



**DOOR COUNTY TOURISM ZONE  
COMMISSION and EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Minutes of May 21, 2020- 9:00 a.m.**

**Teleconference Meeting via Zoom held in public meeting chamber at the City of  
Sturgeon Bay.**

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6 **ACTION ITEMS:**

7 **Ward moved and Boston seconded to approve the agenda.** Motion carried.

8 **Le Clair moved and Weddig seconded to approve the minutes of May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 as presented.** Motion  
9 carried.

10 **Ward moved and Dannhausen seconded to approve reports and payables plus receipts.** Motion  
11 carried.

12 **Robillard nominated Wait as Treasurer of the Tourism Zone Commission.** Motion carried.

13 **Wedding moved and Dannhausen second to approve the nomination of Wait as Treasurer of the  
14 Tourism Zone Commission.** Motion carried.

15 **Ward moved to adjourn; Dannhausen seconded. Motion carried.**  
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17 **Committee Members Present by Roll Call:** Mary Boston, Dave Eliot, Myles Dannhausen, Nancy Robillard,  
18 Bill Weddig, Sara Rae Lancaster, Elizabeth Le Clair, Cathy Ward, Sandra Rice, Richard Young, Pam  
19 Seiler, Josh Van Lieshout and Linda Elmore.

20 **Excused:** Fred Anderson and Bryan Nelson.

21 **Absent:** Mike Johnson, Ryan Heise, Jeff Larson, Keith Krist, and Beau Bernhofft.

22 **Also in Attendance:** Kim Roberts/**Administrator DCTZC**, Mary Horton/**KerberRose, Jack**  
23 **Moneypenny/DDC**, Jon Jarosh/**DDC**, Michelle Rasmussen/**DDC**.

24 **Call to Order**

25 Chair Van Lieshout called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

26 **Approval of the Agenda**

27 **Ward moved and Boston seconded to approve the agenda.** Motion carried.

28 **Approval of the minutes of the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Executive Committee Meeting.**

29 **Le Clair moved and Weddig seconded to approve the minutes of May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2020 Executive Committee  
30 Meeting as presented.** Motion carried

31 **Report by Destination Door County**

32 Moneypenny reported that they hoped to open the Welcome Center on June 2; he stressed that there  
33 have been lots of parts and pieces on order that are not in yet. He added that they have made five  
34 hundred (500) welcome bags with maps, Visitor Guides and a welcome letter that discussed what is  
35 going on in the county that are available to those who stop at the Welcome Center. That is the plan  
36 for Memorial Day Weekend, he said. He went on to say that staff will report June 1 and the building  
37 will open June 2.

38 Moneypenny went on to say that Yvonne Torres will be the director of Finance and Administration for  
39 the organization. She will work with the accountants, auditors and oversee part of the construction of  
40 the new building along with continuing to help in the membership department.

41 Jarosh reported that there is a lot going on in the media space regarding the reopening process. He  
42 stressed that the re-opening is going to have to be done carefully, responsibly, and respectfully. We  
43 are all going to need to respect each individual businesses desires and ways that they are going to  
44 control their individual business. By and large, he said, most businesses are asking that guests wear  
45 masks. It seems that social distancing will be a way of life for some time. He went on to say that they

1 are getting the word out there that Door County is slowly re-opening which has been a big news story.  
2 There has been an influx of media requests for information about Door County.

3 Jarosh discussed work with a crisis communication firm whose services will be made available to some  
4 key local organizations including community business associations and county departments that send  
5 out external messaging. He stressed that it is a short-term scenario and initiative that they are setting  
6 up because they realize and recognize how vitally important a consistent message to visitors is.  
7 Through the firm they will be setting up an online virtual meeting to discuss how to handle or respond  
8 in certain situations now. The firm will provide support in conducting ourselves civilly and responsibly in  
9 the age of COVID when faced with challenges with tourism.

10 Jarosh reviewed the 2019 Visitor Spending fact sheet and shared that it was available online.

11 Jarosh reviewed the recent tourism research survey. He said that the survey had been sent out to two  
12 hundred thirty-four thousand (234,000) contacts and ten thousand four hundred thirty-two (10,432) had  
13 responded. He noted that this was a good sample size that provided insightful information for everyone  
14 in tourism.

15 From a media standpoint, Jarosh said, moving forward we will be carefully crafting messages telling  
16 visitors that Door County is open for business and that we are asking visitors to act responsibly and  
17 reasonably while they are here and respect the business owners and their wishes. He added that the  
18 messaging on the website has been consistently updated.

19 Jarosh commended the work of the community coordinators who have been doing great work in a  
20 very short amount of time to assist with getting information out to businesses. He added that they rolled  
21 out with their help the Commitment to Cleanliness and Safety in partnership with Door County Medical  
22 Center and Door County Public Health. It is a program that our local businesses can participate in, it  
23 doesn't cost them anything, he said. They can utilize a logo and there is a one-page sheet that  
24 includes high level items that businesses can do to keep their guests and workforce safe and what  
25 guests can do to keep everyone safe whether they are visiting from out of town or live locally. He  
26 added that the information is on doorcounty.com/open. He felt we are as ready as we can be and  
27 fortunately businesses are being flexible and adjusting as they go, and willing to do what it takes to  
28 open safely. He added that many are seeing how it goes and adjusting as needed.

29 Jarosh discussed media trips which have been temporarily halted and the June trip is in review. He  
30 added that the earned media coverage will cover what you can do in Door County this year and we  
31 are in fact open.

32 Money Penny asked Jarosh to review the high-level points of the visitor sentiment survey.

33 Jarosh replied that the key take away points were: 87% of respondents said that they were willing to  
34 wear masks while visiting Door County this year, about 75% said that they felt it was important to have  
35 workers at tourism businesses wear masks, 72% felt that it was important to have visitors wear face  
36 coverings. He went to say that clearly the results show that visitors support that face coverings are  
37 essential. In terms of visiting: 43% of respondents said that they had not changed their plans to visit Door  
38 County, 26% postponed and 16% had already cancelled as of May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020. He said that he did not  
39 know how things will change as we move forward.

40 Jarosh discussed some of the comments on social media from local residents' in the last two (2) months  
41 and how they have impacted visitors. The survey's open-ended response comments show evidence  
42 of this. He added that traveler sentiment because of local residents' posts on social media will play a  
43 role with visitors in the future. He stressed that it is an important reminder that what our residents say  
44 does have an impact; mind your P's and Q's, he said.

45 Money Penny reminded everyone that COVID is here, it has not gone away, it is as contagious and  
46 deadly as it was a month and a half ago. He went on to say that his staff has reminded him that it is  
47 still out there, and we really need to be safe. He stressed that we cannot let our guard down and need  
48 to stay vigilant. We need to be smart about how we work around people.

1 Rasmussen discussed work on the Welcome Back message. They felt that it was important to have a  
2 message for visitors returning to Door County, so they understand what they are coming back to. It  
3 details what we expect of the visitor when they come back. She went on to say that they are excited  
4 to resume with their media buys which are highlighting what you can do in Door County while  
5 accentuating the open spaces.

6 Van Lieshout asked if the survey would be repeated to continue to gauge consumer expectations.  
7 Money Penny replied that it would make sense; it was low cost and provided high impact information.

8 Van Lieshout asked for questions and requested that they stay on point.

9 Boston asked if there were any guidelines on prepping rooms.

10 Money Penny directed Boston to the Wisconsin Economic Development "WEDC" guidelines for  
11 Lodging. He added that some lodging providers were following the guidelines, some exceeding and  
12 some not doing anything different and were business as usual.

13 Eliot thanked Destination Door County "DDC" for their work. He said that it would be great if we could  
14 get the messaging about masks out to businesses; he felt the community was looking for uniformity. He  
15 felt that it was important to keep pushing that piece of the puzzle. He stressed that consistency would  
16 be really helpful for visitors to understand expectations.

17 Dannhausen asked if there was any new information about pools.

18 Money Penny replied he was not aware of any.

19 Le Clair asked if businesses were responsible for supplying masks to guests. She went on to ask are  
20 people supposed to give them away or charge for them.

21 Money Penny said Door County is not the only place asking people to wear masks. We have to believe  
22 that they've had to wear masks where they are visiting from. Therefore, one would assume that they  
23 should have masks with them.

24 Ward expressed concerns about people refusing to wear masks. She felt encouraged by the survey  
25 responses.

26 Van Lieshout added with respect to refusal of wearing masks the crisis management information Jarosh  
27 covered should provide resources to businesses.

28 Money Penny agreed and said there would be information about how to deescalate scenarios sent  
29 out.

30 Jarosh added that a lot of this comes down to owners being respectful in how they handle the  
31 interaction.

32 Eliot reminded the group about local concerns about local residents who object to wearing masks. He  
33 stressed that this goes beyond tourists. He felt the messages needed to reach locals as well.

34 Rice said she had no questions. She agreed with the need for consistency with messaging; it is the one  
35 thing that will get people to adhere to guidelines.

36 Young asked about the Economic Fact Sheet. He wanted to know what direct visitor spending was.

37 Jarosh answered that the total impact of tourism for Door County in 2019 was \$480.6 million which  
38 included both direct and indirect spending. He added that total includes the products that businesses  
39 buy to make tourism businesses run.

40 Wait commented that consistency is hard to achieve. She added that most people would like others  
41 to wear a mask. She noted that 56% of those who took the survey were couples. She asked if that was  
42 the norm.

43 Jarosh replied and said typically in the summertime we see more families, but we don't know how  
44 families will travel this summer.

1 Rasmussen added that busy families are not typically the ones that complete surveys.

2 Seiler updated the commission on work being done by the community coordinators. She went on to  
3 say that the cleanliness and safety pledge was printed and distributed so that the guidelines are visible  
4 for guests to show them that the business they are visiting has chosen to put protocols in place. She  
5 went on to say that the effort has been to communicate expectations so that we can meet  
6 expectations. She added the information is prominent on websites, e-newsletters, etc.

7 Van Lieshout thanked Seiler for her efforts and follow through.

8 Elmore said that she had no questions but had two (2) comments. She went on to say that the  
9 Northport Welcome Center and Washington Island Welcome Center will be closed for the foreseeable  
10 future.

11 **Report from Administrative Assistant on current activities, projects and issues associated with permitting**  
12 **new members.**

13 Roberts reviewed the number of properties that remain to report for 2019: For August 2019 there is one  
14 (1) property to report, for September 2019 there is one (1) property to report, for October 2019 there is  
15 one (1) property to report, for November 2019 there are two (2) properties to report, and for December  
16 2019 there are two (2) properties to report. She went on to say that for January 2020 there are two (2)  
17 properties that remain to report, for February 2020 there are ten (10) properties that remain to report  
18 and for March 2020 there are fifty three (53) properties to report.

19 The total outstanding due in unpaid taxes, fees and penalties is four thousand seven hundred seventy  
20 dollars and eighty-eight cents (\$4,770.88) from five (5) permit holders.

21 Roberts reported that she had permitted seven (7) new properties. One (1) was issued as a result of  
22 compliance efforts. Twenty-nine (29) permits were issued during the same period last year. She added  
23 that there are currently one thousand two hundred sixty-eight (1,268) permits.

24 Roberts reviewed current listings on lodging platforms.

25 Roberts reviewed the March 2020 "By Property Report".

26 There were no questions for Roberts from the Commission.

27 **Discussion on Current Comparable Occupancy numbers**

28 Horton reported that we have collected \$43,362.14 for the month of March and in addition to that we  
29 have \$16,891.17 in late collections for January and February and possibly some of 2019. She said that  
30 she wanted to mention that some of the lates include items that were reported for Marketplace  
31 lodging by our permit holders, we are still asking permit holders to report on those Marketplace Lodging  
32 in the same way they have so that we can distribute that revenue. However, she said, the January and  
33 February reporting didn't pull in to reports previously, therefore they are included in the lates this month  
34 and that total is about \$5,500 dollars she said. March numbers do include all the items reported for  
35 marketplace sales. She added that she wanted to point out on our balance sheet that we have a  
36 growing negative balance of money remitted from marketplace companies; that number has grown  
37 to twenty-six (\$26,000) thousand as of April. She stressed that the board will have to make a decision  
38 of what to do with those excess funds. Those funds are coming in either because of permit holders not  
39 properly reporting or we are getting funds that do not belong to us and there is a chance we may  
40 have to repay some of that down the road. She stressed that she did not recommend distributing the  
41 money any time soon.

42 Van Lieshout reminded the commission that this is one of the problems we anticipated with the new  
43 legislation. He said that having money that you don't know where it came from is a bigger problem  
44 than not having enough. We will be putting our heads together to try and assemble a policy of how  
45 to handle these funds.

46 Van Lieshout asked if there were any questions for Horton. There were none.

47 **Consideration of approving reports and payables plus receipts**

1 **Ward moved and Dannhausen seconded to approve reports and payables plus receipts.** Motion  
2 carried.

3 **Consideration and discussion of nomination of Linda Wait for Treasurer.**

4 Van Lieshout explained that Wait has great experience to fill the Treasurer position.

5 Robillard nominated Wait as Treasurer of the Door County Tourism Zone Commission.

6 **Vote for Treasurer**

7 **Weddig moved and Dannhausen seconded to approve the nomination of Linda Wait as Treasurer of**  
8 **the Door County Tourism Zone Commission.** Motion carried.

9 **Discussion and consideration of status, updates and/or impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the**  
10 **tourism and lodging industry of Door County.**

11 Van Lieshout explained this agenda item has been a standing item; the Executive Committee has  
12 been meeting weekly. He added that this was the time for the full commission to ask questions.  
13 There were none.

14 **Report from Commissioners on feedback from local Boards on recent issues.**

15 Elmore reported that Washington Island is still trying to follow the guidelines for reopening.

16 Wait said the Town of Sevastopol is in a holding pattern as they try to see what the reduction in room  
17 tax revenues will be.

18 Ward added that the Liberty Grove Emergency Order was extended to June 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

19 Weddig said that the Town of Gibraltar is discussing the reduction in room tax revenue and signage to  
20 help businesses.

21 Van Lieshout said that the loss of room tax revenue has resulted in budget cuts. He added that there  
22 are no forward-looking projections. He went on to say that they also fund Destination Sturgeon Bay  
23 and their funding for 2022 could look very different.

24 Seiler added that it is important to remember how local business associations are funded. She went  
25 on to say that they also receive money from Destination Door County via the Strategic Partnership  
26 Funds which are based on room tax revenue and money from municipalities. She stressed that all  
27 funding will be impacted for 2022. She urged everyone to remember the work these organizations do.  
28

29 **Adjournment**

30 **Ward moved to adjourn; Dannhausen seconded. Motion carried.**

31 Respectfully submitted,

32 *Kim Roberts*

33 Kim Roberts  
34 Administrator