Sturbridge Tourist Association

*A Committee of the Town of Sturbridge*

**Regular Monthly Meeting**

Wednesday, March 9, 2022 – 6:30 P.M.

**Members Present**:
Brian Amedy, Chair
Tom Chamberland, Vice Chair

Nick Salvadore

Sandra Gibson-Quigley

**Absent:**

Dawn Merriman

**Guests:**

**Staff Present**:

Terry Masterson, Economic Development/Tourism Coordinator

**Meeting Open**

Chair Amedy opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

**Approval of Minutes January 15, 2022**

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| **Motion:** | Approve January 15th 2022 Minutes |
|  | BY: T Chamberland SECOND: S Gibson-Quigley |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Amedy, Chamberland, Gibson-Quigley, Salvadore  |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

**Budgetary Motions**

Added Cost of Hotel Data Subscription

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|  **Motion:** | To allocate $275.00 from Community Support to pay an additional cost for the annual STR Report on hotel activity. The annual subscription will be $1925.  |
|  | BY: B Amedy SECOND: T Chamberland |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Amedy, Gibson-Quigley, Salvadore, Chamberland  |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

Financial Report Change

Brian noted that a $156 charge to Sperling Interactive was listed in the Encumbrance section and should be moved.

Selection of a Web Site Digital Messaging Consultant

Terry briefed the Board on the process to select a consultant to manage the digital messaging for the new tourism web site. There was an initial hope that 3 quotes could be solicited quickly but it was determined by the Town’s Procurement Officer than an RFQ process would be necessary. This process required the drafting of the RFQ document and allowing several weeks for replies and proposals. There was also time used to confirm that the low bid would be the guideline for an award. Bids under $10,000 can be awarded based on the “best judgement” of the bid issuer. Terry also noted that 3 quotes had been solicited with one firm Rhyme Digital of Easthampton declining to bid. The two remaining firms are Sperling Interactive and Open the Door Inc.

Sandra and Tom commented on the challenges of awarding a bid for services that are specialized and intangible versus a bid for a durable quantifiable product such as paper clips. Nick noted that selecting a firm that has “local awareness” is important as well as a firm that is small enough to give Sturbridge direct versus “multi-client” quota based services. Brian opined that Open the Door has a long record of working well with Sturbridge. Sandra also amplified the skills that Open the Door would bring to supporting the web site. Tom echoed the view that Open the Door was very responsive.

Nick and Tom reviewed the various services and the tiered price points for each bidder. Tom opined that the one price for multiple services proposed by Open the Door offered the best value and overall lowest cost versus single priced services which were not necessarily the lowest price.

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|  **Motion:** | To select Open the Door Media to provide digital messaging services for the tourism web site for the months of April, May and June 2022 at $3,750.00 per month  |
|  | BY: T Chamberland SECOND: S Gibson-Quigley |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Amedy, Gibson-Quigley, Salvadore, Chamberland  |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

**Next Meeting**

BA noted that the next meeting will be Wednesday, April 13, 2022.at 6:30pm

**Adjournment**

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| **Motion:** | Adjourn Meeting |
|  | BY: T Chamberland SECOND: B Amedy  |
| **Vote Record:** | Yes: Amedy, Gibson Quigley, Salvadore, Chamberland  |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |