



**DOOR COUNTY TOURISM ZONE  
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING  
Minutes of May 7, 2020- 9:00 a.m.  
Teleconference Meeting conducted from Council Chambers  
City of Sturgeon Bay - 421 Michigan Street**

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6 **ACTION ITEMS:**

7 **Anderson moved and Weddig seconded to approve the agenda.** Motion carried.

8 **Nelson moved and Anderson seconded to approve the minutes of April 30, 2020 Executive Committee meeting.**  
9 Motion carried.

10 **Nelson moved that the AH&LA guidelines be distributed to Door County Tourism Zone permit holders with DCMC in  
11 receipt of the guidelines and are comfortable with the guidance; the Executive Committee voted to share it with  
12 you. Anderson seconded.** Motion carried.

13 **Weddig moved to adjourn; Le Clair seconded.** Motion carried.

14  
15 **Committee Members Present by Roll Call:** Josh Van Lieshout, Bryan Nelson, Elizabeth Le Clair, Bill Weddig, Dave  
16 Eliot and Fred Anderson.

17 **Also in Attendance:** Kim Roberts/**Administrator DCTZC**, Jack Money Penny/**DDC**, Brian Stephens/**Door County**  
18 **Medical Center**, Greg Stillman, Linda Wait, Sara Rae Lancaster and Cathy Ward.

19 **Call to Order**

20 Chair Van Lieshout called meeting to order at 9:00 AM from the public location of the City Council Chambers at  
21 the City of Sturgeon Bay.

22 Chairmen Van Lieshout asked if there were any comments, correspondence or concerns from the public.

23 There were none.

24 **Approval of the Agenda**

25 **Anderson moved and Weddig seconded to approve the agenda.** Motion carried.

26 **Approval of the minutes of the April 30, 2020 Executive Committee meeting.**

27 **Nelson moved and Anderson seconded to approve the minutes of April 30, 2020 Executive Committee meeting.**  
28 Motion carried.

29 **Discussion and consideration of status, updates and/or impact of the COVID-19 pandemic to the Tourism and  
30 Lodging Industry of Door County.**

31 Van Lieshout noted that when we left the meeting last week, we were working on obtaining some standards aimed  
32 at providing confidence for sanitation to provide to our traveling guests who will be staying at lodging properties in  
33 Door County. Last week Door County Medical Center "DCMC" and Door County Public Health "DCPH" published  
34 a one-page information sheet with general information for the public. He asked Anderson and Stephens to provide  
35 an update on progress on the development of standards for the lodging industry.

36 Anderson replied that fourteen (14) Door County lodging professionals from Northern Door were on a call last Friday  
37 to strategize in effort to create a document with cleaning standards for hotels and to assist Destination Door County  
38 "DDC" with creating a message that is appropriate to welcome guests back soon when it is safe. He went on to  
39 say the American Hotel and Lodging Association "AHLA" created their own guidance document with the input,  
40 effort and support of seventeen (17) of the world's largest, prominent hotel companies including Hilton, Marriot  
41 and Walt Disney. He added that on Monday, as a lodging group, they endorsed the AH&LA guidance document  
42 "Stay Safe" and forwarded it to DCMC. He stressed if it is good enough for Hilton, it is good enough for Door  
43 County. Stephens had accepted the document and agreed to carry the message forward.

44 Van Lieshout asked Stephens of DCMC to comment.

45 Stephens thanked Anderson for sending along the guidelines and agreed that if it is good enough for Hilton and  
46 Hyatt, it seems like they would be a good recommendation for Door County lodging establishments. He noted  
47 that the only issue is that DCPH is hesitant to endorse the guidelines. DCPH would like to wait to see what the state  
48 comes out with. The State is supposed to publish lodging guidelines on Friday. He added that he had brought up  
49 the AH&LA document on the zoom call yesterday so that Lodging Providers would know that there is a resource  
50 out there that they can refer to. He did not believe that DCPH would endorse the AH&LA document. He added  
51 that DCMC wants to be a resource for people, but there is no way they can answer all the industry specific  
52 questions.

1 Van Lieshout said that he was going to put himself out on a limb by saying something really needs to be put out  
2 there for lodging providers. He stressed that by next Tuesday this needs to be completed, he stressed that he is  
3 reluctant to wait for the state to create guidance. People are here, he said, and they are coming. There has been  
4 no help in getting direction for lodging providers and felt it was an option for the Tourism Zone to distribute the  
5 AH&LA guidelines to our members as a reasonable next step.

6 Nelson said he felt it was within the Tourism Zone's purview to distribute the AH&LA guidelines. We do not need to  
7 make a formal endorsement, but we can give some background. He added that if they are good enough for  
8 Hilton and Marriot it can work for us especially with DCMC on board.

9 Le Clair noted that she was on the Zoom meeting yesterday with DCMC and DCPH and found it very informative.  
10 They had discussed the AH&LA guidelines and she had sought them out and printed them. She expressed concern  
11 about understanding them correctly and still had questions about how long to keep a room closed.

12 Weddig expressed concern about taking guests who need a place to quarantine; where will they go and what  
13 are the guidelines, he asked.

14 Eliot said he was concerned with information release when people are anxious right now about the amount of  
15 information coming out. If we can't make it official, then they are getting one more piece of information tomorrow  
16 than another piece next week. We need to be cognizant that there is too much messaging to business owners,  
17 and it is pulling them in every direction. We need to give lodging providers one set of guidelines that they can use.  
18 There is just too much conflicting information out there and still too much unknown.

19 Anderson added that he was on the Zoom call as well. He spoke about the issues that DCPH had with the AH&LA  
20 document. One of the pieces of the guidelines is the use of the gloves. The Public Health Nurse takes issue with  
21 the information on gloves. The problem is that in hotel work, there are certain tasks that require the use of gloves.  
22 He added that a simple adjustment to the language could make the information workable. She threw the whole  
23 document under the bus because of its suggested use of gloves.

24 Van Lieshout said his sense from this conversation is that publishing the best information we have available at this  
25 time, which seems to be the guidelines from the AH&LA, could be really beneficial to our permit holders and their  
26 customers. If there is a consensus for that we will push for that, he said. He asked for a motion to take action.

27 Roberts asked how we will advise permit holders who are going to or have received standards from Airbnb and  
28 VRBO. Will we direct them to the AH&LA standards, she asked.

29 Van Lieshout said the goal is to provide something to our lodging providers that gives them some direction and  
30 some standard to try and achieve for preparing their rooms for guests. Our impression is that there has been nothing  
31 provided from the State or County. It was his impression that our future guests are looking for assurances and  
32 information that the lodging providers are taking reasonable steps for cleaning that are above and beyond what  
33 a lodging provider would normally do.

34 Van Lieshout imagined the communication as, "Dear permit holder, we understand that there is the need for some  
35 sort of guidance or information. The AH&LA has published guidelines that seem to be reasonable steps that have  
36 been shared with DCMC and DCPH. Objections haven't been raised."

37 Stephens interjected that you can't say that DCPH is on board but was comfortable with saying the folks at DCMC  
38 read through the guidelines and are comfortable with the guidance. You can definitely use the DCMC name, he  
39 said.

40 Van Lieshout said the point is to address the lack of information and provide confidence to our guests that  
41 reasonable precautions are being taken.

42 Nelson added that the AH&LA guidelines are the best that he has seen so far. He went on to say that it was  
43 comforting that they passed muster with DCMC.

44 **Nelson moved that the AH&LA guidelines be distributed to Door County Tourism Zone permit holders with DCMC in**  
45 **receipt of the guidelines and are comfortable with the guidance; the Executive Committee voted to share it with**  
46 **you. Anderson seconded.** Motion carried.

47 There were no further comments from Eliot, Weddig and LeClair when Van Lieshout asked for additional comments.

48 Anderson said he was in favor but had not had the time to review the other standards such as the Airbnb  
49 guidelines. He went on to say that the lodging group had endorsed the guidelines for hotels, motels, inns and  
50 resorts and the document is also written in such a way that it certainly applies to house rentals. He did not think  
51 there should be a segregation between the types of lodging for the guidelines.

52 Van Lieshout said he would share the information with Stephens.

1 Moneypenny said that DDC could become the clearing house for visitors calling with requests to know which  
2 properties are doing the best job with cleaning. He added that we may have lodging providers that will do the  
3 same as they did before and people that go above and beyond guidelines. He added that he didn't want to  
4 tell callers they don't know because it makes the DDC look like they don't know anything. He is looking for who  
5 has the clearinghouse of who is meeting the standards that people can be referred to.

6 Van Lieshout said that is a good question. Part of this could be a self-certification by the lodging provider; we are  
7 doing this as our promise to you. He asked Anderson his thoughts.

8 Anderson said that there was conversation with regards to calling it a certification. He expressed his fears with  
9 regard to calling it a certification, which could have liability in that statement and in turn someone could challenge  
10 you on it. It will happen, he said. DDC will field those calls and he understands their desire to say something, in  
11 those cases. The lodging provider is the person who should be answering those calls not DDC.

12 Moneypenny said his concern was when they call, and they do, they are looking for a place to stay and ask  
13 questions about standards he would hate to say you'll need to call the property to find out what standards are in  
14 place. He asked will there be a list that shows what properties are meeting standards of the AH&LA, a list would  
15 offer a starting point of who is following standards.

16 Eliot asked if the Tourism Zone could create a list by having properties opt in via programming through Swain so a  
17 list can be generated to forward to DDC.

18 Van Lieshout asked if Roberts felt this was something that the Tourism Zone could generate.

19 Roberts said it could be a field in the permit profile that could be checked and then a report could be generated  
20 to keep the DDC up to date.

21 Moneypenny said we would never say a property is not doing something, we would refer the guest to the property  
22 to obtain more information.

23 Stillman said he appreciated the invite. He said that if we have a list that people opt into people may do it whether  
24 they are following the AH&LA guidelines or not. He suggested innkeepers take responsibility and have DDC remind  
25 people that there is a set of criteria out there and these are the things you should find out without having a list.  
26 People are going to say they are doing it whether they are or are not. At some point the innkeepers need to take  
27 responsibility and let travelers know what they are doing. That was the whole point in partnering with the medical  
28 center so that we have that credibility. If you do not follow through and follow the guidelines it is on yourself as an  
29 innkeeper, he said.

30 Van Lieshout agreed. No one has the capacity to check that innkeepers are complying with standards.

31 Stillmann added that there is still so much uncertainty and unknowns about the virus, at some point the businesses  
32 need to take responsibility for their best practices and communicate it to their traveling public so they can make  
33 the best decisions for themselves. He went on to say the wheel is not being reinvented here, there are hotels that  
34 are currently operating and already dealing with this.

35 Eliot said he appreciated that, but DDC will get questions and they need to be able to provide the correct  
36 messaging. He asked what that message will be. Are you telling DDC if they get a call, they have to tell the caller  
37 to check in with each lodging provider, he asked.

38 Stillman said if you are an innkeeper and you have some sort of seal of approval, for lack of a better term, we ask  
39 them to put that on their website so that when people are making a reservation they can see it. If DDC endorses  
40 a list, it could cause liability issues; we should stay away from that. He stressed that it needs to be the lodging  
41 facilities responsibility to communicate and follow protocols, without creating more work for DDC or DCTZC.

42 Van Lieshout said what he is understanding is that we need some sort of seal that is identifiable on a businesses  
43 home page that says we have taken these steps to make sure your room is clean.

44 Stillman added that it could be a cling on for the front door and imaging for the website that shows the  
45 commitment innkeepers have made to agreeing to protocols. He noted that the cleaning for lodging is already  
46 very thorough, but this takes it to a whole new level.

47 Van Lieshout asked Stephens and Moneypenny if there was anyone that could create a graphic for the  
48 pledge/promise.

49 Stephens said that Jarosh has a few proofs already, that had been their original thought that people could use  
50 the graphic as stickers, on their website or as window clings. They had stopped in their tracks in the proof stage  
51 because of potential liability issues. People will be cautious about certifying standards when there is no legal basis  
52 to do that. We talked about the concept but wanted to make sure they were doing it in the right way.

1 Van Lieshout said that he felt that this would be a personal pledge from the lodging provider to the customer. It  
2 would have no ties or enforceability with DCMC or DCTZC. This is a brand promise meant to instill a level of  
3 confidence with the traveling public. He went on to say that the more he is reading about how we will get out of  
4 this economic mess, we will be largely relying on consumer confidence and not much else.

5 Stillman said that if you look nationally Hilton, Marriott and Wyndham, the bigger hotel brands are doing just that;  
6 they have created a brand promise. If we look at Door County's brand promise we can use that same concept.  
7 It would be completely voluntary and if a lodging provider opts in, they are making a promise to follow the  
8 protocols. At least it is a start, to show we are trying to make it as safe as we can to get people traveling again.

9 Anderson asked if it would be appropriate for DDC to endorse the AH&LA guidelines as well and that is the  
10 message to the traveling public going forward. The response to the questions should be that DDC has endorsed  
11 the AH&LA guidelines and in turn have asked all lodging members to adhere to the guidelines. He felt that it should  
12 be let go at that. It puts the onus on the traveler and the lodging provider to live up to those standards.

13 Money Penny replied that they will refer people to the hotels to ask those questions. We will tell them we do not  
14 know exactly what each property is doing, but if you find a property you like call and discuss it with them. That is  
15 what we will do, he said. That way the lodging operator can tell the guest directly what they are doing.

16 Stillman suggested that Money Penny ask that lodging operators who answer the phone to communicate that the  
17 local businesses are working closely with DCMC and DCPH to make sure we are doing everything possible to make  
18 it as safe for people to enter local businesses.

19 Money Penny said sure, absolutely. We will put together a script.

20 Van Lieshout asked that DDC make endorsing or acknowledging the AH&LA standards an agenda item for their  
21 next meeting. He went on to ask DDC to convey to customers that a number of properties have pledged to follow  
22 the standards. He asked Stephens if he would be able to share the pledge identifier.

23 Stephens said yes.

24 **Discussion regarding matters to be placed on a future agenda or referred to a committee, official or employee.**

25 Van Lieshout asked if we should meet next week.

26 Nelson felt the meeting was valuable, we should meet.

27 Le Clair agreed.

28 Weddig agreed.

29 Eliot agreed.

30 Anderson agreed.

31 Van Lieshout called the meeting for next Thursday May 14th, 2020 at 9 AM.

32 **Adjournment**

33 **Weddig moved to adjourn; Le Clair seconded.** Motion carried.

34 Respectfully submitted,

35 Kim Roberts  
36 Administrator