



**Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce
Minutes of Board Meeting
October 12, 2018**

Present: Peter MacLaren, June Anderson, Jim Tabor, Brad Long, Lori Klein, Ted Fisher, Ana Dan, Roger Nishi
Also, Jasmine Bigelow, Executive Director and Ginger Berkelhamer, Member Services Coordinator

Apologies: Kevin Begin, Jack Sharry

A quorum of 8 Directors was declared by the Chair.

Minutes of prior meeting: Motion to move the minutes from the last meeting, 2nd and motion carried.

Financial Report

1. The Treasurer, Roger, presented the reports. It's early in the year with little yet to report given we are only one month into the new fiscal year. In examining budget vs. actuals, we have started out well in terms of revenues. Our ED goal remains to exceed budgeted dues by 10%.
2. It was noted that annual meeting expense-revenue was booked in the prior year. It will be adjusted to current year.
3. A TD Bank account related to the Chamber was closed by a former ED and the balance was deposited into our current account. Thank you Susan Klein.
4. Director's insurance has been purchased, not in original budget.
5. Bills related to website work from prior fiscal year received. Will be booked to appropriate year.

Membership Report

1. Member Services Coordinator, Ginger presented the Chamber's membership report. Discussion on report format and what would be most helpful to communicate occurred. Comments from meetings with our members are helpful and appreciated. While it is helpful to sometimes know who is commenting, it was decided that in certain situations, the staff may keep the comments anonymous.
2. We were unable to come to a mutual agreement with Lake Champlain Regional Chamber of Commerce for shared benefits with our members. Therefore, we came up with two new membership benefits we believe are just as valuable, if not more so: 1. Incentive to members using the MRV logo or branding on their websites and/or in their advertising, and 2. A complimentary registration to the VT Tourism Summit, VT Economic Conference, or the VT Conference on Recreation.

Director's Report

Marketing Report:

1. Executive director presented marketing report, requesting feedback on ways to improve to better communicate with the Board. Discussion on making statistics more valuable with comment and insight as to why trends were occurring.
2. It was noted that an increase in unique users to the website is our goal. For today, we are tracking well on our website over last year. Referrals down which means we have to get members to put links on their own websites. Educating members about hashtags for Instagram, engaging members through blogs posts is crucial. Scenic photos do best. Discussion on how Chamber can help/encourage members to help the Chamber. ED will explore creating an area on our site where members can download logo files, photos, marketing and web content.
3. Discussion about the Chamber's 'owned' content on social media vs requests from members to share posts. Noted that in most cases, the shared posts don't get good engagement, and in some cases the requests may actually work against the MRV social media algorithm. ED to draft a written policy to address the Chamber's right to edit, change, or discretion to not post requested content on MRV social media.
4. SEO is a big initiative. We are working with a professional, Jackson Whelan, to improve SEO on our website. This includes offering the tools to members to improve SEO in their individual listings. We currently have a 6 month work agreement with Jackson.
5. Content creation is progressing with 2 blog posts, 3 advertorials, and 3 videos, so far. Our first MRV TV show at Mad River Glen was just filmed.

Visitor info:

1. Executive Committee agreed that we should aim to be open 5 days a week in winter and 7 days in the summer. We will shoot for 85% of available shifts.
2. Need more volunteers to work shifts. Working to enhance incentive plan for volunteers by asking members to donate.
3. Visitor Stats: 215 people came into the visitor center in the first 10 days of October.
4. Lawson's Finest asked for a kiosk for their space with a special configuration on the homepage. We are working with them on making that happen.

Task Teams – with shift to quarterly board meetings, task teams work and communication is very important. ED will work with team leads one on one, on a regular basis.

1. Communications – Jack Sharry. Goal is to make sure the MRV Chamber is getting credit when earned and to boost the organizations brand.
2. PR - Jim Tabor. Goal is to work with Sugarbush & MRG PR teams, create media fam (familiarization) visits and media pitches.
 - a. Currently working on a MRV night in Burlington with Mad River Distillers.
 - b. Created the media kit and story ideas.
 - c. Jim is also doing "power of PR" workshop for our members.
3. Investor Relations - Kevin Begin. Currently helping Member Services Coordinator, Ginger, with selling of Chamber membership to current and potential members. Also troubleshooting and critiquing membership sales process.
4. Design – June Anderson.
5. Ski Industry Relations – Ted Fisher.
6. Retail – Lori Klein.
7. Restaurant and Sponsorship – Ana Dan.

8. Content and Photography – Brad Long. Photography library wish list and develop a catalog of blogs.
Executive Committee – Peter MacLaren and Roger Nishi.

Executive Director Update on Current Activities

1. It is only October 12th and things are moving forward quickly. The Chamber website is in good shape, setting up events and Chamber news. Moving forward, we're adding Chamber news items to the website, and sending out regular 'headlines' emails to members, where they can click through to get more information. We're doing this manually, but hope to set up automatic emails in the future, to go on Mondays and Thursdays when there is new content.
2. The Community Forum with the Ski Industry will be Tuesday, October 30th from 5-7. Will be publicized through email, posts on FPF, PR in the Valley Reporter, boosts from Molly and VT Tourism. Jim and Ted to assist.

Other Business

1. Board succession planning – need to find a Vice Chair that will become Chair in upcoming fiscal year, also future treasurer and future secretary for upcoming year. All positions currently held term out at end of current fiscal year. Decision by the January Meeting. Also, identifying of new board members. Three positions will be open.
2. Event Grants – Only \$5,000 in budget. Discussion on applicants not changing, with sponsorship going to same events year over year, attracting new events, applicant qualifications, selection process, etc.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn, 2nd, motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 12:45pm.

Next Meeting: Friday, January 11, 2019