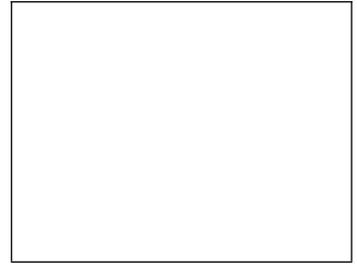




# MINUTES TEMPLATE



COMMITTEE: Visitor Services Advisory Committee Time Meeting called to Order: \_\_8:00am \_\_

MEETING DATE: \_\_May 11\_\_ Time Meeting Adjourned: \_\_8:55am\_\_

MEMBERS PRESENT via ZOOM: Janet Schulte, Director of Culture and Tourism, David Sharpe, Visitor Services Coordinator, Josh Gray, Chair, Liz Holland, Karen Macumber, Mary Malavase, Peter Morrison and Sharon Quigley

ALSO PRESENT: Noah Karberg and Rob Ranney

MEMBERS ABSENT: Thayer Hale

<b>AGENDA ITEM</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>VOTES / ROLL CALL</b>
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<b>1 Welcome VSAC Members</b>	Janet Schulte welcomed the members of the committee to meeting. The meeting is held by Zoom video conference due to the COVID-19 outbreak. She then asked for a roll call of all members present. Director Schulte then reviewed Governor Baker’s orders from March 12, 2020 suspending certain Open Meeting Law provisions in order to meet electronically instead of in person during the pandemic. Josh and Janet also reviewed the ground rules and script for remotely conducted open meetings via Zoom.	
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<b>2 Approval of Minutes from April 13</b>	The minutes from April were unanimously approved.	6-0
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<b>3 Travel Predictions for Summer 2021</b>	After introductions, Nantucket Memorial Airport Assistant Manager, Noah Karberg, reviewed a report he developed regarding arrivals and departures to Nantucket. He noted that this summer will be very busy at the airport. American and United Airlines will be flying non-stop from Chicago’s O’Hare airport. Elite Airlines will be flying daily from White Plains, NY, JetBlue is adding Newark service and there will be more flights from both New York City airports. In all, there will be 23 peak daily departures. The planes will be larger regional jets representing about a 30% increase in seats. Most planes are smaller regional jets, not the big commercial jets and that these flights avoid traditional hub routes. Noah reviewed a chart that compared activity in 2019 and 2020. Private airplane traffic at the start of the pandemic in March of 2020 was lower but then increased as the summer arrived stayed steady into the fall of 2020. There was more private airplane travel in 2020 than vs 2016-2019. 80% of the private passengers are coming from beyond Boston and New York, from places such as Michigan and Northern California. Noah concluded that many families relocated during the pandemic and are commuting. It will be interesting to see if this stays the same way in 7 years or so.	
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Steamship Authority Board of Governor’s Member, Rob Ranney also provided a report. One chart compared 2019, 2020 and 2021 auto reservations. Rob reported that auto reservations are higher this year than the last two. Car reservations are up 12.7% overall when compared to 2019. He noted that advance reservations for the high-speed ferry are lower, down 2.7%, but in general that goes up when you account for walk up tickets. He expects fast ferry passenger traffic to be higher in June, July and August. Passengers don’t want to be in confined spaces. Rob added that the Drive On/ Drive off option will return May 19 along with the reopening of boat concessions. The Nantucket member of the Board of Governors also noted that unlike airlines which can add more aircraft, the Steamship Authority doesn’t have the capacity to expand. They only have 10 ferries and many of those serve the island of Martha’s Vineyard.

Committee member, Liz Holland who is the Manager of the Hy-Line Ferry's Nantucket office reported that they have many advance reservations. Wedding traffic is picking up and their tour subsidiary, Nantucket Island Tours is booked for September. She added that most people either do walk up/ same day reservations or reserve only a couple weeks in advance.

Noah Karberg and Rob Ranney disconnected at 8:42am

**4 Director's Report** Janet reported that she is developing a robust Cultural District website and calendar. The launch date is late June, early July. Janet will meet with the HDC's Sign Advisory Committee to review the Blue Economy sign at Children's Beach. It will be installed in June. The Cape Cod and Island Economic Task Force has been discussing if businesses should require employees to get the Covid vaccine. Janet reported that both the local Cultural Council and the Economic Development Task Force are working on grants. She also noted that the committee will get new members in the next term as 2 members are stepping down. Janet recently attended an NHA Marketing Committee. With the merger of the Lightship Basket Museum into the NHA the Whaling Museum will be a repository of a large collection of lightship baskets.

**6 Visitor Services Coordinator's Report** David reported on the April statistics. Last year, the office was closed due to the Covid lockdown. The weekly restaurant list continues to be the most popular download from the website.

The committee briefly discussed the issue of stranded airport and passengers and how to help them. In previous years, there was an emergency committee that help. Now as Noah Karberg indicated in his report, the airlines are responsible in helping the customer find lodging or a way to get off the island. Liz noted that the airlines usually call her to get them on the ferry. David added that the office faxed the room list to the boats, police and fire.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_