



# MAD RIVER VALLEY VERMONT

## Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce Minutes of Board Meeting June 15th, 2018

Present: Amy Todisco, Peter MacLaren, Roger Nishi, Brad Long, Lori Klein, Ana Dan, Jim Tabor, Kevin Begin & Jack Sharry (by phone)  
Also, ED Jasmine Bigelow, Membership Services Coordinator Ginger Berkelhamer

Apologies: Ted Fisher, Brad Long, June Anderson

The Board meeting was called to order by the Chair Amy Todisco at 11:04 a.m. at the Mad River Taste Place Board Room. She expressed our thanks for the use of the room once again.

A quorum of 8 Directors was declared by the Chair.

### Minutes of prior meetings:

1. Moved by Peter that the minutes of the May 11th Board meeting be accepted as circulated, seconded by Lori. Carried. The minutes are posted on our website.

### Action Item Updates:

1. Next steps with possible naming change. Following a discussion all agreed that with the new and dramatically improved perception of the MRV Chamber among our members and the community a name change was no longer an appropriate course of action. **Item closed.**
2. Ski the Valley for next season. Jasmine has started discussions with SB & MRG and is working on a solution for a new Ski the Valley campaign. **Action: Jasmine**
3. Other elements of the Dashboard to be planned. Noted that 9 Lodging properties have now agreed to report. Still in progress. **Action: Jasmine**
4. Steve Parker to meet Select Boards to discuss challenges faced by MRV businesses. Still to be arranged. **Action: Amy**
5. Roger & Jack to sign Directors' responsibilities document. **Completed.**
6. Visitor Center coupons for member referrals. Still to be addressed. **Action: Jasmine & Ginger**
7. Brief Jim & Kevin on non-dues revenue Task Team action plan. **Completed**
8. Email all members with the link to the Dropbox where they can download the new logo. Completed however a problem with green color has been discovered. An updated version will be circulated shortly. **Action: Jasmine**
9. The YTD comparison adjusted for next month. Still being adjusted. **Action: Roger**
10. Opportunities for conferences that would be hosted across multiple Chamber members. Jasmine and Clay are working on a date to host a first meeting. **Action Jasmine.** (Peter reminded the Board that Sugarbush actually owns a 300-person conference center on German Flats Road at Club Sugarbush, that has not been used for many years; it is currently used for storing golf carts.)
11. Email the Membership Brochure draft to the Board. **Completed.** Discussed later in the meeting.
12. Talking points that can be used by Board members: email to Board for feedback. **Completed**
13. Gather quotes from members and add to the member section of website. In progress. **Action: Jasmine and Ginger**
14. Complete consolidated Marketing Plan by end May. Still to be done. **Action: Jasmine**

15. Do a media outreach to “announce” updated website when ready. Waiting for final thumbs up on website.  
**Action: Jasmine**
16. Updated media contact list. In progress. Action: **Jim & Jasmine**
17. Media kit that will be linked from our website. To be done when ready. Action: **Jasmine & Peter**
18. Newsletter item asking for great photos of the MRV. Still to be done. **Action: Jasmine**
19. Grants for specific initiatives. In progress. **Discussed during meeting.**
20. Website click-stats. Action Jasmine to provide to Ana and Lori. **Completed**
21. Sponsorships. Ana has developed some ideas for how sponsors could appear on our website in various ways. To be discussed with Jackson to finalize a plan in that regard. Peter will set up conference call.  
**Action: Ana & Peter**
22. Individual contributions. **Discussed during meeting.**
23. Flesh out Signature Event ideas. No longer being pursued for now. **Closed.**
24. Nominations for Chair and Vice Chair. Discussed during meeting.
25. Draft Bylaw language for proposed new Governance approach. Discussed during meeting.
26. Ongoing approach for Board Meetings. Agenda approach has been revised. **Closed.**

#### **Financial Update:**

1. The financial reports were distributed before the meeting.
2. The YTD comparisons still need adjusted as already actioned. **Action: Roger**
3. Overall position is very positive, with minimal A/R over 30 days.
4. Noted that the commissions from VACCE Dental and Vision insurance for members are a useful source of revenue for the Chamber and a great deal for member businesses to offer to their employees. Agreed that we should promote this membership benefit more proactively to our members. **Action: Ginger**
5. Note that we still need to improve dues income by at least \$15k next year over this year’s projections to break even. The ED is confident that we are making good progress in this direction.

#### **Membership Update:**

1. Membership report was circulated before the meeting.
2. Excellent feedback on our plans is being received from member visits.
3. A suggestion for consideration was to reverse how the new membership levels are being presented. No firm decision was made on this change, however noting that all dialog is being handled one-on-one it was agreed that the present approach was quite workable and has benefits.
4. Kevin offered to work with Ginger to fine-tune the presentation approach. **Action Kevin & Ginger**
5. A suggestion was made to add a summary of the membership levels and a la carte pricing for add-ons.  
**To be considered by Jasmine**
6. Jasmine advised that the objective is meet one-on-one with all members by the end the next fiscal year.
7. **Ana offered to speak with Peter Boynton**, currently a non-member. **Kevin offered to participate in a meeting with Cabot** as he knows the senior players.

#### **Director’s Report:**

1. Alchemist presentation at Visitors’ Center last week was initiated by Ginger as an opportunity as John was heading our way en-route to Manchester. So even though a last-minute event it attracted a standing room only crowd. Suggested that **Jasmine reach out to other Stowe businesses** to get their perspective on the impact of the Alchemist opening.
2. Agreed that we should we should plan to meet with Sean and Karen to plan a Mad River Valley outreach at the brewery during the opening month to maximize the potential for marketing the valley. Jasmine & Ginger will be meeting with Lawson’s next week and will include this proposal in the discussion. **Action: Jasmine**
3. Task Teams. Following some discussions, it is believed that these will operate better by having one leader (rather than two) and having the leader ask for additional help when needed. **Jasmine will follow up with each Task Team** to finalize leadership.
4. Jasmine emphasized that the key to success was to follow through – please only take on leadership if you have the time to move the yardsticks!

5. For donations, the plan is to have a clear process in place by 1<sup>st</sup> September to ensure people are thanked appropriately.
6. Sponsorships update by Ana covered in Action items.
7. Jasmine noted that she had met with Ted, who apologized for the many conflicts that have prevented him from attending some Board meetings. He agreed to keep in close touch Jasmine to update her on relevant topics if he is not able to attend. He is also working with Jasmine to tie Valley events into their PR activities. Following discussion, the other Board members recommended that Jasmine ask Ted to invite Diane Forester to represent him as his delegate if he unable to attend Board meetings. **Action: Jasmine & Ted.** Amy noted that Diane has been working with her to promote Farm Tours to the Sugarbush audience.
8. Association Memberships. These are a bit complicated as such membership are for the Association itself and not a “backdoor” for individual association member business to access Chamber benefits. There has been some confusion in this regard. The Executive Committee has discussed and come up with a clear definition of Association memberships, specifically:
  - Base membership investment will be \$379, with in general the same membership privileges in the name of the Association as a regular sole proprietor business.
  - The Association would be represented by the Executive Director, President or other designated leader (only) in terms of participating at Chamber events.
  - 50% off workshop fees would be available to Association members.
  - All correspondence, newsletters etc., would be sent to the designated leader only.
  - If four or more of the Association’s current members are also members in good standing of the MRV Chamber the annual membership would be reduced to \$200.
  - Rack cards displayed in the Visitor Center and the Association web listing on the Chamber website must reference the association ONLY, and not list any members. A link to the Association website is fine.

The revised definition was moved by Peter and seconded by Lori. Carried. Jasmine will update the relevant Association members. **Action: Jasmine.**

### Annual Meeting Plans:

1. The date is set for Thursday September 6<sup>th</sup> at the 1824 House. Plans is to have a brief annual meeting, social hour then dinner.
2. After some discussion it was agreed that the price for dinner would be \$30, with \$25 going to 1824 House. There will be a cash bar.
3. A “Celebrate the Valley” Raffle will be included, the same as last year.
4. Considerable discussion ensued about details for the dinner part of the evening. The intent has been to invite a business focused but entertaining speaker. Jack then brought up the perspective that there have been a lot of changes in the ski industry this part year, as well as a lot happening the Valley – in particular the opening of the Lawson’s brewery this fall. We then all agreed that a “perfect” idea that would attract interest from our members, would be to have an invited panel of speakers to review changes in the ski industry and the valley, specifically Win Smith, Eric Friedman and Sean Lawson.
5. Also discussed that we might open the dinner part of the evening to non-members. While there was a brief discussion about trying to have the meeting before the Labor Day weekend to attract more 2<sup>nd</sup> home owners, we agreed that the meeting needs to be in early September after the end of our fiscal year.
6. Actions: Jasmine to extend invitations to the proposed panel. Also Jasmine to discuss capacity at 1824 House and make decision on whether to broaden the invitation to non-members and/or change venue if necessary. **Action: Jasmine**

### Governance:

1. Draft Bylaws update has been circulated and comments incorporated. Discussed that we should be leave wording more flexible with respect to membership categories and payment plans. With these changes, the proposed revised Bylaws were moved by Jim and seconded by Roger to bring forward to the members for approval at the annual meeting. Carried. Final revisions - **Action Peter**
2. Moved by Amy that the following slate be proposed to the members at the annual meeting for the incoming officers:

- Chair: Peter
- Secretary & Treasurer: Roger
- Vice Chair: Vacant for now, but to be filled by end of calendar year.

Seconded by Lori. There being no other proposals, carried unanimously.

3. While Peter has served only four and a half years as a Director, his term currently expires at the end of August 2018. Given the flexibility allowed in the By-laws to extend a term up to a max of a total of 6 years, moved by Lori, seconded by Jim that Peter's term be extended until August 31<sup>st</sup> 2019. Carried.
4. Amy noted that she wished to step down from the Board at the end of the current year to focus on her new business ventures. Given that the incoming Chair and Secretary/Treasurer are continuing from prior roles on the Executive Committee she did not feel there was a continuity issue that would require her to continue in the role of Retiring Chair.
5. Peter moved a vote of thanks to Amy for all her work over the last almost two years as Chair, during which she has helped move the Chamber onto a much better defined and more effective path to serve our members for the foreseeable future. Seconded by Lori and carried unanimously.

#### **Adjournment:**

1. Moved by Roger seconded by Jim. Carried. Meeting adjourned at approximately 12:55 p.m.

#### **Next Meeting:**

1. The next regular Board Meeting will be Friday July 13th from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at the Mad River Taste Place.

Minutes submitted by Peter MacLaren, Secretary

#### **Open Action Items:**

1. Ski the Valley for next season. Jasmine has started discussions with SB & MRG and is working on a solution for a new Ski the Valley campaign. **Action: Jasmine**
2. Other elements of the Dashboard to be planned. **Action: Jasmine**
3. Steve Parker to meet Select Boards to discuss challenges faced by MRV businesses. Still to be arranged. **Action: Amy**
4. Visitor Center coupons for member referrals. Still to be addressed. **Action: Jasmine & Ginger**
5. Email all members with the link to the Dropbox where they can download the new logo. An updated version will be circulated shortly. **Action: Jasmine**
6. The YTD comparison adjusted for next month. Still being adjusted. **Action: Roger**
7. Opportunities for conferences that would be hosted across multiple Chamber members. Jasmine and Clay are working on a date to host a first meeting. **Action Jasmine**
8. Gather quotes from members and add to the member section of website. In progress. **Action: Jasmine and Ginger**
9. Complete consolidated Marketing Plan by end May. Still to be done. **Action: Jasmine**
10. Do a media outreach to "announce" updated website when ready. Waiting for final thumbs up on website. **Action: Jasmine**
11. Updated media contact list. In progress. **Action: Jim & Jasmine**
12. Media kit that will be linked from our website. To be done when ready. **Action: Jasmine & Peter**
13. Newsletter item asking for great photos of the MRV. Still to be done. **Action: Jasmine**
14. Sponsorships. How sponsors could appear on our website in various ways to be discussed with Jackson to finalize a plan in that regard. Peter will set up conference call. **Action: Ana & Peter**
15. Promote VACCE Dental and Vision insurance to members. **Action: Ginger.**
16. Kevin to work with Ginger to fine-tune membership presentation approach. **Action Kevin & Ginger.**
17. Add summary of the membership levels and a la carte pricing for add-ons. **To be considered by Jasmine.**
18. Ana to speak with Peter Boynton. **Action Ana**
19. Kevin to participate in a meeting with Cabot. **Action Kevin & Ginger**

20. Reach out to other Stowe businesses to get their perspective on the impact of the Alchemist opening.  
**Action: Jasmine**
21. Plan a Mad River Valley outreach during the opening month of Lawson's. **Action: Jasmine**
22. Task Team revamp. **Jasmine will follow up with each Task Team.**
23. Ask Ted to invite Diane Forester to represent him as his delegate if he unable to attend Board meetings.  
**Action: Jasmine & Ted**
24. Update the relevant Association members on new membership details. **Action: Jasmine**
25. Extend invitations to the proposed panel for Annual Meeting. **Action: Jasmine**
26. Discuss capacity at 1824 House and make decision on whether to broaden the invitation and/or change venue if necessary. **Action: Jasmine**
27. Final revisions to Bylaws. **Action Peter**

**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.