

## BUCKS COUNTY CONSORTIUM

Thursday, May 5, 2016

### Meeting Minutes

#### **1. Call to Order:**

A meeting of the Bucks County Consortium was held at 9:00 a.m. and hosted by Doylestown Borough at the Mercer Museum, on May 5, 2016. The meeting was called to order by Consortium President William Wert.

#### **2. Roll Call, Introductions and Community Updates:**

The following Bucks County communities were represented at the meeting:

Dana Cozza, Buckingham Township  
Sandra Zadell, Chalfont Borough  
John Davis, Doylestown Borough  
Caroline Brinker, Doylestown Borough  
Stephanie Mason, Doylestown Township  
Autumn Canfield, Doylestown Township  
Bill Wert, Dublin Borough  
John McMenamin, Lower Southampton Township  
Stephanie Teoli Kuhls, Middletown Township  
Scott Sadowsky, Middletown Township  
Angela Benner, New Britain Township  
Eileen Bradley, New Britain Township  
Robert Pellegrino, Northampton Township  
Jamie Gwynn, Northampton Township  
Michael Walsh, Northampton Township  
Carolyn McCreary, Plumstead Township  
Mark Fournier, Telford Borough  
Alison Smith, Tullytown Borough  
Judy Collings, Tullytown Borough  
Herb Schoell, Upper Southampton Water & Sewer Authority  
Joseph Golden, Upper Southampton Township  
Ann Alker, Upper Southampton Township  
Timothy Hagey, Warminster Township Municipal Authority  
Vivian Bell, Warrington Township  
Gail Weniger, Warwick Township  
Greg Lippincott, West Rockhill Township  
John Boyle, Yardley Borough

#### **Sponsors:**

Chris Englebert, Beirne Wealth Consulting  
Jeff Hugo, InR Advisors  
Chris Tomlinson, InR Advisors  
Severine Zarza, Royal Bank  
David Ohman, Uninvest Bank

#### **Community Updates:**

The local managers went around the room and introduced themselves and briefly shared “Front Burner” issues affecting their community. Sponsors in attendance also shared updates or current issues in their field of expertise.

#### **3. Approval of Minutes – March 3, 2016:**

Upon motion by Eileen Bradley, seconded by Stephanie Mason, the Minutes of April 7, 2016 were approved as presented.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report and Payment of Bills:**

Vivian Bell reviewed the treasurer's report for April 2016. Upon motion by Mark Fournier, seconded by Carolyn McCreary, the Treasurer's Report for April 2016 was approved.

Mr. Wert stated that the March 2016 Treasurer's Report had not been approved at the previous meeting. Upon motion by Sandra Zadell, seconded by Carolyn McCreary the Treasurer's Report for March 2016 was approved.

#### **5. Presentations:**

##### **Presentation: Paul Bencivengo, Vist Bucks County.**

Mr. Wert introduced Paul Bencivengo, Vice President of Visit Bucks County.

Mr. Bencivengo thanked Mr. Wert for inviting him to speak at the Consortium Meeting and stated that it was also National Travel and Tourism Week.

Visit Bucks County (VBC) is the official tourism promotion for Bucks County. Their mission is to increase visitation in Bucks County by effectively marketing its heritage and its diverse sites and attractions. VBC has a \$2.8 million budget with 10 full-time staff, and is funded by lodging tax and membership. The lodging tax is 3% with 2.5% going to VBC and .5% to non-profits. Mr. Bencivengo stated that in 2015 the Pope Visit produced an additional 30-70% in occupancy at lodging properties. Visitor spending in Bucks County generates \$937 million in economic impact, \$126 million in taxes, and visitor spending supports 12,000 in jobs.

Visit Bucks County is made up of Partnerships, Operations, Visitor Services, Administration, and Marketing, Sales, and Communications. VBC has landed 300+ stories in Travel and Leisure annually helping to increase tourism in Bucks County. Travel and Leisure is just one of the many publications that VBC has a presence in promoting tourism. VBC promotes local sporting events like the dragon boat festival in New Hope and the curling club in Bucks County. VBC does leisure marketing for local events, like community fall festivals. VBC does traditional marketing like billboards and print advertising. VBC also does online advertising through their website [visitbuckscounty.com](http://visitbuckscounty.com) and social media. VBC has content partnerships which means they pay magazines like Philadelphia Magazine in order to get what VBC wants covered.

Mr. Bencivengo stated that Visit Bucks County has recently been working with Google to obtain street views of some of the sites and attractions in Bucks County. Some of these locations are Peace Valley Park, Ringing Rocks Park, Shady Brook Farm, Tyler State Park, and Washington Crossing. These street views will provide visitors to the VBC website an opportunity to see what different sites and attractions at a ground view. VBC will continue working on doing this for different locations throughout Bucks County.

A new challenge that Visit Bucks County is facing is Airbnb. Airbnb is when homeowners can place their house or room(s) up for rent for a short period of time for travelers. They operate similar to a Bed and Breakfast, although there is no lodging tax at Airbnb, therefore when people travel to Bucks County and stay at an Airbnb, no revenue goes to Tourism. So VBC is working on promoting the local Bed and Breakfasts to help their business, and continue to help tourism funding.

Mr. Bencivengo ended by reminding everyone that Visit Bucks County is grinding away for every municipality in Bucks County. VBC wants to work with the local municipalities to help promote what is unique in each municipality. VBC's website has a community calendar that is free for advertising all local events. VBC is here for municipalities to lean on and to direct and locals and visitors to for travel and leisure information. Visitor spending = economic impact and jobs.

Mr. Wert asked if Visit Bucks County works with the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC). Mr. Bencivengo stated that VBC has provided DVRPC with a grant to work with Bike Bucks County to create a biking trail map. Mark Fournier stated that Telford Borough is located partially in Bucks County and partially in Montgomery County. Mr. Fournier asked if he would still be able to post on the Visit Bucks County website. Mr. Bencivengo stated that is no problem and will gladly help promote their events. Bob Pellegrino asked if there is a need for additional hotels in Bucks County. Mr. Bencivengo stated that Bucks County is good with hotels currently although depending on where in

Bucks County a hotel could be needed. John Davis asked what the five biggest attractions in Bucks County are. Mr. Bencivengo stated that the five biggest attractions are Peddlers Village, Sesame Place, Doylestown, New Hope, and local Parks.

**6. Discussion:** There was no Discussion at this time.

**7. Other Business:**

Sterling Silver Act Program: Jamie Gwynn announced that BCATO was holding their Sterling Silver Act Program tonight, May 5, 2016 at the Doylestown County Club. Mr. Gwynn stated he was expecting a good turnout.

Emerging Leaders Training: Mr. Wert reminded everyone that in place of the Annual ICMA training, the Consortium is hosting an Emerging Leaders Training event that will focus on Police Negotiations. The date of the training is June 10<sup>th</sup> at the Talamore County Club. Registration deadline is May 31, 2016.

House Bill 340: Mr. Wert stated that the Executive Committee is trying to obtain a sample resolution against House Bill 340 that would allow the taping of Executive Sessions.

**9. Adjournment:**

Upon motion by John Davis, seconded by Herb Schoell, the meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

The next meeting was scheduled on June 2, 2016 at Middletown Township.

Respectfully Submitted,

Angela P. Benner  
Consortium Coordinator