



STURBRIDGE TOURIST ASSOCIATION

A COMMITTEE OF THE TOWN OF STURBRIDGE

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES – 17 APRIL 2019

Town Hall, 308 Main Street – Julian Meeting Room– 6:00pm

MEMBERS PRESENT

Brian Amedy (BA); Nick Salvador (NS); Tom Chamberland (TC)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Jeff Ardis (JA) [excused]

STAFF PRESENT

Kevin Filchak (KF); Jeff Bridges (JB)

GUESTS

Maxine Carter Lome (MCL); Doug Quigley (DQ); Connie Pion (CP); Doug Horan (DH)

1) Call to Order

- a. BA called the meeting to order at 6:13pm, with a quorum being present. BA made introductions.

2) Review of Previous Minutes – 13 March 2019

- a. **TC MOVED to approve minutes as presented, BA seconded. APPROVED (3-0).**

3) Treasurers Report

- a. KF gave treasurer's update. BA noted that KF investigated the Chambers 'discretionary' allocation and that those funds are intended to be spent prior to end of fiscal year. **BA moved to approve treasurer's report as written. TC seconded. APPROVED 3-0.** General discussion about STR reports.

4) New Business

- a. Funding Request – 2nd Meeting – Weathervane Enterprises
 - i. BA gave introductions. MCL explained the history of the show. Explained the various publications that Weathervane supports and how it ties in with the antiques show. MCL noted that in the heyday of the previous iteration of the show, there were approximately 1000 visitors and 29 hotel rooms used. MCL

noted that she's making a commitment to 10 hotel rooms for this first year. Said that most of the dealers are regional or local and as such do not need a hotel for this purpose. She noted that in the future when this show is on a weekend this may change. The show this year is only open New Year's Day and will have 65 vendors and 72 booth spaces. MCL will use Weathervane's capabilities to promote the show. BA explained the challenges with current level of funding. MCL said that she has startup costs and branding with first run marketing expenses. The funding request is centered on marketing. MCL noted that her magazine is already running ads and they will be placing ads in other magazines as well. BA asked if branding is priority, she said yes. NS asked if vendors pay to participate, MCL said yes \$135 - \$150 per booth, but there are fees from the Host and fees to assemble booth spaces. MCL noted she just wants to break event in year one. Guests charged \$10 at the door or \$8 if tickets are bought in advance. General discussion about the previous show. **BA MOVED to allocate from the marketing line item \$1,000 for branding of the Antiques Collectibles show to support Weathervane Enterprise's revival of the New Year's Eve/Day Antiques Show. TC seconded.** TC asked about available funding and there was general discussion on that item. **APPROVED (3-0).** General discussion about the finance committee and fiscal year approvals. MCL left.

- b. Funding Request – 2nd Meeting – Central MA Working Dog Club
 - i. BA provided introduction. JH explained that this is the 2019 Working Dog Show and it is a national show; this is the first time the show has been in Central MA. Noted that he expects two-hundred people coming for a meet and greet for this event. Explained that there were issues with Tantasqua, but that they will be using Memorial Park in Spencer, MA. JH said that the group would be coming back in September for a regional show; the Publick House will be primary host for that event. Explained that several judges are coming in internationally. CP noted that there are over 200 room nights booked at the Publick House alone coming to over \$30,000 in revenue. The major draw night will bring over two-hundred people. JH noted that their organization is looking at a site for the next international show. JH is bringing in bleachers for the show, explained other costs associated with the show to set up the event. BA asked about down time at this event. JH noted that they are encouraging people to visit and patronize the area. General conversation about the show and potential show space. CP recommended considering 508 International for future space. NS asked where the previous national events were held; JH noted various past show locations. JH said they're at 66 teams currently but he expects about 75 entries total. CP asked about future funding, BA explained next fiscal year funding. TC noted that this is the first time funding an event outside of Sturbridge, but noted that it is a new precedent for the town. **TC MOVED to approve \$1,000 from the Community Support line item to fund the Central Massachusetts Working Dog**

Club event in Spencer in May of this year. NS seconded. APPROVED (3-0). JH and CP left.

- c. Funding Request – 2nd Meeting – Discover Central MA FY 2020 Campaign
 - i. **Discussed after item 4.f. which was moved ahead of this and subsequent agenda items.** BA gave overview and noted that the total amount for the DCM campaign was asked to be lessened for this month's review. KF discussed the changes. TC asked about the complimentary memberships and there were general discussions on that, possibly tying it with annual awards to businesses. General discussion about the value of the campaign and the money saved. General discussion about the motion, BA talked about the value in notifying DCM of the campaign decision. **TC MOVED to allocate from the FY2020 Marketing line item \$16,890 for a marketing campaign with Discover Central Massachusetts, pending approval of the budget at the Annual Town Meeting. NS seconded APPROVED (3-0).**
- d. Funding Request – 1st Meeting – Jaguar Association of New England (JANE)
 - i. BA provided explanation for the show, explaining the request is to cover the costs of a tent. NS asked if there was a head count for the show. KF said no, just that the show has more value now that the show can operate in inclement weather. TC asked if the STA pays permit fees for other show, KF said no. KF said a motion can be made to avoid that. TC suggested that this would need to be brought before the Selectmen; JB said that he would not be inclined to wave the fees. General discussion about fees including police fees and having groups cover fees; JB suggests that the sponsors should cover those town costs. BA noted that willing to allocate full amount now and not have them come back for a second meeting, KF noted it is in the STA's policy that a request in this amount would require two month review, but said if the committee wanted to change it they could adjust it. General discussion on costs of the rental. **TC MOVED to approve the request of the JANE for the amount of \$3,095 from FY2020 Community Support pending town meeting approval. BA seconded APPROVED (3-0).** TC suggested capping JANE next year at \$3,000, and there was general agreement from the committee.
- e. Funding Request – 1st Meeting – Recreation Committee
 - i. **TC MOVED to approve \$3000 from FY 2020 Community Support for Concerts on the Commons pending approval at Town Meeting, BA seconded. APPROVED (3-0).**
- f. Funding Request – 1st Meeting – Sturbridge Historical Society
 - i. **Discussed after Item 4.B.** DQ noted that this event has been held over the past 25 years and explained the history of the event as well as the program. TC asked

about having the Historical Society coming before the STA earlier to help better market the event. DQ talked about the historical campaign to promote the event and using the Sturbridge Community page on Facebook. Extensive discussion about promoting the event in the future. **TC MOVED to allocate \$500 from the Community Support line item to fund the Sturbridge Historical Society's 1775 Colonial Muster. BA seconded. APPROVED (3-0).**

- g. Funding Opportunity – DCM Meeting and Event Planner Guide
 - i. KF explained that there is limited funding. General discussion on the limited funding. BA noted that there may be unspent funding coming back but it is unclear. **TC MOVED to transfer from Community Support to Marketing the amount of \$100, NS seconded APPROVED (3-0). TC MOVED to purchase a ¼ add in the DCM Meeting and Event Planner Guide out of Marketing. NS seconded. APPROVED (3-0).**
 - h. Funding Opportunity – Mystic Seaport
 - i. **TC MOVED to table Mystic Seaport. Acclimation.**
 - i. Introductory meeting with Town Administrator, Jeff Bridges
 - i. JB gave overview of his background. TC noted the challenges with measuring the benefits of tourism here in town, general discussion on data. BA talked about the hotel market in Sturbridge and the transient population who comes to town. TC talked about the challenges with the Host, general discussions regarding the hotel.
- 5) Old Business
- a. Requests for Proposals
 - i. KF noted that the RFPs are posted and provided a timeline for submission and review.
- 6) EDTC Report
- a. KF provided update. TC asked questions related to the Farmers Market.
- 7) Correspondence
- a. The Last Green Valley
 - i. General discussion on the value of supporting the 15th Annual Tastes of the Valley feast and fundraiser at the Publick House in August. **TC MOVED to appropriate \$300 from Marketing from FY 2020 pending approval at Town Meeting BA seconded APPROVED.**
 - b. American Trails

- i. **BA MOVED to approve \$100 from Community Support to renew membership in American Trails, NS seconded. APPROVED (2-0-1).** TC asked that it be listed as Town of Sturbridge.

8) Next Meeting

- a. KF will send out information.

9) Adjourn

- a. TC MOVED to adjourn the meeting at 7:54. BA seconded. APPROVED (3-0).