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**CITY OF DANA POINT  
DANA POINT DESTINY AD HOC COMMITTEE  
MINUTES**

April 25, 2012  
6:00 p.m.

City Hall Council Chamber (#210)  
33282 Golden Lantern  
Dana Point, CA 92629

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**CALL TO ORDER**

City Council Member Scott Schoeffel called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

City Council Member Scott Schoeffel asked Economic Development Manager Christy Teague to take the roll call. The following were present:

Damian Collins  
Brian Dunn  
Keegan Hicks  
Donna Kalez  
Joe Lovullo  
Jim Miller  
Jorge Olamendi  
Jim Samuels  
Scott Schoeffel  
Jay Styles

*City Staff Present:*

Doug Chotkevys  
Christy Teague

Scott Schoeffel announced that he received a letter of resignation from the Destiny Committee from Bruce Beal.

Others Present: Dan Stetson of Ocean Institute, Paul Lawrence of OC Dana Point Harbor Department, and Ross Teasley of Casa Dana Group.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**1. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES, NOVEMBER 30, 2011**

Joe Lovullo made a MOTION to approve the minutes; Seconded by Keegan Hicks. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

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None.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**2. INTRODUCTION OF HEATHER JOHNSTON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF DANA POINT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE**

Scott Schoeffel noted that Heather Johnston was unable to attend the meeting and that she would be introduced at the next Destiny Committee meeting. He reminded the group that the Chamber would be hosting the Mayor's State of the City Luncheon at the Laguna Cliffs Marriott on May 3, 2012.

**3. PROPOSED COMMUNITY CONSERVATION INCENTIVE PROGRAM**

Scott Schoeffel asked City Manager Doug Chotkevys to provide a background summary of conservation efforts in Dana Point. Doug Chotkevys discussed the recent ban on single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam containers as the City Council's latest actions of an ongoing commitment to the local environment. He noted that tourism is essential to Dana Point and that, as a resort town, visitors often buy homes in Dana Point. He stated that approximately 70% of resort business is for meeting groups and that conference RFPs require environmental checklists, indicating the importance and expectations of environmental responsibility as a destination area.

Scott Schoeffel noted that in his State of the City address last year he stated the importance of economic development and incentives for shoppers and businesses to leverage success. He noted that the Destiny Committee was formed to develop business ideas, incentives and opportunities as a group and to increase opportunities and success of Dana Point businesses. He noted that there is a direct relationship between TOT (transient occupancy tax or "bed tax") and Sales Tax, and that more visitors equates to increased business for all. The question is: How do we use conservation as a key driver for an environmental incentives process? The premise is that environmental awareness and amenities attract visitors to resorts, and then cross-sell other business through an attractive environmental awareness program. Scott Schoeffel stated an example might be international groups, recognizing Dana Point as a scenic location and their host resort as environmentally sensitive, might ask the resort for other local business recommendations with similar conservation practices to patronize. He suggested a new program that Dana Point businesses have agreed upon and participants must be qualified as "preferred partners," which would allow visitors to be assured that these listed businesses operate with environmentally sensitive practices. Through this incentive program, the environment is "front and center" and becomes attractive to visitors. Scott Schoeffel asked Jim Samuels, General Manager for Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort, how he thought resort customers would respond to a

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list of preferred environmentally-sensitive businesses. Jim Samuels responded positively, noting that resort guests are well-informed and obtain information from the resort website, which includes information about surrounding businesses. Scott Schoeffel asked the potential if guests were directed to standards-driven businesses, and if additional business could be captured if they met environmental standards? Brian Dunn asked about the qualifying criteria. Jim Samuels noted that groups represent millions of dollars in business, and that meeting planners are looking at Dana Point resorts and others, including city-adopted initiatives, to help support the decision to come to Dana Point. Brian Dunn asked about initiatives like water quality efforts, such as those in the Harbor or LEED certification as examples? City Manager Doug Chotkevys suggested that event planners could have a list of green partners on a map to be given to attendees. Jim Samuels noted that meeting planners ask about specific actions, and that the resorts could share information on other businesses that have taken specific environmentally-responsible steps. Doug Chotkevys suggested the resorts could share nice reusable bags with the TBID brand to be shared with visitors. Scott Schoeffel suggested the program would not be for referrals only, but could also offer benefits and cooperative ventures to those who participate and the network could potentially bring visitors to patronize local businesses. Scott Schoeffel asked members how the program could drive additional traffic to each business. Jim Samuels suggested that there are other opportunities for business when conference attendees have a positive experience and come back with their families for leisure visits, and that environmental awareness and responsibility is attractive to those visitors. Scott Schoeffel suggested that "a stickier web attracts more flies" and that an alliance could help capture additional business as the economy improves. He suggested that conservation and environmental awareness is a driver for business. Keegan Hicks asked which products were to be promoted, and clarified if an example would be sustainable seafood. Scott Schoeffel suggested that it would be a commitment to ideals which would be carried out in business practices, such as reusable bags or support of a wildlife fund or environmental charity. Jim Samuels noted an example could be the Dana Wharf Sportfishing clean-up efforts. Doug Chotkevys stated that the TBID recently adopted a reef near Salt Creek Beach, which is a good example. He noted that a program could encourage visitors to support Dana Point businesses through references to environmental partners. Jay Styles suggested a major incentive for business participation would be placement in hotel rooms at no cost. He noted that visitors may not be driven by environmental motives but if the information is provided then visitors are more likely to patronize listed businesses. He stated most businesses would be incentivized by marketing, including a city link, room placements, Chamber of Commerce promotion, and partner support, and could perhaps gain support from environmental groups such as Sierra Club, Surfrider and MiOcean for promotion. He noted participants could be listed on a reusable bag and that a list of participants could be included in the bag. Scott Schoeffel stated that he has never seen a list in hotels as described, and asked what the most effective point of sale and reliable source would be

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to trust. He suggested that information in hotel rooms, including listed participants, could include a coupon, and that it would be an exciting and creative way to increase business.

Scott Schoeffel suggested the program could be called "PEP" for "Preferred Environmental Partners" and could include a logo icon in the window showing the "Seal of Approval." Jorge Olamendi suggested that there was a lot of opportunity through leveraging eco-tourism. He noted that Costa Rica is successful due to eco-tourism and takes advantage of visitor interest in environment, including a 26% annual tourism growth. Jim Samuels asked if there are existing benchmarks that Dana Point City can model. Scott Schoeffel suggested there are some universal standards, from Costa Rica and other locations worldwide, and that we could develop a customized "Bill of Environmental Rights". He challenged the group: How can we best take advantage of our many visitors to improve business citywide; and then, how can we include other institutions such as schools and governments to strengthen the partnerships? He suggested support and commitment among businesses and actively networking around an identifiable set of goals. Jim Miller noted that the ordinances passed to eliminate single-use plastic bags and Styrofoam, but that these issues should be an overall community effort including residents and not affect businesses only. Keegan Hicks noted that administration could be a challenge based on criteria and enforcement. Donna Kalez suggested that the hotels could present welcome gifts with a list of vendors enclosed, with incentives such as coupon to receive 10% discount when brought back to business to reinforce the message. Scott Schoeffel added that the bag could be an advertisement. Upon request from Scott Schoeffel, President of the Ocean Institute Dan Stetson agreed that the more that could be done to support the environment, the better it is for the community. He noted that the Ocean Institute was named one of the Top 25 Companies for Green Practices by OC Metro magazine. Jim Samuels noted that the City could be the start of what should be a more progressive movement in other cities. Jay Styles noted that the Wind & Sea Restaurant is catching rain water, which is stored and used for irrigation. Brian Dunn noted that the Harbor has been aggressive in their Clean Harbor actions, including water filtration. Jim Samuels stated that the hotels have strong initiatives in place. Scott Schoeffel suggested that music, arts, culture and environmental sensitivity all go together. Joe Lovullo noted rain barrels are more common and sold locally. Scott Schoeffel added that arts and culture is attractive, including the Dana Point Symphony which attracts attendees beyond Dana Point. He suggested that magnetic events not only attract visitors, they also encourage them to come back, tell others, and then expand. He noted that the Destiny Committee could develop a written product to bring back to the City Council. Donna Kalez suggested paper bags could be purchased in bulk by Dana Point Harbor, and that smaller businesses would consider a huge purchase of paper bags for a cooperative, lower price. Jim Samuels suggested the Chamber of Commerce could assist with these initiatives.

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Scott Schoeffel suggested that a cute Harbor Seal mascot could represent the PEP logo. Jim Miller suggested criteria be established before the next meeting. He suggested the harbor, resorts, county and other lists be reviewed to come up with about 10 recommended practices. Doug Chotkevys asked for ideas to be included be forwarded to him or Christy Teague to share with the group.

Jim Samuels noted that the TBID includes the four large resorts through self-assessment to brand Dana Point as a destination. He announced that the State of the City event on May 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Laguna Cliffs Marriott will include an introductory video with the brand promise and introduction to the TBID destination promotion.

#### **4. ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION – SUMMER EVENTS**

A list of summer events was distributed. Brian Dunn suggested the Boat Show should be added to the list. Scott Schoeffel suggested that he would re-circulate his list of ideas and minutes from previous Destiny Committee meeting discussions prior to the next meeting, which will include strategies for increasing summer business. Donna Kalez asked about summer concert locations. Jim Miller noted that Lantern Bay Park is a problem for parking in the Harbor. Doug Chotkevys noted that the Lantern Bay Park basketball court is to be converted to additional parking. Scott Schoeffel noted the opportunity to turn potential negative impacts into positive impacts, perhaps through Harbor restaurant specials before or after the concerts. Brian Dunn suggested increased outreach for events. Scott Schoeffel suggested a proactive strategy be developed. Keegan Hicks suggested that the valet hours could perhaps be shifted to correspond with concerts and to accommodate concert goers. Brian Dunn asked about a potential shuttle for Lantern Bay Park events. Jorge Olamendi suggested that any ideas to bring in people were good for all businesses, and with the quality spenders in town, we should be open to solutions. Jim Miller noted a new parking area off Puerto Place in the Harbor will be available as of July 1<sup>st</sup>, which can help with event parking. Doug Chotkevys announced that the Dana Point is now the #1 criterium race in the nation. He encouraged members to keep this momentum going and to email suggestions to him. Jay Styles suggested event parking be added to the next agenda.

#### **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

##### **5. UPDATE OF DANA POINT TOURISM BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT AND BRAND LAUNCH**

Jim Samuels previously provided the update during earlier discussion. Doug Chotkevys noted the new destination website is expected to be operating by mid-May.

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**COUNCIL MEMBER SCOTT SCHOEFFEL COMMENTS**

There were no further comments by Council Member Scott Schoeffel.

**MEMBER COMMENTS**

There were no further member comments.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Council Member Scott Schoeffel at 7:45 p.m.

The *next* meeting of the Dana Point Destiny Ad Hoc Committee will be subsequently posted.