

Tourism Board Regular Monthly Meeting

November 21, 2017 – Oriental Town Hall

A quorum being present, meeting was called to order by Chair Marsha Palpham at 5:30PM.

Members in Attendance: Marsha Palpham, Carol Mabe, Suzanne Gwaltney; newly appointed member Victoria Hardison; prospective member Pat Thomaier.

The Minutes from the September 19th Meeting were approved. No meeting was held in October.

Discussion: Planned radio advertising on FM 95.7/Beach, Boogie and Blues in eastern NC will commence this December. We will run 66 30-second spots for holiday season. Al Pike, our rep from the station, will work with Carol Mabe on the radio spot creative and scheduling. The station will broadcast live from Oriental during Spirit of Christmas; and spots will promote the events Spirit of Christmas, Running of the Dragon and overall Oriental as travel destination. A motion was made by Gwaltney to approve use of \$500 from the 2017-2018 budget; seconded by Mabe and approved by unanimous vote.

Discussion: Mabe provided copies of the current 2017-2018 Tourism Strategic Plan, to new members. She also noted that she would send copies of the 2017-2018 Budget and the Oriental Brand Positioning work to each. There was a general discussion for the new members of how Tourism is funded through the 3% town occupancy taxes which are allocated 50% to our efforts and 50% to the Harbor/Waterfront Board.

Discussion: There was a general discussion with Barb Venturi about a new liaison for Tourism from the Town Board as Barb leaves the Board. She has been a great advocate for tourism and advisor over the years, and will be greatly missed. The group offered thanks to her. We will invite several commissioners to join us for our next meeting and assess their interest in working with us going forward.

Discussion: Mabe has completed an article on Oriental to submit to state and area magazines for possible publication. Publicity is essential to getting us on the map and enticing more visitors to our town. It was suggested that we also ask local fishing guides, sailing schools, etc. to write articles which could be submitted to publications across the state. Mabe will identify key people and possible publications.

Discussion: Mabe cited the need for banner stands to display the two Oriental banners used for events such as Mumfest and the Chinese events Flora Moorman attends for dragon boat racing. There is currently no way to hang them in these situations. Mabe will research stand options and make a proposal to purchase at December meeting.

A proposal was made to send a small gift to the owner of the Bookstore in New Bern who provided space for Oriental at Mumfest free of charge. Two hundred brochures with town maps were handed out to hundreds of people who chatted with us at the booth over two days.

Mabe made a motion to spend up to \$100 for gift; Gwaltney seconded. Motion carried. Mabe will ask Flora Moorman for ideas and handle.

Discussion: New member Victoria Hardison shared her background with the group. We also heard from Pat Thomaier about her experience as a potential new board member.

Discussion: There was a brief discussion of a 2018 creative project to make lighted ball holiday decorations for the trees at Lou Mac Park. This will be discussed with the Oriental Womens Club as a potential project by OWC member Suzanne Gwaltney.

A motion to adjourn at 7:45 was made by Gwaltney; seconded by Hardison and approved.