



Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
January 19, 2022

In attendance: Ana Dan, Mimi Bittenheim, Kim Donahue, Suze Edwards, Sean Kramer, Anna Nasset, Mary Tuthill, and Roger Nishi by zoom.

Regrets: Dianne Forester, TJ Greenwood, and Matt Lillard

Chamber Staff: Eric Friedman

Video meeting via Zoom

Meeting started at 3:05 pm, with greeting from Board Chair, Ana Dan.

**Minutes** - Minutes from November 17, 2021 reviewed. Motion to approve was moved and seconded, motion carried.

**Financial Update** - in good position with current level of cash and receivables. Small profit through the first 4 months of the fiscal year. Discussion on past and future billing and collections.

## Board Reports

### Executive Director Updates:

- Sexual Assault Awareness Program Update: Chamber was praised in bringing about this extremely valuable program. We are probably the only Chamber in the nation with this program. Special thanks again to Sugarbush and Mad River Glen for their sponsorship.
- "Best of Route 100": \$30K grant awarded that will focus on acquiring video and photo assets that incorporate more diversity; to market in a more inclusive manner. This will involve hiring models and engaging videographers and photographers. There will also be a media buy element of about \$10K focusing on the diversity markets specifically engaged in outdoor activities for summer and fall seasons.
- stewardMRV Recreational Access Point Stewardship Initiative: End-of-season report completed and presented MRV town select boards. Eric's meetings resulted in funding for 2022 being secured via:
  - Waitsfield - \$7.5K
  - Warren - \$5K
  - Fayston - \$5K ask on town meeting ballot
  - MRV Chamber - \$10K committed
- Business Perspective on Masks Debate: Requested by towns. Need for consistency for all three towns as visitors do not differentiate between towns. Majority of

businesses wanted town support. Decision to mask up showed community in a positive light.

- Housing: Working through our involvement with the MRV Planning District, the Chamber is taking an active leadership role in the dialog on the housing crisis in the MRV. The Chamber is bringing the business perspective to the discussion.
- 2022 Legislative Session: Just starting, have had meetings with Betsy Bishop from VT Chamber and Heidi Scheuermann from Stowe re H.569 on unspent aid, 28 million left, how to get unspent dollars to businesses, especially tourism, hospitality and travel. Application process needs to be revised.
- Visitor Center traffic in winter season has picked up despite the spotty snow. We average about 8-10 people per day.
- Other:
  - VOREC Grant process has been extended with awards announcement now in February.
  - Working on a new initiative, focusing on Women in Business.
  - Created a 2-week radio campaign on WDEV focusing on retail, 15 retailers participated. Thanks to Annemarie Furey from Product Think tank for spearheading this effort.
  - Afghan Refugee Resettlement Update: Continued working with Vermont Refugee Resettlement Program and Direct Aid International to develop a support.
  - Continued main marketing focus in developing the foundation for ongoing social media, with the philosophy of “telling the stories” that differentiate the Mad River Valley.
  - Illuminating the MRV for the holiday season:
    - The “Star Kits” initiative was once again successful this year with \$7,300 in sales.
    - The Memory Tree initiative was successful once again with over \$5,000 raised to help fund the stewardMRV program.

**Membership Report:** New members - 1) Northbound Consulting, 2) Mad River Property Management, 3) Root Juice, 4) Three Buds Apothecary, 5) Peasant Restaurant

**Other Business:**

Date of next meeting: 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday March

Motion to adjourn moved and seconded. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 4:17.

Minutes taken by Roger Nishi.

