

The Rehoboth Beach – Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce

# Downtown Advisory Task Force Meeting

February 4, 2020 10:00-11:00AM – The Bellmoor – Rehoboth Beach

Downtown Task Force Chairman: Dale Lomas

Co-Chair: Rachel Webster

Moderator: Carol Everhart

## Meeting Notes

### 1. DART Fares & Payment Options – Julie Theyerl

The Summer Season is considered May 18th-September 20<sup>th</sup>. This is the season of increased bus frequency.

**NEW for 2020:** Parking will be FREE for the Rehoboth Beach Park & Ride. The Lewes Park & Ride parking will also remain free of charge.

The Variety of Bus Fare Options:

- Single one-way: \$2.00
- Single round-trip: \$4.00
- 1-day pass: \$4.20
- 7-day pass: \$18.00
- 30-day pass \$65.00
- Multiple “DARTCard” Options (stored-value card)

Julie reminded businesses of Federal Tax Benefits for employers and their employees.

DART Transit App is free. This app includes real-time bus schedule updates. There is an option to pay fares via this app, allowing you to board with a digital ticket.

The stored-value DARTCards are transferrable, while the 1, 7, and 30-Day Passes are not.

## Questions & Answers

**Will a senior fare be offered?** Yes, at \$0.80 per ride, rider must show Medicare card.

**Does the one-way fare include transfers?** No. One-way is defined as one bus ride.

**Will DART be offering a seasonal pass (3-4 months)?** Not at this time.

**What would be the best option for employees working in downtown Rehoboth?** Each employee must calculate this based on travel patterns and work frequency, but the best option will often be the 30-day pass.

**How is the City of Rehoboth going to use the money they had previously used to subsidize parking for employees?** The City of Rehoboth will no longer provide a subsidy. DART fares are not changing; however, there are different payment options available that provide discounts.

**Can a person park in a DART lot for free and ride their bike into town to avoid bus fares?** Yes, parking is free.

NEW for 2020: The Rehoboth Beach – Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce will be selling select DART bus passes at the Visitors Center. More information about this will be released.

## **2. Downtown Parking Status – Carol Everhart**

Carol updated the group on the previous City Parking Committee meeting. In the public metered parking areas that have a current 3-hour parking limit, the Parking Committee suggested an increase to 4 hours. However, the Rehoboth Beach – Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce asked the City to consider an across the board 12-hour limit. Their recommendation is a system to “identify and simplify” parking in downtown Rehoboth. This includes increased wayfinding signage and uniform meter fares.

## **Questions & Answers**

**When will the City of Rehoboth decide on parking time limits?** It is unknown at this point.

**Are there any other options for our employees to park in downtown Rehoboth?** Consideration of the use of Rehoboth Elementary School are currently tabled because of construction.

## **3. Potential Downtown Shuttle Service Proposal – Carol Everhart**

Jolly Trolley proposed to run a shuttle service throughout downtown Rehoboth Beach. The route proposal can be found on the City of Rehoboth website (<https://www.cityofrehoboth.com/news/new-shuttle-service-proposed-rehoboth-beach>). No final decision has been made at this date.

## **4. Rehoboth Plastic & Green Initiatives**

### **The Environmental Committee – Stuart Martens**

This committee has been tasked by the City Commissioners to return Rehoboth Beach to one of the cleanest beaches on the East Coast. Their proposed ideas are as follows:

- Ban Styrofoam cups and other takeout products
- Ban plastic straws and single-use plastic bags
- Ban plastic water bottles and use reusable containers
- Institute a purchase fee on paper bags
- Use compostable rather than recyclable materials
- Install public water refill stations
- Create discounts for using reusable cups
- Encourage use of cardboard takeout containers

Proposed next steps by the Environmental Committee:

- A 90-minute brainstorm session
- A 2-hour workshop to create an implementation plan
- Create a Marketing & Education Campaign

### **Save Our Lakes Alliance & Rehoboth Beach Homeowners – Jan Konesey**

Their recommendations differ slightly from the Environmental Committee. They propose:

- A ban on single-use plastic and Styrofoam.
- Straws by request only in restaurants and stores
- Consistency of green practices among the businesses in Rehoboth Beach

Jan touched on all the neighboring areas that are making green changes and laws.

She mentioned the 2021 Statewide ban on single-use plastic bags. She proposed that giving the businesses a 3-6 month adjustment period before enforcing this on smaller businesses.

### **Questions & Answers:**

**Do you have data on current business practices?** No, they are basing their decisions on state, national, and international practices.

**A comment was made that businesses who are currently following green practices need to be given credit.**

**What will be required of AirBnBs and rental properties?** They will have to comply with the laws in the same way other businesses will.

**Can we start the green initiative on a voluntary basis as opposed to a law or ordinance?** Stuart responded that the problem is already so severe that the Committee believes more is required.

**A comment was made by a local business owner that it's best for everyone that we market the green initiative as a positive change instead of a punishment.**

**Could a person be fined for violating these regulations?** No, they are not proposing fines. It requires time to make these adjustments.

**A comment was made to suggest that Rehoboth Beach parking staff also double as "green ambassadors."**

**Where will the money from the proposed bag tax go?** This is up to the discretion of the City of Rehoboth.

## **5. Final Remarks – Carol Everhart**

Carol updated the group on the Chamber's Green Force initiative, which recognizes the businesses that are taking part in being environmentally friendly. Visit the Chamber's website, [www.beach-fun.com](http://www.beach-fun.com), for a current list of Green Force Members. Additionally, if your business is participating in green efforts, please reach out to Katie Bragg ([katie@beach-fun.com](mailto:katie@beach-fun.com), (302) 227-6446) to be added to the list!

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