



Town of Sturbridge

Sturbridge Tourist Association

Regular Meeting Minutes

03/08/2017 – 6:30 p.m.

301 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Center Office Building

Members Present: Brian Amedy (BA); Kristie Galonek (KG); Jim Leaming (JL); Tom Chamberland (TC)

Staff Present: Kevin Filchak (KF); Leon Gaumond (LG)

Guests: Alix McNitt (AM); Bob Datz (BD)

CALL TO ORDER: BA called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES 02/08/2017: JL abstained as he was not present for the meeting. *TC MOVED and KG seconded. APPROVED.*

TREASURERS REPORT: KF provided report and noted an excel spreadsheet error and correction in the February report. TC noted that the second printing of the trail guides had come in. *TC MOVED and BA seconded to approve the Treasurers Report as presented. APPROVED.* TC asked AM about the Chamber's Area Event Sign move to Rotary Park and possible damage to the site caused by the move. AM answered saying that the contractor had been notified of the concern. BA asked AM about the status of the sign. AM noted that there has been positive feedback for the new location of the sign.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

NON-EVENT FUNDING REQUEST: CHAMBER OF CENTRAL MASS SOUTH (CCMS), ALIX MCNITT AND BOB DATZ PRESENTING. AM detailed how the CCMS Promotion's Committee has been looking for ways to expand into Albany, NY market and maintain its presence in CT as well. AM detailed the various capabilities for the Albany Times Union and the Hearst Corporation respectively. For the Albany Times Union AM cited Option 1 as the preferred choice from their proposal. TC asked for copies of screenshots for past and future online campaigns. AM said the CCMS has copies and KF stated that he likely also has copies of the fall campaign. There was general discussion of the different media capabilities between Options 1 and 2 of the Albany Times Union's proposal. Discussion moved onto the Hartford Courant proposal. There was general discussion related to

the performance of the fall campaign with the Courant. AM went through the proposal and there was discussion on the Courant's Travel Shows. TC asked about the promotion of Sturbridge as a wedding destination leading to further discussion. BD talked about the expansion of Jet Blue in Worcester and the importance of that new market. There was general discussion of other regional events and event facilities. *TC MOVED and JL seconded to fund the marketing campaign for the Albany Times Union and the Hartford Courant for \$22,000.00 from the Marketing account. APPROVED.*

BA asked AM about Restaurant week. AM stated that restaurants were not interested in participating this year citing a lack of enthusiasm for the event. BD said that their threshold for participation was too low to host the event. BA suggested a general restaurant advert.

The STA reviewed the CCMS post-event evaluation for the Harvest Festival. TC asked about requirements for food sale for Nonprofits. AM said that requirement has long been established and that it provides vendors with access to food during the event. AM also cited requirements from the Board of Health as being challenging for nonprofits. AM noted that the food trucks help to alleviate many of those challenges and that it helped to require less staffing; AM said that food trucks will likely return next year.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR – LEON GAUMOND: LG discussed the Board of Selectmen's goals as it related to community events. There was general discussion on Restaurant Week. LG suggested bringing some kind of events to the Town, not necessarily large events but a variety. There was general discussion on collaborating with other groups/organizations. LG noted that the goal should be to create something sustainable. There was discussion of the Sturbridge Business Breakfast and KG asked about surveys for the event. LG noted that he was considering putting together a special event committee or subcommittee to help pull together events in Town. There was some discussion on what events could occur and highlighting the various things the STA can offer. KG noted that it is important to support events in town and giving residents various options of things to do. KG also provided an update on the Concert on the Commons. BA noted that collaboration will be key for all these events. General discussion of events in Town.

LG asked for an update from the STA. BA said many of the initial goals of the STA have been met within the past year. There was general discussion of the improvements during the last year and what still needs to be done in the future. Discussion of future goals and plans, as well as a discussion of the Town and the Chamber of Commerce.

LG provided overview of the company Buxton and their capabilities. KF and LG talked about different challenges with the initial proposal. There was general discussion on this.

REVIEW OF STA TAGLINE: KF noted that the "Shop. Eat. Stay. Play." Tagline for the STA is currently not copyrighted, and to ensure its continued use copyright might be an option to consider. TC asked what authorization is needed. TC suggested STA offer to fund payment for Town Council. *TC MOVED and BA seconded to authorize KF to talk with LG and Town Council about copyrighting, "Shop. Eat. Stay. Play" and "Merchants of Sturbridge" and authorize the use of*

\$2000.00 out of Marketing for associated costs. APPROVED. [Note the initial motion was only for “Shop. Eat. Stay. Play.” Motion was amended after further discussion to also include the phrase “Merchants of Sturbridge”]. Discussion on the “Merchants of Sturbridge” tagline.

STA VISITOR GUIDE BACK COVER: KF discussed alterations to the back cover of the Visitor Guide as per February’s discussion. *TC MOVED and KG seconded to approve the new design. APPROVED.*

EDTC UPDATE: KF went through update and highlighted various events over the past month. TC asked about economic development guides.

ADJOURN: April 12th proposed next meeting time. *KG MOVED, TC seconded to adjourn the meeting. APPROVED.*