

Minutes of the Patriots Point Development Authority 559th Board Meeting, 10:00 A.M., Friday, April 18th, 2025, Patriots Point Boardroom, Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Wayne Adams, *Acting Chair*
Susan Marlowe
Pat Waters
Mayor Will Haynie
James Smith
Zeb Williams, via virtual call

STAFF PRESENT:

Allison Hunt, *Executive Director*
Nick Magar, *Administrative Services Division Director*
Chris Jones, *Operations Director*
Gina Zahran, *Visitor Services Director*
Kenny Brinckman, *Education and Public Programs Director*
Sam Elkin, *Marketing Director*
Terry Ansley, *Property Management Director*
Lori Held, *Administrative Coordinator*
Lauren Austin, *Assistant Marketing Director*
Miranda Helton, *Registrar*
Sam Derrick, *Retail Services Director*

OTHERS PRESENT:

Bill Craver, *Counsel*
Brandon Dermody, *The Southern Group*
Chauncey Clark, *USS Yorktown Foundation*
Kayla Webber, *USS Yorktown Foundation*
Melissa Bosse, *USS Yorktown Foundation*
Cindy Lee, *USS Yorktown Association*
Tom Ziencina, *USS Yorktown Association*

Acting Chair Wayne Adams called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M.

- A. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA.** The agenda was unanimously approved with no changes.
- B. **APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES.** The minutes were unanimously approved with no changes.
- C. **INTRODUCTIONS.** Ms. Allison Hunt introduced the following persons to the Board: Mr. Tom Ziencina, board member of the USS Yorktown Association; Mr. Kenny Brinckman in his new role as Director of Education and Public Programs; Mr. Colby Causey as Historian and Special Programs in the Education Department; and Ms. Melissa Bosse as Interim Director of the USS Yorktown Foundation. Ms. Hunt then recognized and thanked retiring Patriots Point employee, Mr. Sam Derrick, Director of Retail Services, for his significant contributions to Patriots Point for nearly twenty-seven (27) years.
- D. **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

1. MUSEUM AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE REPORT.

Ms. Susan Marlowe welcomed Mr. Kenny Brinckman to the Board. Mr. Brinckman provided the following Education report:

- a. EIA Programming – The school year is coming to a close and Patriots Point is busy in “field trip” season. In addition, the Education staff is preparing for summer camps in partnership with the Town of Mount Pleasant.
- b. Professional Development Efforts – Patriots Point will be hosting, in partnership with the Charleston County School District, the end of the year Pathways to Teaching ceremony in May. Attendees will include first year teachers and Patriots Point will be excited to showcase its program.
- c. The Education staff is also preparing for Patriots Point’s annual June teacher education conferences. Mr. Pat Waters asked whether the teachers at the conference would be local, to which Mr. Brinckman explained that the teachers attending would be coming from all over the state and the conference provides the teachers with the chance to earn recertification credits.
- d. Flight Academy – Hardware and new software for this exhibit is nearing completion.
- e. The Collections team has been doing a great job archiving and cataloging Patriots Point’s extensive collection.
- f. Looking Forward – Mr. Brinckman has been working closely with Mr. Colby Causey as historian and special programs coordinator to plan mission-based events for the next fiscal year, which will provide a unique and special way to engage the public.

2. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE REPORT.

Ms. Sam Elkin, Marketing Director, presented the following report:

- a. The past few days at Patriots Point have been focused on the eightieth anniversary of the kamikaze attacks against the USS Laffey and honoring the ship and its crew for their heroic contributions. Ms. Elkin shared a clip from Live 5’s interview with Board Member Mr. James Smith, who is also a grandson of a USS Laffey veteran. Mr. Smith highlighted the success of the USS Laffey’s unprecedented defeat of twenty-two kamikaze planes for over eighty minutes. Mr. Smith’s grandfather, Capt. Paul Bridges Smith, was awarded the Silver Star for his efforts in saving the ship from probable destruction. Visitors to the USS Laffey had the opportunity to hear from Mr. Smith about crucial battles on that day. Ms. Elkin

also shared pictures from the events, which showcased the beautiful weather and the very high attendance for the event.

- b. In addition to the historical information provided to visitors during the anniversary event, on the first day of the USS Laffey event, Mr. Sam Singewald, a Lego Master from Iowa, whose great-grandfather served on the USS Laffey, was present to share his Lego replica of the USS Laffey and eight other ships. Mr. Singewald creates his accurate Lego replicas by studying the various ship's schematics. To further engage visitors in the Lego-theme, Patriots Point had a USS Laffey Lego competition. Local toy store Bricks and Minifigs graciously donated fifty-seven gallons of Legos for the event and had a team member present to interact with the guests. In addition, Bricks and Minifigs donated the prizes for the competition, which included Lego sets and gift cards.
- c. Marketing Report – Initial reports on the new spring break Myrtle Beach ad campaign are very positive, with sales reporting the highest revenue in the last 12 months since the campaign launched.

Mr. Adams thanked everyone who made this week possible, including Mr. Smith's involvement.

E. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT.

Ms. Hunt gave the following updates:

It has been a great week, Patriots Point is packed with visitors from many states, including school groups, overnights, group tours, and events.

Patriots Point hosted Medal of Honor Day; Night at the Museum Member Event; Vietnam Veterans Day Event, which included film footage; Charleston Race Week; the unveiling of a new exhibit: The Ship that Would Not Die; a new online collection; new displays in the cases; and the USS Laffey Association reunion. Ms. Hunt thanked the entire staff for everyone's dedication and hard work.

F. PUBLIC COMMENTS. There were no public comments.

G. EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING CONTRACTUAL MATTERS RELATED TO PARCELS A, B, B1, C AND D, NATIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP, USS YORKTOWN FOUNDATION, AND PERSONNEL MATTERS.

- 1. Mayor Haynie moved to enter Executive Session. Mr. Pat Waters seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. The Board went into executive session at 10:30 A.M.

2. The Board returned from Executive Session at 12:29 P.M. No votes were taken in Executive Session.

H. OTHER BUSINESS. There was no other business.

I. NEXT SCHEDULED PPDA BOARD MEETING, MAY 23, 2025.

J. ADJOURNMENT. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:30 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

s/Lori Held

Lori Held, *Recording Secretary*

c/Allison Hunt

Allison Hunt, *Board Secretary and Executive Director*