Sturbridge Tourist Association

*A Committee of the Town of Sturbridge*

Regular Meeting

#  12 August 2020, 7:00pm

 Remote Meeting – Go to Meeting

**Members Present**:
Brian Amedy, Chair
Tom Chamberland, Vice-Chair
Nick Salvador
Jeff Ardis
Dawn Merriman

**Staff Present**:

Jeff Bridges, Town Administrator

**Chair Amedy called the meeting to order at 7:00pm.**

**Chair Amedy read the following statement:** \*Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting law, G.L. c. 30A Section 18, and the Governor’s March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Sturbridge Tourist Association will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible.  Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation can be found on the Town’s website at <https://www.sturbridge.gov/town-administrator/pages/how-access-virtual-meeting>.  For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen and or watch the meeting either online via the Town’s on demand video broadcast, on cable television on channel 191, or dial into the meeting at 774-304-1455, enter 1428# for the meeting number and 12345 for the access code.  (This phone number is only active for the public during public meetings).  No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means.  In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post of the Town’s website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of the proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

**Chair Amedy read through the agenda**

**Old Business**

Christina Pappas Advertising / Marketing Proposal

Chair Amedy informed the committee that he spoke to Christina Pappas of Open the Door to see what items on the proposal would work with the current Town website. She told him that they could go ahead with most items on the proposal without forming a new website.

Dawn Merriman and Tom Chamberland were absent at the last meeting when Christina Pappas was going over her proposal. Dawn Merriman said she agreed with everything that Christina Pappas had laid out for them. Tom Chamberland agreed adding that Christina Pappas provided many opportunities and options to pick and choose from.

The committee discussed the importance of building a new website and decided that the marketing tools are what will bring people to Town. They agreed that the website is definitely an important part of the foundation but it is not all of it. The committee discussed finding quotes from several different companies on building a website. Dawn Merriman suggested each committee member find a couple website designers and reach out to them so as to control the amount of quotes and proposals coming in as opposed to sending it out as a request for proposals. Mr. Bridges suggested they wait until a new Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator is hired and have that individual put the website out for requests for proposals. He stated the reasoning for this is because there are several decisions to make about the website prior to putting out the request for proposal.

**Motion: To set aside $40,000 to $45,000 out of the marketing budget for the purpose of developing a marketing program for the Town of Sturbridge By: Tom Chamberland**

**2nd: Dawn Merriman**

Discussion: Jeff Ardis asked if this motion meant that this number would be discussed with Christina Pappas to see what level of detail the $40,000- $45,000 would do for them in regards to marketing. Tom Chamberland stated that the clock is ticking and he thinks that Christina Pappas shouldn’t have to come back with a timeline and to get further approval from them because he thinks that they should get started, and between Chair Amedy and Mr. Bridges, he thinks that there wouldn’t be a problem.

**Motion: To approve and amount up to $45,000 to be used to move forward on a marketing proposal with Open the Door and to have the initial phase established by Chair Amedy and Jeff Bridges to get the process started By: Tom Chamberland**

**2nd: Dawn Merriman**

**Roll Call Vote: Brian Amedy: YES, Nick Salvadore: YES, Jeff Ardis: YES, Tom Chamberland: YES, Dawn Merriman: YES
Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

**Website Discussion**

**Motion: To set aside $15,000 for initial website development By: Tom Chamberland**

**2nd: Jeff Ardis**

**Roll Call Vote: Brian Amedy: YES, Nick Salvadore: YES, Jeff Ardis: YES, Tom Chamberland: YES, Dawn Merriman: YES
Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

Chair Amedy suggested that the committee members start doing some research on other community’s websites.

**New Business**

Action steps until new Coordinator is hired

Chair Amedy explained that he will try to handle all the new incoming applications. He said he has already been in communication with several people including the organizer of the Antique Show about whether or not it will be happening on New Year’s Eve. He stated that Tom Chamberland will do the financial end of things.

**Next Meeting**

The committee set their next meeting for 6:30pm on September 2, 2020.

**Adjourn**

**Motion: To adjourn at 7:56pm By: Dawn Merriman**

**2nd: Tom Chamberland**

**Roll Call Vote: Brian Amedy: YES, Nick Salvadore: YES, Jeff Ardis: YES, Tom Chamberland: YES, Dawn Merriman: YES
Vote: All in Favor (5-0)**

**Adjourned at 7:56pm**

**Minutes Prepared By: Andrea Mensen**