

Mad River Valley Chamber of Commerce  
Board of Directors Meeting Minutes  
Monday October 30, 2023

Present:

- Sean Kramer, Anna Nassett, Matt Lilliard, Mimi Buttenheim, Susan Edwards, Mary Tuthill, Eric Friedman (Chamber Attendance), Diane Forester (Zoom Attendance)

Regrets:

- Roger Nishi, TJ Greenwood, Aron Shea, Steve White

Meeting Start Time: 3:06 PM

Sean's Opening Remarks:

- Emphasized the importance of developing a consistent story for media and social media to establish the identity of the chamber in the Mad River Valley.
- Suggested subsidizing marketing materials for collaborative efforts, such as advertising in publications like the one that featured Mad River Glen being the top ski resort in the east.
- Encouraged brainstorming and collaboration on events.

Approval of Meeting Minutes:

- Meeting minutes from July were approved.

Financial Report:

- Provided an update on financial matters, including the removal of Star Kit & Memory Tree from the main P&L sheet.
- Chambermate transition has been rolled out and is a success.
- Initiated annualized dues and paper invoices for those that still have open balances.
- Discussed the budget for 2024, which is not significantly different from 2023. Budget has not been started yet but is next on Eric's list.
- Mimi advised listing individual members in both QuickBooks and Chambermate to have a system of checks and balances for all member accounts.
- Cash at the moment roughly \$40K in main account, \$35-38K in savings account, \$12K in StewardMRV account

Management Report:

- Discussed the use of Chambermate for CRM and email integration. Questions from the board around other functions within Chambermate. Eric is going to use the program to send out email newsletters and track all communication/meetings with members. This will keep a log of all member interactions.
- Mentioned the success of the annual meeting. Best turnout. Board feedback is to have a shorter/better structured timeline for the meeting.
- Reported positively on StewardMRV and its continued support from volunteers. Tom will be returning for the 2024 season. Hoping to get even more towns involved for next season.

#### Welcome Center:

- Addressed challenges in staffing and signage issues.
- Discussed the possibility of an incentive program for volunteers.
- Discussed the aesthetics of the exterior and how to work with the surrounding businesses for better upkeep.
- Eric is aware signage needs to be changed from Bridge St. and signage at the new location needs to be added.
- Discussed the new touchscreen program - businesses have already been loaded onto the program. Eric to load the information for the hiking trails. Other groups to load their trail systems to the program i.e. mountain bike trails, gravel trails. Will also be linked with Trail Forks
- Kim asked about the other groups involved in the Welcome Center - they are:
  - Friends of the Mad River, Mad River Path, Mad River Riders, Mad River Recreation, Backcountry Coalition, Mad River Planning District

#### Afghan Refugee Support:

- Mentioned the denial of visas for Afghan refugees.
- Noted the need for \$5,000 to cover legal costs, with Mad River Barn having already funded half.
- The chamber agreed to front the remaining funds. Mad River Barn already paid back the funds.

#### VACE Insurance Board:

- Eric's involvement on the VACE insurance board and receives \$3500 stipend
- MRV one of the highest users of the program
- Discussion on the limitations of insurance offerings due to ACA and VT One Pay System

#### New Hire:

- Discussed the need to hire a new staff member.
- Planning for budget considerations and determining job duties.
- Consideration of renting out the Welcome Center to generate additional revenue.

#### Annual Meeting Debrief:

- Received feedback regarding the length of the meeting.
- Discussed the purpose of the annual meeting and the possibility of inviting ski resorts to talk about their upcoming plans. Or other relevant speakers like that.

#### Event Initiative:

- Discussion on coordinating small business conferences and defining the scale of events.
- Considered promoting a cluster of seasonal events with a unified marketing approach.
- Addressed the potential economic impact.

#### Legislation:

- Highlighted the chamber's increased involvement in legislative matters.

- Suggested forming a legislative committee.
- Considered the importance of engaging with local legislation and educating the community.

Board Meeting Schedule:

- Established the schedule for board meetings every other month on Mondays at 3 PM.
- Next meeting is scheduled for right after the New Year.

Meeting Adjourned: 5:12 PM

These minutes capture the key points and discussions from the meeting. Meeting minutes taken by Mary Tuthill