

**Montana Lodging & Hospitality Association  
General Membership Meeting  
Hilton Garden Inn Kalispell, October 28, 2015**

**Call to Order**

President Paula Ruark called the 2015 general membership meeting to order at 8:30am. Approximately 60 members were in attendance.

**Approval of 2014 Minutes**

**Motion:** It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2014 meeting. Motion approved.

**Financial Reports (Attached)**

Stuart Doggett provided explanation of line items and reviewed the income and expense lines to date, including the financial compilation prepared by the accountants at Laser 1040. Total assets of the association on October 19, 2015 were \$131,516.07.

**Motion:** Moved and seconded to accept the financial reports as presented. Motion approved.

**Committee Reports**

• **Convention / Education Committee Report – Michelle Skinner**

Michelle thanked everyone for attending the convention, especially the convention committee. Evaluations will be sent out next week, so make sure you complete them so we know what to do better. We are looking at reinstating the scholarship fund, but have had trouble implementing it in past years. Please let the committee know if you have any ideas.

• **Membership/Non-Dues Report – Matt Sease**

Matt Sease said we ended the fiscal year with 178 lodging members which puts us ahead of our retention goal of 8-10%. Dues have been coming in faster than usual so members are seeing the benefits of the association. Matt thanked board and members that have gone out to their communities and recruited and let others know the value of membership. He noted that there is a construction rate of \$200 which has helped get a lot of new properties into the association.

Allied members are important to the association and Matt encouraged everyone to take advantage of what our allied members offer as well as the many benefits offered only to MLHA members.

MLHA has also been looking at medical coverage for members and employees. We have sent out RFPs to a couple insurance companies to let us know what they can provide to our membership. Minimum essential coverage requirements are required by you as an employer to avoid tax penalties so MLHA is trying to provide this benefit to our members.

• **Sales & Marketing Council – Carol Eichler**

Carol stated that the Sales & Marketing Council had a great year. They had their retreat in June this year at Buck's T-4 in Big Sky. They had 20 attendees with 7 of those being new in conjunction with a discounted retreat rate. It was one of the highest in attendance in recent years. She thanked Valerie Edwards for organizing the retreat and obtaining great speakers. RFPs will be sent out to host the 2016 retreat location.

Valerie Edwards was elected as the new Sales & Marketing President – a two year term. Audy Butler was elected as the Vice-President – a one year term. Carol thanked everyone during her years in the Sales & Marketing industry.

- **Hospitality Council – Stuart Doggett**

Stuart spoke on behalf of Maclaren Latta and Alex Tyson. He noted that the Hospitality Council has done well to diversify MLHA but there has been a transition with Voices of Montana Tourism. Voices has grown and has been very successful, so we're moving to make it free standing as a 501 3-C. As a result the council efforts will now be focused on Voices.

- **AHLA & Legislative Report – Steve Wahrlich**

Steve informed the membership that he goes to Washington DC 2-3 times per year. He wanted everyone to be aware of the items AH&LA is working on:

1. Overtime rules – this rule will tie exempt salary rate to 40<sup>th</sup> percentile of average wage of full time workers. Goes into effect early 2016, but AHLA is still fighting.
2. Lodging has been singled out to pay employees a minimum of \$15/hour – also being fought by AH&LA.
3. NLRB
4. Deceptive tour operators are acting as hotels and taking fake reservations online and pocketing the money, so the customer thinks they have a reservation when the hotel knows nothing about it. AH&LA is working on this issue.

Lastly, Steve wanted to let everyone know about a tool we can use to easily contact Legislators and committee members separately. AH&LA as a very easy online tool to perform this task and they have all the Montana Legislators in their system. They will let us use it if we send the information through us. It will make it much easier to contact Legislators about certain issues.

### **Break – Ballots were distributed.**

### **2016 Board Members**

The following slate of officers were presented by Matt Sease on behalf of the Nominations Committee. Five board positions are open with four being open two year terms and one being an appointment by the Chair for a one year term. Treasurer is also an open executive position.

#### Board of Directors (Lodging)

- Scott Arensmeyer – TownHouse Inn of Great Falls
- Karen Baker – Grouse Mountain Lodge, Whitefish (Treasurer)
- Bryce Baker -- Best Western Golden Prairie Inn & Suites, Sidney
- Tina Wiser – Hilton Garden Inn, Billings
- Jim Tucker – Jorgenson's, Helena
- Robert Carette – Marina Cay Resort, Bigfork (Treasurer)

**Motion:** It was moved and seconded to cast unanimous votes for the four individuals running for the four open board positions. Motion approved.

#### Board Members (Allied)

- Greg Elliot, PayneWest
- Trevor Haar, Big Sky Cabinet Shop
- Blair Hope, Procter and Gamble
- Dana Jepsen, Mendenhall
- Jeff Monahan, Montana Broom & Brush

### **Legislative and PR Committee Reports, Stuart Doggett and Steve Wahrlich**

We had a great Legislative Committee this year. The session started on January 5<sup>th</sup> and concluded on April 28<sup>th</sup>. It looks like there won't be a special session this year. It was a very active year and Stuart appreciates those that supported the bills we were tracking.

He also reported the MT Dept of Revenue sued the online reservations because they weren't collecting the bed taxes. A Montana judge ruled for the online reservation sites that they didn't have to pay bed taxes. DOR appealed the ruling to the MT supreme court, they determined that they didn't have to collect, but did have to collect the 3 percent lodging facility tax going to general fund and pay the tax retroactively.

HJ27 Bill passed by legislature. They will study statutory appropriations including the 4% bed tax. This issue of some concern and MLHA will be monitoring and working on it between now and the 2017 session.

### **Resolutions Committee Report**

Tony Brown and Scott Arensmeyer presented the 2015 Convention Resolutions.

### **Other Business**

Colee Wingo was the recipient of the raffle basket. Proceeds of \$1045 will be given to Keynote Brad Ludden's charity, First Descents.

### **Results of Balloting**

The following were announced as elected to the MLHA Board of Directors:

- Karen Baker – Treasurer
- Directors
- Scott Arensmeyer – TownHouse Inn of Great Falls
- Tina Wiser – Hilton Garden Inn, Billings
- Jim Tucker – Jorgenson's, Helena
- Robert Carette – Marina Cay Resort, Bigfork (Treasurer)

Greg Elliot was elected to the position of Allied Director and Trevor Haar was elected to the Alternate position.

### **2016 Conference Location**

The membership selected Fairmont Hot Springs as the 2016 conference location.

**Motion:** It was moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion approved.

**Meeting Adjourned at 10:30am**