

**Montana Lodging and Hospitality Association  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Hilton Garden Inn Kalispell  
May 22, 2014**

**Members Present**

- Scott Arensmeyer
- Karen Baker
- Jeri Duran
- Carol Eichler (via phone)
- Sandra Johnson-Thares
- Paula Ruark
- Matt Sease
- Michelle Skinner
- Alex Tyson (via phone)
- Steve Wahrlich

**Members Absent**

- Bryce Baker
- Maclaren Latta
- Blair Hope
- Shelli Mann
- Jeff Monahan
- Regina Rhodes
- Andy Sabatini
- Joe Wilson

**Others Present**

- Stuart Doggett
- Mike Garcia
- Charlotte Lauerman

**Call to Order and Announcements**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Paula Ruark at 1:00 pm.

**Agendas / Approval of Minutes**

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. Motion was seconded and approved.

Carol mentioned her name was left off the list of Members Present, so it was noted her name would be added.

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the minutes of the February 12, 2014 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.

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

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Executive Committee – Paula Ruark & Stuart Doggett**

Stuart went over the next fiscal year's budget. The Executive Budget Committee made a few adjustments listed below:

Income        Dues – MLHA was changed from \$79,000 to \$81,000

Expense        AH&LA Travel was changed from \$4,000 to \$3,000  
Convention Expense was changed from \$34,000 to \$33,000  
Legislative Expense was changed from \$7,000 to \$10,000

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the budget. Motion seconded and approved.

Since MLHA has made a profit this year so the Executive Committee recommended the following:

1. \$6200 be put into long-term reserves
2. \$2500 be given to Voices of Montana Tourism. This is in addition to the \$10,000 already given during the fiscal year.
3. \$1295 to implement the new MemberClicks software program purchase

Steve suggested holding off the motion until after Charlotte gave her presentation on the software program.

### **Membership / Non Dues – Matt Sease, Stuart Doggett**

Matt talked about the membership recruitment and retention plans for the next year. Stuart mentioned that the new AH&LA dues structure can be used as more of a selling point.

The plan objectives are to:

1. Recruit 32 new lodging members
2. Retain 90% of our members
3. Each MLHA member contact at least one property, personally, during the year.
4. New MLHA members will be contacted by a board member within a month of joining.

Member benefits should be communicated to current and prospective members. Michelle suggested adding education and professional development to the list of member benefits. Current partnerships with Avitus and National Purchasing Partners and their monetary benefits to MLHA were discussed.

### **Legislative / PR – Steve Wahrlich, Stuart Doggett, Mike Garcia, Jeri Duran**

Steve discussed the upcoming legislative session. It has been determined that 138 bills have been placed on hold. Stuart reported that 8 of these may impact MLHA and 4 definitely could, but not sure of the specifics.

Mike talked about how the Kalispell Legislative Roundtable format went well and was well attended. Voices would like to host 6-8 more – with one being the Monday morning before Convention in Billings (October 27<sup>th</sup>). The Voices budget is a little ahead and doing well.

Jeri gave a Montana Office of Tourism Update. They have been active in the Governor's Main Street Project branding work and they are in the process of hiring a new chief marketing officer. In addition, they have established a new partnership with Razorfish – a company that will help them optimize their existing website. In September, Mike Bento will help them with a "brand refresh."

### **Convention / Education – Charlotte Lauerman**

Charlotte reviewed the changes made to the Convention agenda. MLHA Board meeting will be held at the Best Western ClockTower Inn on Oct. 26 with a no-host dinner following. It has been confirmed that Wendy Sampson will be the Keynote speaker on the first day of the convention.

At the last convention planning meeting it was recommended that two baskets be raffled off instead of one so the vendors have an opportunity to win. It was decided to only raffle one basket.

We will recognize long-time members at the Tuesday night dinner by having everyone stand, announce years of membership, and have members sit after they're yearly membership has been called. The longest members will remain standing and will be recognized and given a bottle of wine or champagne.

Charlotte will create a non-vendor sponsorship form to solicit different levels of sponsorships from other types of entities. Michelle will find out how many MLHA members are members of the state chamber so they could possibly be approached for a sponsorship.

#### **AH&LA, Steve Wahrlich, Matt Sease**

Steve discussed the AH&LA changes. They are now mostly a lobbying organization and with their new structure that includes more direct memberships through individual franchises, they can actually say they represent 90% in the lodging industry.

#### **Hospitality Council, Maclaren Latta**

Maclaren was absent but sent summaries of the Hospitality Goals, Messaging and Survey Results that were passed out to those in attendance. Her next steps are to work on a targeted level to survey the respondents of the recent survey plus others to solicit membership.

#### **Sales Council, Carol Eichler**

Carol mentioned the Sales & Marketing retreat is June 1-3 in Billings and they have 15-16 registered. They will have a Sales & Marketing Council meeting during the retreat and will discuss increasing membership.

#### **Presentation of New MLHA MemberClicks Software, Charlotte Lauerman**

Charlotte provided a review and answered questions about the new MemberClicks software program that she is working to implement for MLHA. The new program will allow MLHA members to log in and update their information, pay dues, register for and track events, and interact with other members/committees. Members can also include pictures and reservation links to their properties that will display professionally on the MLHA website as well as many other benefits.

**Motion:** It was moved to accept the recommendations of the Executive Committee that were previously discussed. They include, putting \$6200 to be put into long-term reserves, \$2500 given to Voices and approval of \$1295 for implementation plus annual service for MemberClicks software. Motion seconded and approved.

#### **Next Meeting/Adjourn**

The next meeting of the MLHA Board of Directors will be September 18 in Helena. Meeting Adjourned at 3:15pm.