



MAD RIVER VALLEY VERMONT

Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce Minutes of Board Meeting March 9th, 2018

Present: Amy Todisco, Peter MacLaren, Roger Nishi (by phone for first part of meeting), June Anderson, Brad Long, Lori Klein, Ana Dan, Kevin Begin and Ted Fisher.
Also ED Jasmine Bigelow, Membership Coordinator Ginger Berkelhamer

Apologies: Jack Sharry, Jim Tabor

Special guest: Kyle Sexton by video

The Board meeting was called to order by the Chair Amy Todisco at 11:03 a.m. at the Chamber Visitor Center.

A quorum of 8 Directors present at the start of the meeting was declared by the Chair. (Ted Fisher joined while the meeting was in progress.)

The Chair welcomed our two new Board members, Ana Dan and Kevin Begin who were appointed by Board resolution as noted in the minutes of the January 24th Board email meeting. With their addition, we now have a full complement of 11 Directors.

The Board expressed their sympathies to Board member Jim Tabor on the recent death of his son.

Dues/Investment Plan:

1. The meeting started with a presentation video and Q&A with Kyle on the plans for a revamped dues/investment structure for the Chamber.
2. We are working towards an introduction about 45 days from now, or slightly sooner.
3. Planned introduction is one-on-one with members expected to be “early adopters” at a rate of about 6 per month for first year.
4. One of the objectives of the first discussions will be to get feedback and to fine-tune the proposals.
5. Questions:
 - a. One proposed value-add is a “Vermont Outlook” presentation. What will this look like and is it relevant? To be discussed further
 - b. What is the \$ objective for dues once the process is completed? **Action: Jasmine, Ginger and Kyle.**
 - c. Will there be an a la carte option to add items from higher levels? Possibly.
6. Next steps will include a two-day visit by Kyle in late April time frame, including a meeting with the Board and along with Jasmine with some early adopters to get feedback.
7. Jasmine then summarized some background, in particular for our new Board members.
 - a. The Chamber has been in rebuilding mode for the last 18 months.
 - b. A key challenge has been the dues structure with resulting low revenue.
 - c. We believe a large part of the challenge has been that we have not fully defined our value proposition for our members.
 - d. These challenges led us to consider a tiered membership structure, with additional benefits/value at each tier.
 - e. Success with this transition will be key to a sustainable future for the Chamber.

- f. After considering various ideas, we realized that to do the job properly, we needed help from an expert who has successfully helped other US Chambers move to this kind of model. This recognition led to the engagement with Kyle Sexton who has had success with this approach with numerous Chambers facing similar challenges to our own.
- g. Noted that we currently have 147 members in good standing, down from a high in the past of almost of 300 members. (The elimination of VACCE Health Insurance for members with the move to Vermont Health Connect was one big factor here.)
- h. Sugarbush currently pays about 20% of the total dues budget, and only 10 members pay over \$2k per year.
- i. As we are working on the value added at each tier level, we are also working on how to deliver those benefits. We believe many of these benefits will tie in closely with our core strategies. Concrete details are in the process of being worked out.
- j. A key benefit of the new approach will be to tailor the benefits of membership more closely to the needs of each member.
- k. The initial early adopter member dialog will be largely focused on developing the value proposition proposals, as opposed to a “selling” discussion.

Minutes of prior meetings:

1. Moved by Peter that the minutes of the January 12th Board meeting and the email Board meeting minuted on January 24th be accepted as circulated, seconded by June. Carried. The minutes are posted on our website. Note that there was no Board meeting in February.

Financial Update:

1. Categories are almost all cleaned up so that budget items, QB line items, and financial reporting are aligned.
2. Noted that we will need to upgrade our QB package.
3. With these changes in place we expect to be able to produce reports by the next Board meeting that show YTD tracking against budget.

Proposed Joint MRV Vitality Planning Team with MRVPD:

1. Peter briefed the Board that the MRVPD Steering Committee, where he represents the Chamber, unanimously agreed at their February meeting to form a small team to plan the details of the next steps of the Economic Vitality process that has been under way for the last three years.
2. The critical remaining challenge is the need for finding sustainable funding for new Vitality initiatives in the Valley, and how the management of that funding would be carried out.
3. The Steering Committee has invited the Chamber to participate in this team, as they believe it is critical that we continue the partnership that has been in place during this process to date. The proposed team members will be one representative of the Select Board from each of the three towns, two representatives from the Chamber Board, and one other member of the Steering Committee.
4. The intent will be for the plan to be formulated then brought back to the MRVPD Steering Committee and the Chamber Board for review. Assuming endorsement it will then be presented to each Select Board for review.
5. Moved by Peter, seconded by Lori, that the Chamber Board accept the invitation to join this team. Carried unanimously.
6. Given Peter’s involvement to date he was one obvious candidate and volunteered. Amy also volunteered initially but then subsequently learned that Jasmine was willing and interested and we decided that she was a much better fit. Jasmine brings significant experience on this topic from her prior role, and also can reflect a broader view across all Chamber members.

Director responsibilities:

1. Amy circulated the document that lays out the responsibilities of being a Director. This document had previously been discussed and approved by the Board. All members are asked to sign to indicate their concurrence and return a copy to Amy. **Action: All Directors**

Adjournment:

1. Moved by Amy seconded by Lori. Carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:00 p.m.

Next Meeting:

1. The next meeting will be on Friday April 13th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Mad River Taste Place.

Minutes submitted by Peter MacLaren, Secretary

Completed Action Items:

1. Arrange for example unit of new kiosk to be delivered to Visitor Center. **COMPLETED**
2. Advise members that Kiosks are available for their business at the price of \$500 each. **COMPLETED**
3. Email the updated/reformatted member benefits package to each Board member. **COMPLETED**
4. Email financial report. **COMPLETED**
5. Resolve major receivable. **COMPLETED**
6. Email a copy of Marketing Plan to all Board members. **COMPLETED**
7. Set up ASANA system. **COMPLETED**
8. Identify members and categories for new Wedding page. **COMPLETED**

Open Action Items:

1. Next steps with membership and naming. **To be addressed along with the development of membership and dues plan with Kyle Sexton**
2. Review details of payment plan for next year. **Action: following agreement on the new membership/dues plan**
3. Work with SB and MRG on replacement for Ski the Valley for next season. **Action: Jasmine**
4. **Action: Jasmine**
5. Circulate details of Dashboard proposal. In progress. **Action: Jasmine**
6. Plan follow up meetings for Steve Parker to meet Select Boards etc.. **Action: Amy**
7. Dialog with LCRCC Chamber. (Moved from Deferred.) **Action: Jasmine**

New Action Items:

1. \$ objective for dues once the process is completed. **Action: Jasmine, Ginger and Kyle.**
2. Directors to sign responsibilities document and return a copy to Amy. **Action: All Directors**

Ongoing Reminders:

1. Invite a friend to ED Coffee mornings. **Action: All**
2. Suggested speakers for Coffee Mornings. **Action: All**
3. Personal Interaction with members. **Action: All**
4. Encouraging new members to join. **Action: All**
5. Let Jasmine know ongoing of any critical member meetings that need to take place. **Action: All**

Deferred items:

1. Exchange ideas with Karen Nevin.
2. Valley Vitality Fund.