



Sturbridge Tourist Association

A Committee of the Town of Sturbridge

Meeting Minutes

Regular Meeting

10 January 2018, 5pm

Center Office Building, 301 Main Street, 2nd Floor

STA Members Present: Brian Amedy (BA), Chair; Kristine Galonek (KG), Secretary; Tom Chamberland (TC), Vice-Chair

STA Members Absent: Jim Leaming (JL), excused absence.

Staff Present: Kevin Filchak (KF), Economic Development & Tourism Coordinator

- Call to Order: BA called the meeting to order at 5:10. A quorum was present.
- Approval of Previous Minutes – 15 November 2017: KG recused herself from the vote as she was absent from previous meeting. **TC MOVED and BA seconded to approve the minutes as presented. APPROVED 2-0-1.**
- Treasurers Report: KF provided update and explained expenses since last meeting. BA asked about remaining allocated/unallocated funding. General discussion on allocated/unallocated funding in the marketing line item, and comparing funds to known/expected funding requests in the spring. TC recommended adding this discussion to New Business. **TC MOVED and KG seconded to accept the Treasurers Report as presented. APPROVED 3-0.**
- New Business
 - Hartford Courant Funding Campaign: BA discussed the need for the Town to advertise itself during the winter months. KF described the plan as it was presented by the Hartford Courant. TC asked what the end goal would be and how it could advertise events. General discussion on the Chamber of Commerce's spring advertising campaign and general support for it. KG and BA discussed scaling down the STA's campaign to fit the February and March months rather

than also including January. TC asked about the Booth at the May travel show and general discussion on booth participation followed. KG discussed the idea of having a March only campaign which could be used as a test for future STA campaigns. General discussion on promoting Town during February and March including a discussion of having Breweries and Restaurants partner for local deals. **KG MOVED and BA seconded to approve \$8,000 from Marketing for the STA to run a digital campaign in February for impressions, and for March do digital, eblasts and print advertisements. APPROVED 3-0.** KG asked about collecting data from the campaign and KF said the campaigns should produce useable data. TC asked if there was a company that the STA could consult with leading to general discussion on market research.

- 2018 Marketing Plan: KF detailed his roadmap for developing a town brand and creating a marketing campaign. TC asked how this would be started. General discussion on marketing the town and steps to accomplish it. TC suggested finding a company who could host a charrette for the community. KF discussed developing the statements needed to recruit companies for a charrette, and would speak with Town Administer Gaumond regarding the project.
- QR Coded Maps – Sturbridge: TC spoke about creating a QR code for marketing the Town based on a similar product in Worcester. The STA discussed QR codes and how to implement them in the Town. **TC MOVED and KG seconded to set aside \$250 to pay for the printing, laminating, and other production costs to produce a QR Code. APPROVED 3-0.**
- STA Membership / Advertising Opportunities
 - American Trails: TC talked about how the Town wanted to improve the recognition of the trails and stated that American Trails is the premier group for this type of promotion. TC said that by supporting American Trails it would help to promote Sturbridge Trails, further stating that many communities support this publication. TC acknowledged that he is a member of the organization. General discussion on what level of membership to purchase. **BA MOVED and KG seconded to set aside \$100 for the Trail Protector for the American Trails. APPROVED 3-0.**

- Discover Central MA: STA discussed need for set up of a marketing plan prior to launching. TC asked if they offer any services for preparing an ad. BA noted that the STA was missing information if it wanted to publish. TC suggested getting a copy of the current version. **TC MOVED and BA seconded to set aside \$950 for a full page ad in the guide. APPROVED 3-0.**
 - The Last Green Valley: Discussion on what was spent last year and a discussion on what to spend in the coming year. **TC MOVED and BA seconded to renew partnership at the enhanced level for \$100 and add new location for \$20 with 10 locations each, a quarter page explore ad for \$210, and a quarter page Walktober ad for \$175. APPROVED 3-0.**
- Old Business
 - TC asked about Out of State Travel. KF said he will review the associated Town Policies. TC explained concerns with the current policies. TC said that the Trails Committee is possibly looking for funding in calendar year 2019 for an event in Syracuse NY and may need assistance with funding. General discussion on travel.
- Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator Report: KF showed the committee the revised STA application. **TC MOVED and KG seconded to authorize KF to use the new forms. APPROVED 3-0.** KF talked about a variety of subjects. KF and TC talked about the idea of creating a Sturbridge 'trade show' and/or 'business showcase.' TC expressed his displeasure with the wayfinding signs given their text size, the directions of the signs to different businesses. General discussions on signs and general issues.
- The STA returned to the discussion of allocations discussed originally during the Treasurers Report. General discussion on allocations and upcoming needs. **TC MOVED and BA seconded to transfer \$11,000 from Community Support to Marketing and Advertising. APPROVED 3-0.**
- Next Meeting: February 7th at 5pm. BA asked KF to follow up with Discover Central MA about participation in the AAA Travel Show.
- Adjourn: **BA MOVED and KF seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:58pm. APPROVED 3-0.**