



Board Meeting Minutes from April 16, 2026

Sussex County EOC Building

In attendance: Scott Anthony (Board Chairperson), Terry Carson, Jasmine Castaneda, Drew DiFonzo, Mike Dunmyer, Ben Gray, Bonnie Hall, Andrew Harton, Maggie Lingo, Fred Mast, Kristin Miller, Matt Parker, Linda Price, Betsy Reamer, Jo Schmeiser, Alison Schuch, Jim Smith, Scott Thomas, Fred Thompson (Board Co-Chairperson), Kevin Thompson, Nadine Timpanaro, Meghan Hyett, Lauren Weaver, Jessica Welch

Absent: Judy Lodge

1. Call to Order time: 9:30am by Scott A.
2. **Welcome and Introductions:** After recognizing and celebrating board member Jo Schmeiser's retirement, Scott A. welcomed everyone and those in attendance introduced themselves through alphabetical roll call. Quorum confirmed by Scott T.
3. Approval of the January 2026 Meeting Minutes
Motion by: Bonnie H., **Seconded by:** Kristin M., **Passed by** the Board.
4. Committee Reports

Finance – Presented by Scott A

At its April 9th Meeting, the committee:

- Approved a non-budgeted \$13,500 expense to Zartico for digital media attribution services starting in April 2026.
- Approved a non-budgeted \$5,000 expense for sponsorship of DTO FIFA World Cup Watch Parties.

- Voted to move \$60,000 from the checking account to money market account. This was more than the \$37,500 reserve item on the FY 2026 budget.
- Scott T. was able to raise SDT's money market account rate to 3.75%

Motion to approve the Third Quarter Financial Statements by Ali S., **Seconded by** Mike D., **Passed** by the Board.

Investment – Presented by Matt P.

- Edward Jones Account: \$124,717 balance on March statement
- 2.79% loss in a crazy first quarter but back up to \$129,490 balance as of April 9.

Review of the Proposed FY 2027 Budget

- Based on PAT projections, the Finance Committee is recommending a \$3,044,000 budget for FY 2027.
- The budget has \$266,000 in excess revenue (versus \$0) to be invested in TBD items connected to SDT's pending strategic plan.

Motion to adopt the FY 2027 Budget by Kristin M., **Seconded by** Mike D., **Passed** by the Board.

Policies & Procedures – Presented by Ben G.

- Update on FY 2026 committee goals
- On the hotel side, continue dialogue with the Division of Revenue to ensure that all hotels are accounted for.
- We will continue as a committee to monitor the impact of revenue distribution strategy and how bylaws, short-term rentals, minimum allocation support voting are impacted.
- We were also focusing on auditing the list of short-term rentals from the state to ensure accountability and property collection procedures.
- Accomplished the goal of SDT Funding Application /Chamber expenditures modifications. P&P will further evaluate the penalty language in section three of the funding application financials to ensure accountability, clarity, and encourage success for all member chambers.

- Scott T., along with the other DMO directors, Rep. Williams, Rep. Snyder-Hall, and Rep Berry met with the DE Division of Revenue (DOR) and Finance Secretary Smith on March 31. DOR addressed SDT questions one-by-one. DOR is pointing to the Delaware Disclosure Law 368 of Title 30 for preventing them from answering more details to some of our questions. This law has been posted to our boardroom. Scott T. reiterated the importance for SDT having PAT Revenue reports by zip code and they stated that they will discuss possible solutions for providing this data with the Secretary of Finance (who was on the call).
- Jessica W. indicated that her plan is to get the Secretary of State to meet with the Secretary of Finance to see if, as two secretaries, they can try to make the reporting work.
- Policies and Procedures is asking from everybody in this room to encourage your respective chambers to go back to those legislators that you sent letters to and send a follow-up and say, this is what we're looking for, how can we get there? P&P has listed four specific asks in the boardroom.
- After some discussion, Ben G. will relay to the Cape Gazette that SDT will stay out of their FOIA request to DOR for now and concentrate on contacting our legislators with those four action items.

Marketing – Presented by Bonnie H.

AirDNA Presentation

Amanda Norton, with AirDNA, presented virtually to the Board on its capabilities to track and report on hotel and STR activity in Sussex County.

- *They can breakdown activity by zip code(s)*
- *They can produce hotel data now in partnership with Kalibri*

Drew D. questioned which hotels Kalibri was getting data from as the sample size may be smaller and less accurate than CoStar, who SDT currently subscribes to.

Jessica W. indicated that the DTO does have a current AirDNA subscription and can share monthly reporting with SDT that includes the STR activity we are looking for.

- The marketing committee met on April 8th.
- Recommended Zartico and FIFA World Cup Watch Party sponsorships to Finance Committee.
- Following the FY 26 Revenue Contingency Plan, SDT tripled its advertising spend in Q3.
- Bonnie outlined and called out highlights of SDT's Third Quarter Marketing Report that was shared and posted in the Boardroom.
- The next committee meeting is July 8.

5. DTO Update – Presented by Jessica W.

- We're hoping to have a tour with the governor throughout the state on May 6 as part of National Travel & Tourism Week. So he'll hit up some tourism attractions, but also some small business related to tourism.
- Working on a large marketing campaign surrounding the FIFA World Cup Watch Parties. The one in Sussex County takes place on June 20 at Hudson Fields.

6. Other Business / Announcements

- Bonnie H. - In the May Issue of Delaware Today, there's an interview of Chief Avery and myself about the Delaware 250. May 2nd is Heritage Day at our Nanticoke Indian Museum from 11 to 3. Everybody's invited to come out and have a wonderful time with us. Good food, good fun, good felt.
- Lauren W. - We have a coastal Delaware community cleanup with all our 10 towns this weekend. We run this because next weekend we put 2,000 bicyclists out on those roadways for the Ocean to Bay Bike Tour.
- Nadine T. - In Millsboro, have our first Grill and Groove next Friday night, the 24th at the Millsboro Firehall, so we're going to have great music, food by Lasher's, BBQ, raffles, and we're supporting the fire company, so tickets are available online.
- Terry C. - Our Broad Creek Bash is August the 22nd, formerly Broad Creek Bike and Brew. We just got our logo designed by a student and we're really happy with it. It's my favorite one of the five that I've seen.

- Ben G. – Henlopen Hospitality just assisted the RBDB Chamber and Cape Henlopen High School in creating a paid summer internship program for 15-18 year-old Cape High School Students. It is an accredited program with the UofDE and he will send a promotional flyer to the Board.

7. Next Board Meeting will be on July 16, 2026 from 9:30am to 11:30am.

8. Meeting Adjourned at 11:29 am.