

**Montana Lodging and Hospitality Association
Board of Directors Meeting
Hilton Garden Inn – Billings
August 23, 2018**

Members Present

- Scott Arensmeyer – conf. call
- Karen Baker – conf. call
- Tim Giesler
- Shelli Mann
- David O'Connor
- Matt Sease
- Jim Tucker
- Steve Wahrlich
- Joe Wilson
- Tina Wiser

Members Absent

- Bryce Baker
- Rick Cabrera
- Valerie Edwards
- Trevor Haar
- Ryan Kunz
- Bill McGladery
- Dax Schieffer
- Betty Stone

Others Present

- Stuart Doggett
- Charlotte Lauerman – conf call

Call to Order and Announcements

The meeting was called to order by Chair Matt Sease at 12:00pm.

Agendas / Approval of Minutes

Motion: It was moved to accept the minutes of the April 19, 2018 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.

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

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive/Budget – Matt Sease, Stuart Doggett

Stuart reviewed the bylaws and some potential updates. One item of interest was eligibility of non-General Managers running for the board. The board decided against a by-law modification involving board candidate eligibility and tabled the issue for further discussion until the next board meeting.

Stuart also noted that the Montana B&B Association declined our offer to join the association, even as their own council. Their alternate idea was to join MLHA as an Allied member.

The board concluded that they can join the regular process as a lodging member of the MLHA.

Matt Brownlow and Brooks Bunbury with First West Insurance then gave a presentation on their company and Pollution Insurance and Risk Management.

Membership / Non-Dues – Shelli Mann, Stuart Doggett

Stuart talked about having board members to contact non-renewals mid-September. The Top Prospects list will go out to the committee for updates. The current promotional materials will also be shared with the committee for recruiting new members.

Stuart reviewed the discussion with Chase merchant credit card during the Membership / Non-Dues Committee meeting. They are not looking for exclusive arrangement but want to get involved and participate in our Trade Show and possible future sponsorships.

We will ask them to provide a draft contract in the coming weeks to establish a non-exclusive agreement between Chase and MLHA that will layout the proposed relationship and revenue sharing provisions. If approved, the board will sign the final agreement by the end of September. We'll also request confirmation that Chase will join MLHA as an Allied member and participate in our upcoming Trade Show.

Motion: It was moved to request that Chase develop a draft contract to establish a non-exclusive agreement between Chase and MLHA, which includes revenue sharing provisions; and also, to request that Chase join MLHA as an Allied member and participate in the 2018 Fall Tourism Conference and Trade Show, October 22-24 at the Copper King in Butte as well as future Trade Shows if agreement is reached – with conference sponsorships considered beginning in 2019. Motion seconded and approved, with the modifications.

Legislative / PR – Steve Wahrlich, Stuart Doggett

Stuart gave an update on the interim committee meeting in July. A bill will be introduced that will ensure online marketing companies/short term rentals are paying their lodging taxes. The committee will continue to reach out to AH&LA for input from them on the best bills out there related to Airbnb's, etc.

Steve met with the Lt. Governor and the Deputy Chief of Staff in late May. Every legislative session, bills get introduced and no one comes and talks to the lodging professionals first. We'd like to be part of the budget solution, but not the sole solution. He had a good discussion with them about these issues and they were receptive of working with us. Stuart and Steve will reach out in the next week and hopefully they will meet in November.

Dan Villa has taken a new job, not sure who will replace him. Stuart said it could impact the tourism budget the next session.

There will possibly be a Trails coalition bill – they want more funding from a license fee or increase in the bed tax. The draft bills asks for ½ percent to go to trails. They have not reached out to us yet, and obviously there are some concerns. There may be another draft coming out soon. Steve suggests maybe we should reach out to them.

The Resort at Paws Up is charging guests Resort Fees, yet not paying lodging taxes on these fees. The Department of Revenue is saying that these fees are to be taxed at 7%. Big Sky, Paws Up Resort, and Billings Hotel and Convention Center do not agree and are not taxing them. There is no clarification of what the fee necessarily covers. We don't have enough information from the Department of Revenue to take a stand, so we will monitor until we get more information.

Voices, Dax Schieffer

Steve gave update for Dax. He noted the recent ITRR resident/nonresident travel study and said it is hard to say if it's an accurate study. The study gives us a base, but we're not going to focus on it.

Aimee Grmoljez is looking for support for the 6-Mill levy. Every ten years it must be put on the ballot to continue. She has asked for our endorsement. We will endorse and support, but we won't provide any funding.

Lastly, we will continue to support the Montana Infrastructure Coalition. We were an active member going into the last session and will rejoin going into this session at \$500.

Motion It was moved to support the 6-Mill Levy but not provide funding; and support the Montana Infrastructure Coalition and rejoin at \$500. Motion seconded and approved.

Convention / Education – Tina Wiser, Charlotte Lauerman

Tina reviewed the convention discussion. The committee agreed the agenda looks good – no additional changes. As far as this year's nominations, we will revisit some from last year, so those nominations can be valid for this year.

The committee members will approach local associations, TBIDs, Chambers, tourism groups, etc. to increase conference registration. Goal is to increase sponsorships to \$9000. Committee also wants to visit member and non-member properties to reach out and get them to come to the conference. Our goal is to increase from 104 from last year to 150 registered participants this year.

Valerie will touch base with MSU after school starts and will get four names for scholarship recipients to attend the conference (registration only). They will be responsible for travel/lodging. The committee asked Stuart and the Board what our scholarship budget is for this year's conference.

Amanda with the Copper King is hard at work with our Royalty theme and decorations. She will invoice us \$200 for decoration costs and the Copper King will cover the rest.

Board agreed to \$1,000 in registrations for the student scholarship registration fees.

AH&LA Updates, Steve Wahrlich

Steve will be attending the Legislative Action Summit September 12-13. It is unclear where the Online Booking Scam bill is at this point and Steve asked the board if it is still an issue at properties. He will get this information to the Attorney General – or wherever the information needs to go.

Sales Council, Valerie Edwards

Erika Kimball spoke for Valerie and noted the Sales & Marketing Retreat in early June was a huge success with great presentations. They had the most attendees they have had ever as well as one Allied Member. Phil Quigley will be their speaker at the upcoming conference.

Other

None.

Next Meeting/Adjourn

It was announced that the next MLHA Board Meeting will be held at convention at the Copper King in Butte on October 21st at 4pm. There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 2:20pm.