we are able to approve the updated listings as they are completed.

AJ Patel & Ron Kirkland
President & Executive Director
WHMA

[2035954410]

Thanks,

Ron Kirkland
Executive Director

Williamsburg Hotel & Motel Association
Greater Williamsburg Tourist Information Center
1915 Pocahontas Trail Suite A1
Williamsburg, VA 23185
Ron.Kirkland@widomaker.com
P 757 220-3330| F 757 220 3136
WWW.goWilliamsburg.com

There being no further business, Walt Zarembo adjourned the meeting reminding everyone of the Next WADMC Meeting June 20 4:00 PM, @ Greater Williamsburg Area Chamber & Tourism Alliance.

Respectfully Submitted by,

David M. Potter