

**NOTES FROM ACCOMMODATIONS TASK FORCE MEETING  
NOVEMBER 12, 2013- 1:00 PM – BELLMOOR INN**

Present were: Monica Anderson, Helen Arthur, Chris Berg, Barbara Brewer, Carol Everhart, Mary Beth Furjanic, Rob Marshall, Keith Martin, Meghan McCalley, Linda Parkowski, Scott Thomas, Marley Wade, Brenda Skeels, Rod Wilson and Karen Zakarian.

Keith Martin opened the meeting with self-introductions.

1. Carol reported that the following requests by the Accommodations Task Force at the 2012 meeting had been accomplished, including:
  - Placed advertisement that the Chamber purchased on the website for members to review
  - Quick Response Codes had been placed on the Dining Guide and display advertising. Carol advised that the request to have an area in the Visitor Center for QR Codes was not implemented since the Chamber app was more popular.
  - The request to place group leads directly onto the website was not implemented at the request of group leaders who advised they did not want the information available online.
  - The Chamber Facebook page features members and is available for members to post their information as requested.
  - Distribution cards indicating quarters were available had been provided to businesses, including Route One, as requested.
2. The Task Force was supplied with a summary of advertisement to date and was advised that \$84,070 of the \$86,077 budgeted had been expended to date. In addition, a list of advertising partners with a value of over \$100,000 was provided. Pending advertisement for 2013 included Southern Living holiday edition and the State Travel Guide. The top ten states to visit the Chamber website January – November 12, 2013 were Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, New York, New Jersey, Virginia, D.C., Ohio, California and Florida.
3. Carol provided the information requested regarding potential advertisement in Vanity Fair which indicated a one-time rate of \$198,099 making it unaffordable for the Chamber's budget.
4. Occupancy stats were provided indicating a loss in occupancy January through June. There was no opportunity to make up for the lost occupancy during the July, August capacity. September and October occupancy increased, and it is anticipated that the spring loss cannot be completely recouped – potentially, about 50% could be recouped.
5. Linda Parkowski, State Tourism Director, addressed the Task Force, noting the following:

- The State is seeing a reduction in mail order requests for the State Guide publication but is seeing an increase in web hits and review of the Visitors Guide online.
- The State Visitors Guide has been placed at the Philadelphia airport and Amtrak stations, and the State is looking to partner with Frontier Airlines, which would get the guide into major airports, i.e., Chicago, etc.
- Linda suggested the Chamber run the analytics now on the State website which now provides each beach with a connection. She stated it is clear that the beach is what the visitor is looking for.
- Travel and tourism trends, as well as information on how to connect with the Delaware Tourism Office, were distributed.
- The Trip Advisor page for Rehoboth is not currently sponsored, and Linda encouraged the Chamber or others to sponsor this page. Ownership of this page offers other advertising opportunities, including banners and inside pages.
- The State is asking for raw footage, and Carol was requested to send Chamber raw footage, including Sea Witch.
- The State is re-branding and plan to do so as they re-skin their website and make the State website responsive.

Linda asked if the group would have interest in doing a spring promotion such as “show your bikini” – something catchy that the media will respond to. The idea would be to show your bikini – you don’t have to be wearing it to get a deal for discounts, etc. Carol was requested to send an e-mail as a follow-up on the interest level. Linda stated that the State is willing to help, and she also noted that the State is currently working on improving the signage and traffic flow to the beach.

6. Chris Berg asked the group if they had been contacted by Sports at the Beach regarding collection of fees by the accommodations in return for referral by Sports at the Beach. All but one person present at the meeting indicated they had been contacted and had no plans to collect the suggested 12% requested by Sports at the Beach.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol A. Everhart