



# STURBRIDGE TOURIST ASSOCIATION

A COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF STURBRIDGE

## REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – 13 MARCH 2019

*Center Office Building – 301 Main Street – Large Meeting Room – 6pm*

### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Brian Amedy (BA), Chair; Tom Chamberland (TC), Vice-Chair; Jeff Ardis (JA); Nick Salvatore (NS)

### GUESTS PRESENT:

Sue McAdams (SM), Gatehouse Media; Diane Galipeau (DG), Gatehouse Media; Christine Valee [sp] (CV), Herbfest; Salli Greene (SG), Herbfest

### STAFF PRESENT

Kevin Filchak (KF), Economic Development and Tourism Coordinator

- 1) Call to Order – BA called the meeting to order at 6:00pm, a quorum was present.
- 2) Review of Previous Minutes – 13 February 2019 – **TC MOVED to approve the minutes as presented. NS seconded. APPROVED. (4-0).**
- 3) Treasurers Report – KF gave updated and noted the current funding levels. BA spoke briefly about those expenses planning to be spent in the spring, discussing the allocations of unspent money. **BA MOVED to approve the financial report as written. JA seconded. Approved. (4-0).**
- 4) New Business
  - a. Funding Request – Second Meeting – Worcester Magazine – DG gave overview of the campaign, and discussed the zip code locations used. BA noted the campaign and the findings in specific zip codes. SM explained that the campaign can be targeted beyond the zip codes to better target the correct audience. General discussion on the audiences to focus on for the campaign. NS asked about the percentage of the click through rates and how they compare to other. SM said the New Hampshire and Rhode Island campaigns were average views; the Vermont and Maine campaigns were below average. SM also noted how different ad sizes produced different returns. TC asked if it would be possible to connect with OSV to see where they are drawing school children from and then target those markets not currently targeted and also asked how to connect better with millennials. General discussion on OSV marketing and how to target

millennials. BA noted KF's proposed motion, and the potential campaigns with Worcester Magazine in FY 2019 and FY 2020. **TC MOVED to allocate \$1,500 from the Marketing line item for a digital campaign with Gatehouse New England (d.b.a. Worcester Magazine) to run from 4/1/2019 – 6/30/2019. BA seconded. APPROVED. (4-0).** General discussion on potential campaign. BA and TC suggested the idea of targeting Albany and Westchester County for the campaign. **TC MOVED to authorize KF to conduct the campaign on the STA's behalf. BA 4-0 APPROVED.**

- b. Funding Request – First Meeting – Sturbridge Herbfest – BA welcomed CV and SG. SG explained their concept for an herb conference in Sturbridge, noted the conferences throughout the US and explained that Sturbridge is an ideal location. Stated that the Senior Center will be used, and will feature food / craft vendor's et al. JA asked about other Sturbridge vendors, SG said one hasn't formally opened their business yet and the other is Sturbridge Coffee House. SG noted 3 keynote speakers are out of area, but most of the other teachers are generally local. SG explained that she chose the Senior Center because of the free ability of the space. SG noted that they'd like to incorporate OSV herb garden at the event. There was general discussion on transportation and use of Sturbridge buses. TC noted the breakdown of the budget and talked about the STA line items. SG talked about the marketing line item, noting that she had been billed for a few of them already. General discussion on timing of the bills and explanation of how bills can be paid. SG asked about STA covering police detail, general discussion on police detail. SG noted that she has highlighted space for people to stay and sleep in advertisements. JA noted he was pleased to see that they are promoting restaurants. TC talked about those bills that have already been expended. General discussion on cost for spring campaign. **TC MOVED to approve \$1,369 from the FY 2019 Marketing line item to support the promotional efforts of the Sturbridge Herbfest. BA seconded. APPROVED (4-0).** Brief discussion on advertising Herbfest in DCM event calendar.
- c. Funding Request – First Meeting – Weathervane Enterprises, Inc. – BA gave brief overview and history of the event, noting that this was an event that the STA used to sponsor. Discussion on amount of request, JA raised question of its necessity given the three Brimfield shows. NS asked for data on the event. TC noted concern for the \$5,000 and said be willing to have them come in to discuss the application. NS explained how this is just a one night event and asked who might stay for this, questioned how many businesses are open on new year's day to receive those patrons. TC asked is this marketable, with the town as a whole for a 'first night' style event. BA talked about the FY 2020 budget especially with planning. NS said he'd rather see more support for multi-day events. BA said would want to see a full breakdown of the marketing request, as well as seeing the contract with the Host. **TC MOVED to invite Weathervane Enterprises to the next meeting of the STA to discuss their proposed Sturbridge Antiques and Collectibles Show. NS seconded. APPROVED (4-0).** KF said he'll ask for more detailed information.

- d. Funding Request – First Meeting – Central MA Working Dog Club – BA gave brief overview of the event, noting the event is outside of Sturbridge but there are a lot of rooms used. KF suggested that the applicant provide much more information before the STA approves anything and BA concurred. NS asked about the pet friendliness of the hotels leading to a discussion on the subject. TC questioned the ‘stadium’ nature of the park in Spencer. TC raised the question of is this event something that could be funded, noting that this decision might set precedence. NS noted that this event is a four day event with hotel stays in Town. TC asked how the room nights should be counted. **BA MOVED to invite the Central Mass Working Dog Club to the next meeting of the STA to discuss their upcoming show in Spencer. JA seconded. APPROVED (4-0).**
- e. Funding Request – First Meeting – Discover Central MA Campaign (FY 2020) – BA gave overview of the campaign, and KF gave a detailed breakdown of said campaign. BA discussed the value of DCM and the campaign. JA asked if we could come in at a lower amount, KF said yes but there are advantages to it. NS discussed the various campaigns with DCM, general discussion on past campaigns. KF talked about the value of this campaign and the advantages of working with DCM. BA talked about the need to get more accurate numbers for campaigns. TC talked about reducing costs by possibly cutting down on the page size, also questioned the twelve month feature. **TC MOVED to empower the EDTC to discuss with DCM to negotiate a proposal that is at least \$2,000 less than current amount.** JA asked if \$2,000 is an arbitrary number. TC said yes but gives point, to start. JA suggests that we focus on the partnership and look at reducing cost without reducing impact. **TC withdrew motion. JA MOVE that EDTC look to reduce cost without reducing impact of campaign while maintaining strong partnership. BA seconded. APPROVED 4-0.**
- f. Funding Request – First Meeting – Discover Central MA – *Yankee Magazine* – KF gave brief overview. Noted that DCM needs the answer immediately. TC noted the pictures for the advert are good. JA discussed the current funding amounts, concerned about purchasing ad given the remaining total. TC noted concern with price but feels positive it will provide base layer of data. JA noted concerns again with price. **TC MOVED that the STA appropriate \$3,450 from Marketing and Advertising to partner with DCM to promote advertisement in Yankee Magazine. BA seconded. APPROVED (3-1).**
- g. Funding Renewal – STR Reports – KF provided overview. **TC moved to renew their STR report from Community Support. BA seconded. APPROVED (4-0).** Brief discussion on data.
- h. Funding Request - Trail Towns - Leveraging Trails for Community and Economic Development – TC explained that the American Trails membership allows the STA to see

webinars. **JA MOVED to approve the \$19 from Community Support to pay for Trails Webinar. BA seconded. APPROVED (4-0).** TC talked about trails conference.

- i. Discover Central MA – MOTT Presentation Discussion – KF provided copy to members.
- j. *Sturbridge Express* Update – BA gave update on where the BAG stands and the challenges with funding the event. Discussion on the difficulty for getting sponsorship. JA noted it's a shame that it happened but little the STA can do. General discussion on the shuttle and the BAG.

## 5) Old Business

- a. GDP Contract – BA noted that a copy of the contract is in packet.
- b. Discussion on Community Support Line Item – KF gave overview of his report on the line item.
- c. Requests for Proposal – Drafts
  - i. Five Year Marketing Strategy
  - ii. Brand Development

KF gave overview. TC noted that Betterment also supports recreation and to make that correction in both RFP drafts. TC asked if the town planner was aware of it, TC suggested that Jean Bubon conduct an overview of it. KF noted he would look to have finance department review it as well. **TC MOVED to approve the drafts subject to review by Finance Director and Town Planner for suggested changes. JA seconded. APPROVED. (4-0). TC MOVED to authorize KF to make changes as may be suggested by Finance Department, Town Planner, or other member of the STA. BA seconded. APPROVED. 4-0.**

- 6) EDTC Report – KF gave update. TC asked with sign review who asked EDTC to do that. JA asked a few questions regarding First Impressions and Williamstown's response to feedback leading to general discussion. JA asked about the sale of 501 Main Street leading to a general discussion on the property. Also farmers market and Route 15 were discussed.

## 7) Correspondence

- a. *Guide to Brimfield* – Request for STA Advertisement
- b. Women in Criminal Justice – Request for STA support
- c. *Putnam Traveler* – Request for STA Advertisement

Brief discussion on the Guide to Brimfield. Members declined to take action on any of these items.

8) Next Meeting – Scheduled for 4/17/2019 at 6pm.

9) Adjourn – **BA MOVED to adjourned at 8:16. TC seconded. APPROVED (4-0).**