

**Montana Lodging and Hospitality Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Holiday Inn Bozeman: Bozeman, MT
September 16, 2015**

Members Present

- Scott Arensmeyer
- Bryce Baker
- Karen Baker
- Tony Brown - via phone
- Robert Carette - via phone
- Jeri Duran
- Trevor Haar
- Paula Ruark
- Andy Sabatini
- Matt Sease
- Steve Wahrlich
- Joe Wilson – via phone

Members Absent

- Carol Eichler
- Mike Garcia
- Tim Giesler
- Blair Hope
- Maclaren Latta
- Sandra Johnson-Thares
- Michelle Skinner
- Alex Tyson
- Amber Wood-Jensen

Others Present

- Stuart Doggett
- Charlotte Lauerman

Call to Order and Announcements

The meeting was called to order by Chair Paula Ruark at 2:30pm. Introductions were made.

Agendas / Approval of Minutes

Motion: It was moved to accept the minutes of the May 21, 2015 Board of Directors meeting. Motion was seconded and approved.

Financial Reports (Attached)

Stuart presented highlights of the actual expenditures versus approved budget and reviewed income and expenses versus the previous year.

He noted the strong renewal rate this year compared to this time last year.

Motion: It was moved to accept the financial report. Motion seconded and approved.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive/Budget – Paula Ruark, Matt Sease & Stuart Doggett

Stuart shared the website tracking reports. Steve inquired about the specifics of the tracking and Charlotte is going to look into it.

Steve went over the changes in Stuart's contract that came up at the board meeting in Lewistown. The Executive committee recommended and approved the following changes:

1. Commission for new members – if a membership person is hired, Stuart does not receive commission for those memberships.
2. Stuart's contract will run through the end of MLHA's fiscal year and the new agreement is from January 1, 2016 to June 30, 2018.
3. "Subsistence" was changed to "meals".

Steve talked about the constructive strategy session in Bozeman concerning Voices of Montana Tourism. The Hospitality & Tourism Alliance will become more of a foundation under Voices of Montana and will no longer exist or be under MLHA beginning in 2016, with education being the top priority. It was also suggested to bring Tourism Matters under Voices of Montana Tourism as well. Mike Garcia is currently working on the Articles of Incorporation to make a submission to the IRS so Voices can become a 501 (c) 3 foundation.

Mike Garcia is resigning and taking another job. His job was advertised and there were 22 applicants. Six of those applicants will be interviewed in Helena or by phone on September 22nd. The goal is to have someone hired by October 15th.

A MLHA Board Strategy Session with a facilitator is being planned for December 3-4 in Bozeman. Stuart is contacting Mark Willmarth as a potential facilitator to help establish goals, strategize, and create timelines.

Steve noted that a small group meeting with the Department of Revenue was suggested to start working out audit guidelines for our members. He suggested possibly having regular meetings and a sub-committee for ongoing concerns.

Membership / Non Dues – Matt Sease, Stuart Doggett

Matt noted that dues collections are coming in a lot more quickly than previous years. He stressed that we do still need to keep knocking on doors of potential members in respective areas.

With the convention being on the west side of the state, he suggested possibly inviting Idaho, Washington, eastern Wyoming and Dakota properties to try to get more people attending our convention in the future.

Matt mentioned a new potential membership benefit through LobbyLights – they provide a wage comparison tool. Stuart will contact them to see if they will provide a webinar for the October 25 board meeting.

He also discussed the new member benefits added to NPP: Sherwin Williams and OnPoint and reminded everyone that a percentage of the purchases come back to MLHA.

Leavitt Group gave a presentation over lunch and Matt noted they could provide a medical benefits option to members. Stuart will check with PayneWest to see if they have something similar they'd like to offer.

Matt also noted that KMG Hospitality will present at the October 25 board meeting.

Matt ended by reviewing the Top Prospects list and encouraged everyone to target the properties in respective areas.

Motion: It was moved to revert back to having the membership vote on the location of the following year's convention location rather than having the board make the selection. Motion seconded and approved.

Legislative / PR – Steve Wahrlich, Stuart Doggett

Stuart noted that the House Joint Resolution 27 passed this last session. This is a study bill that will look at all statutory appropriations, including the bed tax and make recommendations if changes should be made to the 2017 legislature. Stuart said we need to monitor and provide positive information to the committee looking at this issue to try and avoid the introduction of a negative bill next session.

The new structure of the Department of Commerce was discussed as well as questions about how the dollars are actually being used. Jeri said the exact numbers and budget will be available by the TAC meeting.

AH&LA, Steve Wahrlich, Stuart Doggett

Steve brought up the OTC ruling by the Montana Supreme Court in August on use vs. sales. More specific details will become available to better understand what it means for our membership.

Steve also pointed out that AH&LA has an easy way to email federal legislators when issues arise. Stuart will talk to AH&LA about us possibly using this same system.

Convention / Education – Michelle Skinner, Charlotte Lauerman

Charlotte gave an update on the convention. The agenda has been finalized and registrations are starting to come in. A hashtag will be used for this convention: #MLHA2015 and Heidi O'Brien with the Helena Tourism Alliance will help put together a slide show that will be running at the convention with pictures participants post using that hashtag.

Jeri Duran was confirmed as the tourism speaker during Monday's lunch.

MLHA will have its own booth – we'll possibly have a rotating picture frame with pictures of the board and other MLHA events. Business cards could be placed at the booth as well.

Charlotte went over some of the games and themed items MLHA will be purchasing for the convention tailgate party on Monday night. The Board members will wear referee shirts to distinguish themselves. Trevor Haar has offered to purchase them and include his logo.

Karen suggested contacting local businesses for a special "local" rate to have a booth or provide a sponsorship at the convention. This type of non-Allied member participation will only be offered to local entities. Charlotte went over the list of Allied members that had participated in last year's convention, but had not yet signed up this year and assignments were given to contact these companies.

Hospitality and Tourism Alliance, Maclaren Latta, Alex Tyson

No report.

Sales Council, Carol Eichler

No report.

Other

Nothing to report.

Next Meeting/Adjourn

The next meeting of the MLHA Board of Directors will be at 3 pm on Sunday, October 25 at Grouse Mountain Lodge followed by a no-host board dinner. Meeting Adjourned at 4:06pm.