

St. Michaels Tourism Board

Public Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2010

Present:

Chairman Jon Mason, members Rosemary Fasolo, Helen Van Fleet, Angela Eade-Spence, and Debbi Dodson, Advisor, Talbot County Office of Tourism, Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn, and three members of the public. Member Bonnie Booth was absent.

Call to Order:

Chairman Mason called to order the meeting of the St. Michaels Tourism Board at 8:30 a.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building (Town Office), 300 Mill Street, and welcomed back Member Spence.

Discussion of WineFest Request for Mailing List:

Chairman Mason announced that the representatives of the WineFest Committee would be joining the meeting later to submit a request for live music at their event. Chairman Mason explained that the Board could approve two exemptions per year for amplified music at Town events. Member Spence also asked about their request to obtain a copy of the Tourism Board's e-mail list to publicize their event. Chairman Mason and the members discussed this issue at length, including comments provided to the Board by Town Manager, Cheril Thomas, regarding the Board's obligation to supply the list. Board members expressed concerns about making the list public which could lead to potential visitors to the Town being bombarded with so many e-mails that none would be effective. The members agreed they would rather offer to send an e:mail blast which would highlight the WineFest event for the Committee, the costs of which would be borne by the Tourism Board.

Approval of Minutes:

Member Fasolo made a motion to approve minutes for the January 20, 2010 meeting. Member Van Fleet seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor.

Approval of Invoices:

Chairman Mason gave approval to pay the invoice from Pixel Print & Post in the amount of \$104.00 for design and typesetting of the February advertisement in Philadelphia Magazine.

Advertising Update and Marketing/Advertising Sub-committee Report:

Debbi Dodson gave an overview of recent advertising, noting an ad had been placed in Philadelphia Magazine to run in the February and March issues, and a "St. Michaels is Going to the Dogs" ad would appear in the Washington Times. Ms. Dodson said an ad would also run in New Jersey Lifestyle Magazine which would include a WineFest promotion, and ads would also appear in AAA Magazine and Southern Living. Ms. Dodson said that she and Bonnie Booth had met to determine how to allocate remaining advertising funds in the amount of \$15,000, as noted below:

- \$3,000 - Washington Times
- \$1,500 - Arrive Magazine for April or May
- \$3,000 - Recreation News for June
- \$4,800 - 1/6 page ad in Washingtonian Magazine
- \$2,250 - for 2 ads in Mainline Today

Ms. Dodson said while this used up the remaining Tourism Board budget for advertising, she said that if a decision was made to also advertise in the Hill Report, that the \$3,000 ad cost would come out of the County Tourism budget. The members discussed which ads they wanted to approve. Following the discussion, Chairman Mason made a motion to advertise in Arrive Magazine in April. Member Fasolo seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor. Chairman Mason then called for a motion to run three ads in Washingtonian Magazine in April, May and June. Member Spence made the motion. Member Van Fleet seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor. Chairman Mason made a motion to approve ads for publication in Mainline Today in April and May. Member Van Fleet seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor. Debbi Dodson confirmed that there would be funds available to send the e:mail blast promoting WineFest.

Town Manager Cheril Thomas then joined the meeting to answer members' questions about providing e-mail lists to individuals or organizations. After a discussion of some length, the members agreed to pay for and provide advertising for the WineFest. As there were no other questions for Mrs. Thomas, Chairman Mason thanked her for her time.

Photography RFP:

Member Fasolo provided an update on the photography project, noting that the Art League agreed to ask for donations of photographs and to pursue a possible photo contest. Member Fasolo said that more information on the project would be available at the next meeting of the Board.

WineFest:

Chairman Mason acknowledged the arrival of WineFest representatives George Wilson, Barbara Swenson and John Marrah. Discussion of the WineFest event and advertising for the event by the Tourism Board continued. The WineFest members supported the advertising plan of the Tourism Board and the discussion continued with suggestions and ideas about the contents of the e:mail blast and other advertising that had been done by the Tourism Board for the WineFest event. As there were no additional questions or comments, Member Fasolo made a motion to fund the creation and distribution of an e-blast focusing on the WineFest and other events. Chairman Mason seconded the motion, which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor.

The WineFest representatives noted that they are in the process of establishing a 501(c)(3) status for their event group and have applied for membership in the St. Michaels Business Association. Chairman Mason added that membership in the Business Association was a prerequisite for access to the Association's website. Chairman Mason also asked for a request in writing for an exemption for amplified music for WineFest. Mr. Marrah said he would address a letter to the Commissioners.

Get Away Program:

Member Spence opened a discussion of the Get-away program. She noted that there is currently no drawing scheduled and Ms. Dodson said that she was waiting for John and Bonnie Booth to return from New Orleans for a photos to be taken at the Five Gables Inn. Member Spence said she thought the program should go forward with a focus on the summer, as it was not costing any more than the printing of posters and cards. Member Fasolo suggested not dating the materials other than to say "quarterly drawings to be held" and the other members agreed. There was general consensus among the members to continue with the Getaway Program as it is, with drawings in mid-June and December. Member Spence said work on giveaways for the June drawing was underway.

Tourism Board Vacancy:

Chairman Mason said that Langley Shook has submitted a request to fill the vacancy of Stuart Parnes on the Tourism Board, and that he is on the Commissioner's February 24, 2010 meeting agenda. Chairman Mason said the Board also has a retail vacancy, and asked that a notice be placed on the Town, Post Office and Library bulletin boards requesting volunteers.

Public Comment:

The members discussed the guidelines for public comment during meetings, and noted that the rules should be followed to ensure that meetings run smoothly.

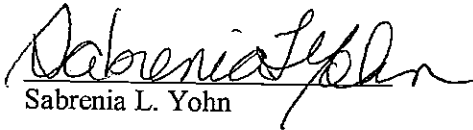
Announcement of Next Meeting:

Chairman Mason announced that the next meeting of the Board would be March 9, 2010 at 8:30 a.m.

Adjournment:

Chairman Mason made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Member Fasolo seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor at 10:10 a.m.

Submitted by:


Sabrenia L. Yohn

Date:

3/9/10