

**Montana Lodging and Hospitality Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Wingate by Wyndham – Helena, MT
May 25, 2017**

Members Present

- Karen Baker
- Rick Cabrera
- Valerie Edwards
- Tim Giesler
- Ryan Kunz
- Dax Schieffer
- Matt Sease
- Lauri Tognetti
- Jim Tucker
- Steve Wahrlich
- Tina Wiser

Members Absent

- Scott Arensmeyer
- Bryce Baker
- Trevor Haar
- Bill McGladery
- Paula Ruark
- Betty Stone
- Joe Wilson

Others Present

- Stuart Doggett
- Charlotte Lauerman

Call to Order and Announcements

The meeting was called to order by Chair Steve Wahrlich at 2:15pm.

Agendas / Approval of Minutes

Motion: It was moved to accept the minutes of the January 11, 2017 Board of Directors meeting. Motion was seconded and approved.

Financial Reports (Attached)

Stuart presented highlights of the actual expenditures versus the budget and reviewed income and expenses versus the previous year. It was suggested that the Sales & Marketing Retreat Income be segregated out as its own category when entering financial information. Currently it is lumped together with Sales & Marketing Dues income.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive/Budget – Steve Wahrlich, Stuart Doggett

Stuart went over the proposed 2016/2017 budget (attached). He was more conservative with Convention Income due to the location and change of our typical date. Lodging dues income was also brought down a little. Another change he made was to give Voices \$6000 in July, but have the second \$6000 payment be conditional on if a special legislative session is held. We would hold up to \$2000 out of MLHA's donation to Voices if legal services are required for a special session. In addition, the Voices donations that individual properties make when renewing their dues would be given to Voices.

Motion: It was moved to accept the 2017/2018 budget. Motion seconded and approved.

Membership / Non-Dues –Jim Tucker

Jim said the committee talked about offering free conference registration and/or discounts to management company owners as well as multi-property owners to entice them to join the MLHA.

It was also suggested we could offer non-members a reduced per room rate over a two year period:

First year: \$3/room

Second year: \$4/room

Third year: regular MLHA rate

In addition, a free conference registration will be included per two properties that multi-property owners join.

Stuart noted a member's concern about an MLHA Allied member with alleged law suits against them. Steve felt we should not monitor vendors, but we would monitor preferred providers. Steve agreed to work with Stuart on responding to her directly in the coming weeks by phone or in-person.

Legislative / PR – Steve Wahrlich, Matt Sease, Stuart Doggett

Steve let us know he was in Washington DC last week and noted we were one of three states that had a board that fully gave to the AH&LA PAC. Steve Daines signed the Online Booking Scam bill in the Senate with Steve in attendance and it was broadcast live on Facebook. Steve and Stuart met with Attorney General Fox to put forward the idea in the bill giving state attorney generals more legal options to address on-line booking scams.

Stuart recapped the bills MLHA was involved in killing and as well as the several bills we supported. Both HB660 and SB376 failed calling for an increase in the bed tax to fund the building of a new historical society museum as well as a historic grant program. If a special session is called, Stuart will have a committee call soon to discuss the future of bill similar to HB660 that might be introduced.

Stuart also noted that Racene Friede is putting together a Tourism Matters committee with 20 different tourism partners to be proactive about tourism issues in future sessions.

Voices, Dax Schieffer

Dax noted that Voices was in decent shape at the end of this fiscal year. He visited 40 places to promote the value of tourism and is working with the Department of Commerce on a marketing plan/PR to promote the positive value of tourism. Currently he has 32 contributors with 7 or 8 being new contributors.

Convention / Education – Valerie Edwards, Tim Giesler, Charlotte Lauerma

Valerie noted the few changes made to the current agenda by the committee. An Active Shooter session possibly proposed for Sunday afternoon will not be included, but will be looked at for next year. The AH&LA list was reviewed by the committee and Charlotte will request the session, "Establishing Your Personal Brand". This same speaker also has another session that includes Evernote – a platform used by properties that would be a good addition to the Tech Trends panel. Charlotte will also inquire to see if this speaker will participate in the panel discussion.

A planning committee of Karen, Tina and Angela from 320 Guest Ranch was formed to work on the Clue Game theme/decorations/vendor inclusion, etc. Future conference calls will be planned to start working on it.

Out of state lodging and tourism people will also be invited since the event is held at Big Sky and the resort can be a big draw to bring people in to participate. Charlotte will get a contact list of other state association directors to share with their members and will reach out to Big Sky to help with a promotional piece.

After further discussion on the final speaker for Tuesday, September 26th it was agreed to invite Brian Crawford of AH&LA to speak during the time slot instead of the person that was tentatively suggested.

Valerie said she would like to see MLHA try a new approach to both nominating individuals for the lodging awards and changing the award presentation ceremony. Board members liked the idea of having board members participate in the process to enhance the annual award program. It was agreed to do the following:

- All MLHA Board Members will be asked to nominate a person for each of the award by July 1st. At the same time MLHA will also solicit award nominations from the membership for each category.
- The nominations for each award will then be compiled and shared with the MLHA board so they determine the top three nominees for each award. After the top three award nominees have been identified the MLHA board will be asked to vote again select that award winners by August 1st.

- It was agreed to issue the awards at the annual banquet in 2017, similar to previous years, and to look at ways to enhance future award presentations starting in 2018 similar to how they are done at the Governor's Conference on Tourism with videos of each nominee, red carpet, etc.

Sales Council, Valerie Edwards

Valerie reported the sales council now has 49 members which is a significant increase from previous years. In addition, she reported that 22 individuals are currently registered to attend the upcoming sales council retreat in Whitefish that will include three tours of MLHA area properties. Valerie said the council will be working to deal with filling open officer positions on their board.

By-Laws Review

Steve asked that members of the Executive Committee take time to review the MLHA By-laws by June 15th and to let Stuart know if they have any suggested changes. Stuart said he would send the by-laws to committee members in the next week to remind them to conduct the review. Suggested by-law changes will be brought to the next meeting for consideration.

Next Meeting/Adjourn

It was announced that the next MLHA Board Meeting will be held at 4pm on Sunday, Sept. 24th at Big Sky Resort followed by a board dinner at the Rainbow Ranch. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 4pm.