Sturbridge Tourist Association

*A Committee of the Town of Sturbridge*

**Regular Monthly Meeting**

Wednesday, February 15, 2023 – 6:30 P.M.

**Members Present**:
Nick Salvadore

Sandra Gibson-Quigley

Jasmine Bell

Peter Champagne

**Guests:**

Annie Roscioli, Director, Sturbridge Recreation

Brian Amedy, Former Chair STA

**Staff Present**:

Terry Masterson, Economic Development/Tourism Coordinator

**Meeting Open**

Sandy Gibson Quigley opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

**Minutes of January 11, 2023**

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|  **Motion:** | To approve and accept the STA Minutes for January 11, 2023 |
|  | BY N Salvadore SECOND: P Champagne |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Salvadore, Gibson Quigley, Champagne, Bell  |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

**Resignation of Chris Tieri**

There was positive conversation about the resignation of Chris Tieri from the STA Board. Jasmine complimented Chris’s efforts on the process to recruit a marketing firm as well as her knowledge of marketing and work for OSV. Sandy echoed these comments as well. Sandy asked what the process would be to fill the vacancy. Terry commented that OSV would be working on a potential replacement for Chris’s seat and that the Town would publicize this opening for any interested residents to apply for.

**STA Grant Request – Concerts on the Common**

Sturbridge Recreation Director Annie Roscioli appeared before the STA to discuss her request for a STA Community Support grant to underwrite the appearance of the Southern Voice band. Annie noted that Recreation has not asked for assistance with bands in a few years and that the Sturbridge Cultural Council underwrites 3 concerts.

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|  **Motion:** | To Allocate up to $1300 from Community Support to underwrite the Southern Voice Band for Concerts on the Common. |
|  | BY N Salvadore SECOND: J Bell |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Salvadore, Gibson Quigley, Champagne, Bell |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

**Discussion of Creating New Town Events**

Jasmine and Pete lead a conversation about creating or reviving new events in the Town. Jasmine raised the concept of a Jack O Lantern contest and/or reviving a Scarecrow display by either businesses at their locations or to revive them on the lawn of Publick House. There was also conversation about a “Taste of Sturbridge” event. Annie suggested that a broader discussion be convened with the SEC and Chamber about specifying which events to create and to plan for. Jasmine and Pete volunteered to help. Jasmine suggested that all community groups be engaged and Sandy suggested the Library. Terry and Annie agreed to discuss this issue and delivered to the SEC for discussion.

**Vice Chair of STA**

There was conversation about filling the empty seat of Vice Chair. Nick noted that his job would be creating a lot of travel throughout New England and this would preclude him from serving in this role.

**Update on the RFQ**

Terry updated the Board on the timing of the issuance of the RFQ. As per the recommendation of Chris Tieri, the RFQ will give applicants 4 weeks to consider and prepare a response. Quotes will be due in time for the March 15th STA meeting so an award can be made.

**Weathervane Publishing Proposal**

There was broad discussion about the potential of Weathervane Publishing offering a proposal to create a quarterly or semi-annual magazine which would incorporate the content of the Travel Guide. So the need for a standalone travel guide would not be required. Terry commented that while the magazine concept was worth exploring the need for a stand alone travel guide was worth preserving. Some of the reasons for this are:

1. The Guide defines Sturbridge and its attractions in one document.
2. Its 4x9 size will make for easier handling, carrying, storage and mailing.
3. A 4x9 guide will fit into traditional guide racks all over New England but a magazine will not.
4. The new tourism web site generates requests for guides .
5. While there is not a large circulation for the Guide it does reach over 7,000 readers.
6. A stand alone guide has value in terms of message and content.

There was support within the STA to have Weathervane continue work on their magazine proposal and for Terry to scope out an affordable leaner tour guide.

**Request to Purchase Tour Guide Narrative**

Terry raised the suggestion of purchasing the written content of the Tour Guide from Global Design because it would save much time and effort in re-creating this information. There was general discussion and consensus about agreeing to the suggested purchase price of $1200 for the galley copy.

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|  **Motion:** | To Allocate $1200 from Marketing/Advertising to purchase the narrative to the Sturbridge Tour Guide.  |
|  | BY S Gibson Quigley SECOND: N Salvadore |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Salvadore, Gibson Quigley, Champagne, Bell |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

**Re-Printing the 2022 Guide**

There was discussion on re-printing the 2022 Guide so that there would be a supply for any requests before the 2023 Guide would be re-formatted and printed. Several local and regional print firms were suggested:

1. Center of Hope
2. Colonial Copy
3. Pagio
4. Vivid Print

**Discussion of Purchasing Advertising in the Spring Summer 2023 Regional Tour Guide**

There was discussion about taking an ad in the Spring Summer 2023 DCM Regional Tour Guide. There was consensus to purchase a one half page ad for $775.00. Terry noted that this request for an ad arrived later than previous years and that the deadline for ads was February 15th. So completing this ad placement may be problematic.

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|  **Motion:** | To Purchase a Half Page Ad in the DCM Spring Summer Guide for $775.00  |
|  | BY J Bell SECOND: P Champagne |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Salvadore, Gibson Quigley, Champagne, Bell |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |

**Discussion of the Host Hotel**

There was discussion about the Host Hotel and Conference Center as it enters its third year of new ownership. Sandy noted that there were many positive events and feedback from recent shows and conventions such as the Trail Wardens Annual Meeting. But that the withdrawal of the bi-annual Pintastic Show would be a loss of hundreds of hotel rooms and local meals spending. Brian Amedy offered some analysis and history about the Host and events in Sturbridge and had praise for the work of Recreation Director Roscioli. There was consensus that perhaps Town Administrator Grimm and Terry could work to meet with Host Owner Yogi Patel.

**Adjournment**

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|  **Motion:** | To Adjourn  |
|  | BY J Bell SECOND: N Salvadore |
| **Vote Record:** | **Yes:** Salvadore, Gibson Quigley, Champagne, Bell |
| **Outcome:** | Approved 4-0 |