Currituck County Tourism Advisory Board
Minutes of Meeting
November 14, 2007

The Tourism Advisory Board met on Wednesday, November 14, 2007 at the Historic Currituck Courthouse, 153 Courthouse Rd., Currituck. The following members were present: John Wright, Krista Boughey, Janice Farr, Vivian Simpson, Don Austin, Barry Nelms, Diane Sawyer, and Veronica Brown.

REGULAR MEETING

Item 1: **Call to Order –** Chairman John Wright called the meeting to order.

Item 2: **Approval of Agenda –** Krista Boughey made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Don Austin. Motion approved: 4-0.

Item 3: **Public Comment –** There was no public comment.

Item 4/Item 5: **Election of Chairman & Vice-Chairman –** John Wright suggested the Board table the election of chairman and vice-chairman until the next meeting. All Board members agreed.

Item 6: **Approval of August 13, 2007 Minutes –** Mr. Austin made a motion to approve the minutes as written; seconded by Vivian Simpson. Motion approved: 4-0.

Item 7: **Old Business / Randall Travel Marketing Comprehensive Tourism Research & Strategic Plan –** Ms. Sawyer suggested the Tourism Advisory Board hold a work session in early December to develop an action plan. The Board agreed and asked Ms. Sawyer to poll Board members and set a meeting date. Janice Farr made a motion to accept Randall Travel Marketing's Research & Strategic Plan into public record; seconded by Mr. Austin. Motion approved: 5-0.

Item 8: **New Business**

Support of Funds Requests –
Mr. Austin made a motion to approve $4,000 to the Currituck County Arts Council for its *9th Annual Art Extravaganza,* March 8, 2008; seconded by Mrs. Boughey. Motion approved: 5-0.

Mrs. Boughey made a motion to approve $5,000 to the American Red Cross *A Carolina Oktoberfest*, held Oct. 5, 2007; seconded by Mrs. Farr. Motion approved: 5-0.

Item 9: **Discussion on Alternative Energy / Wind Energy Ordinance –** Ben Woody, Planning Director, and Planner Maureen O'Shea made a presentation on wind turbines. Mr. Woody explained to Board members that a proposal has been made for a text amendment to Currituck County's Unified Development Ordinance that would allow this alternative energy source within the County. Ms. O'Shea

showed photographs of wind turbines and briefly explained their benefits. Mr. Woody said he was seeking the opinions of Tourism Board members to assist the Planning Board in making a decision on whether to recommend a text amendment to the Board of Commissioners. Mrs. Boughey stated that she has seen wind turbines in California and that the sound they emit is minimal. Mr. Wright asked if there are specific sites in Currituck County being suggested for the placement of wind turbines. Ms. O'Shea said that county staff has been approached by someone wanting to start a small-scale business. The text amendment, she said, would more than likely address a minimum lot size and height restrictions. Mrs. Farr said she believes that wind turbines would not have a negative impact on tourism and that tourists would embrace the "green alternative." Mr. Woody said the Planning Board would more than likely again discuss wind turbines at its December 11, 2007 meeting.

Item 10: **Discussion on Promotion of Currituck Heritage Park –** Item tabled.

Item 11: **Discussion on Pedestrian / Vehicle Traffic at Corolla Light** – Item tabled.

Item 12: **Tourism Director's Report / Marketing Coordinator's Report** – Ms. Sawyer said that Tourism Advisory Board members Vivian Simpson and Don Austin have agreed to continue serving on the Board. Their names have been submitted to the Tourism Development Authority for reappointment at the November 19, 2007, Board of Commissioners meeting. Ms. Sawyer also said a recommendation for the vacant seat on the Tourism Board has been submitted to the TDA; the appointment will be considered on November 19th.

Ms. Sawyer told Board members that staff will not attend the American Bus Association Conference in Virginia Beach, Va. in February but will instead participate in a trade show to be held in March in Washington, D.C. She said the event is better suited towards Currituck County's target audience.

Debra Embrey reviewed the monthly report with Board members and pointed out that staff has begun also tracking average gas prices.

Ms. Sawyer and Peter Bishop, Economic Development Director, discussed ideas concerning how the Tourism Advisory Board and Economic Development Board can work together and share information. Mr. Bishop announced that the Commissioners are expected to appoint the ED Board members in January.

Board members watched a video highlighting NC Amateur Sports' Mountains to the Coast bike ride end-of-ride celebration that was held in October in Currituck.

Mrs. Brown said that the Visitor's Guides and Wedding & Event Planners are in production and should be going to print in about six weeks.

Ms. Sawyer announced that the Public Information / Travel & Tourism Department was awarded three state awards from the North Carolina Association of Government Information Officers (NCAGIO). They were: First Place for the government website, www.currituckgovernment.com; Second Place for the Focus on Currituck newsletter; and First Place for the Moving Wall project. Ms.

Sawyer and Mrs. Embrey accepted the awards at the NCAGIO conference in Chapel Hill, NC.

Item 13: **Board Members' Report** – Mr. Austin reported that Moonrise Bay Vineyard is up for sale.

Mrs. Boughey asked staff to provide an updated list on the Support of Funds grants that have been awarded this fiscal year. Ms. Sawyer said she would make sure the Board received an update at its next meeting.

Mr. Wright said his vineyard has had a "good year," producing 40 tons of grapes. He also said he was impressed with Judy Randall's report on tourism in Currituck County.

Mrs. Farr said Judy Randall's presentation dovetailed nicely with the UNC presentation and that her report is "comprehensive and a nice road map for the future."

Barry Nelms said the Commissioners are considering the purchase of property for a mainland visitor's center, but that negotiations to purchase the property mentioned in the Nov. 1st Virginian-Pilot article have broken off. Mr. Nelms also said he is pleased that the Tourism and ED boards will be working together and that county staff needs to market Currituck County as a friendly place to do business. Mr. Nelms also announced that he will present a "state of the county" address at the December 17th Board of Commissioners meeting.

Item 14: **Other Business** – The Board decided to hold its next regular meeting on Monday, December 10, 2007. Members also instructed Ms. Sawyer to arrange a work session prior to that meeting.

Item 15: **Adjourn** – Mr. Wright adjourned the meeting.

Minutes approved December 10, 2007

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John Wright, Chairman

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Diane Sawyer, Secretary