

Minutes
Outer Banks Transportation Task Force
Demand Management Committee

The Demand Management Committee met at the Outer Banks Chamber of Commerce on March 9, 2006 at 8:30 AM.

Attending were Ben Cahoon, Tina Tice, Linda Hess, David Webb, Buck Thornton and Mike Hejduk. Not present were Erin Burke, Greg Loy, John Walsh, Bill Fenner, Sue Cotellessa, Lori London, Carolyn McCormick, Brandon Shoaf, David Webb and Tim Wilson.

Began meeting with discussion of the inclement weather Aquarium rush. With regard to many traffic problems we are at the mercy of the weather.

It was suggested that the Aquarium might lower admission prices Monday through Wednesday. Whalehead Club and the Currituck Lighthouse should offer early week reduced price tickets.

It was suggested that improved communication is needed between the various municipal police departments and that the bypass (158) should be under the command of the Highway Patrol in emergencies.

Express routes should be considered to certain destinations, including the wildlife center in Corolla and the NC Aquarium.

There should be incentives for linkages between the attractions; both for the attractions to cooperate and for private tour operators to transport groups.

A rainy day guide should be published. This would be similar to early-check-in activity guides published by some rental companies. It could be used to encourage early week good weather visits to attractions and to highlight indoor activities other than the aquarium for rainy days.

Entertainment/shopping/dining districts should be created and promoted.

Stops must be convenient and visible.

The rental companies must be engaged, a change in the culture of the rental business is required.

Buck Thornton discussed his very positive experience with Friday check-in. He said that he acquired better staff. Visitors had a full weekend at home at the end of their vacations. Visitors and staff benefit from flexibility. They change over some houses on Wednesday in the off-season.

Friday change over should be encouraged with incentives. Visitor's Bureau and rental companies must support it. Management must believe in the concept. Heavy advertising and promotion will be required. Success would only require moving about 20% of check-ins to Friday.

Rental managers should be surveyed on changing arrival days. They might be asked to survey visitors. Committee to work up questions and survey rental managers. Conduct a guest survey this summer.

Next meeting was set for April 13 at 8:30 AM.