

## **Joint Kent-Queen Anne's Task Force**

**March 18, 2016**

**Members Present:** Foster Beach, Bernadette Bowman, Wayne Darrell, Shelley Herman, Greg Holsey, Laney Solomon, and Greg Todd.

**Member Absent:** Margo Bailey, Jack Brosius, Mayor Chris Cerino, Commissioner Ronald Fithian, Ken Fry, Paul Hanley, Mark Glass, Joe Holt, Greg Roby, Commissioner William Short, and Commissioner Jack Wilson.

At 9:15 a.m. the meeting convened. Ms. Herman gave opening remarks.

On motion by Mr. Darrell and seconded by Mr. Beach, the minutes from the February 19, 2016, meeting were approved.

Ms. Bowman and Ms. Solomon provided the Task Force with a brief update of the initiatives of the marketing committee which is comprised of the Downtown Chestertown Association, RiverArts, the Chester River Packet, the Lemon Leaf and JR's Past Time Pub, the Tourism and Economic offices for Kent and Queen-Anne's County, the Town of Chestertown, SHA and the Eastport Association. Ms. Bowman gave an overview of events planned during the three main weekends of the closure. During the first weekend there will be a 5k walk/run, a boat parade, music at Wilmer Park followed by possible fireworks and a Sunday brunch around the Town of Chestertown. During the second weekend of the closure the Committee is planning a crab feast on High Street (a family fun day), and Crazy Days (which is an annual event in Chestertown). For the third weekend the Committee is planning a vineyard/brewery/distillery pairing weekend. Ms. Bowman and Ms. Solomon provided the Task Force with a proposed budget for the three weekends during the bridge closure. The Committee is estimating a cost of \$67,000.00. The estimated costs would cover transportation, permitting, insurance, signage, tents, tables, entertainment, etc. The Committee will solicit support from Kent County, Queen Anne's County, the Town of Chestertown, and the State Highway Administration. Queen Anne's County is looking at pop ups at events in Chestertown for businesses that lie close to the bridge on the Queen Anne's side of Chestertown. Ms. Solomon is also working with Rolphs Wharf on activities and entertainment during the closure. The Chester River Packet will be shuttling visitors from Rolphs Wharf to Chestertown and is working on a Passport Book which would provide incentives to visitors to shop, dine and participate in activities in Kent County. Ms. Bowman stated that transportation is going to be a big obstacle. The contract provides a provision for taxis. The Committee is looking into the interpretation of the provision.

Ms. Bowman inquired as to where the equipment would be staged during the closure, Mr. Holsey said that most equipment would be left on the bridge and possibly on some areas on the Queen Anne's County side. Mr. Holsey will discuss logistics with the contractor.

Mr. Beach requested a copy of the agreement with the Contractor to review. Mr. Holsey will circulate a copy to the Task Force.

Mr. Darrell has been working with Jerry Roderick, Director of Public Safety, Washington College, on possible housing and dining solutions for the volunteers who will be staying at the Chestertown Volunteer Fire Department during the closure. Mr. Roderick has arranged to provide breakfast, lunch and dinner to the volunteers for part of the closure and housing for the entire closure. Mr. Darrell will provide a number of volunteers that would need accommodations to Mr. Holsey in the next few days. Shore Regional Medical Center at Chestertown has also offered to assist with meals for the volunteers when the college is closed.

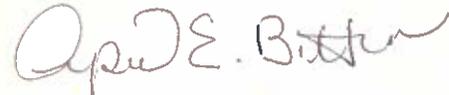
Ms. Holsey provided an update on the closure dates. The Chester River Bridge remains scheduled to close on July 18 through August 14, 2016. Mr. Holsey also thanked the tourism departments for their marketing efforts. It takes a lot of pressure off the State Highway Administration.

Ms. Herman noted that Betterton Day is scheduled for the first weekend in August and stated that it would be nice to tie in marketing efforts or shuttles to Betterton during that weekend.

The Task Force agreed to adjourn the meeting.

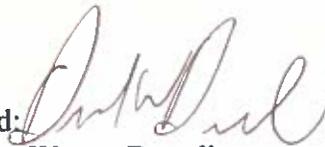
The meeting adjourned at 9:46 a.m. The Joint Kent-Queen Anne's Task Force agreed to meet again on April 15, 2016, in the Commissioners' Hearing Room.

Respectfully submitted,



April E. Bitter, Deputy Clerk

Approved:



Wayne Darrell  
Member