



May 4, 2021

Mayor Dyer  
Virginia Beach City Councilmembers  
2401 Courthouse Drive  
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456

Dear Mayor Dyer and Virginia Beach City Council,

On behalf of the Virginia Beach Hotel Association (VBHA), I wanted to share our board's request to support any initiatives to attract and retain employees utilizing programs through the city and the Hampton Roads Workforce Council. The VBHA discussed the workforce situation yesterday at our board meeting and put forth a motion to support any infrastructure and incentive programs appropriate utilizing grant funding or other avenues available through the City of Virginia Beach. The motion was unanimously approved.

The tourism industry is currently faced with a workforce crisis as we struggle to find enough individuals willing to fill open positions. The VBHA projects approximately 1100 vacancies and the restaurants and attractions have hundreds as well. Hotel inventory is being closed out on a temporary basis resulting in a lack of economic income to businesses and the city tax revenue. Lack of workforce is the key element that is hurting the industry which will ultimately have consequences on the city and residents alike.

We appreciate the efforts of city staff and the Hampton Roads Workforce Council to share in our desire to attract and retain employees. Programs that incentivize retention of the workforce and a marketing campaign initiated to attract individuals is critically important. Our industry offers employment opportunities to everyone and we assist in providing work experiences that highlight "soft skills" which are so desperately needed in our world today. We continue to work with our high schools, universities, civic leagues, churches and beyond to share the gift of tourism which we believe is employment.

Thank you for your leadership and support of our industry.

All my best,

John Zirkle  
President

CC: Virginia Beach City Manager Duhaney  
Interim Deputy City Manager Adams

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