

Town of Sturbridge
Sturbridge Tourist Association
Meeting Minutes
March 1 2012
Sturbridge Town Hall 6:30 PM Conference Rm 2

Present: James Leaming, Tom Creamer, Brian Amedy, Jennifer Lundwall, Kevin MacConnell, Jessica MacDonald. The meeting was called to order at 6:32pm.

Tom Creamer motions to adjourn and reconvene in Veteran's Memorial Hall. Brian Amedy 2nd, 6-0 in favor. Meeting reconvened at 6:38pm in Memorial Hall.

Minutes:

Feb minutes were reviewed as written by Jen Lundwall as Jessica MacDonald was not present at the February STA meeting. Jen Lundwall notes Alix's name is spelled incorrectly in section 2. TC motion to accept the February 2, 2012 minutes as amended; vote 5-0 in favor with Jessica MacDonald abstaining.

Treasurer Update:

Brian Amedy turned in bills, but they were not yet submitted – so no change in account. Should note most of info center comes from revolving account and therefore approx. \$2k left in account. Brian Amedy mentions STA can take funds from marketing account to provide funding for appropriate expenses, or possibly give the chamber its own line item (Jim Leaming) for budget meeting.

New Business:

Jim Leaming recused himself at 6:39 and left the room.

Chamber of Commerce Discussion: Alix McNitt – continuation of chamber conversation from last month regarding the info centers financial state. There was a short recap of last month's discussion regarding the need for more support of the STA to maintain the info center. Additionally, Sturbridge comprises most of the Chamber of Commerce members. Clarifies to disregard the 35% line, looking for 50% funding, so total funds needed less \$10,000 for a total of \$6,251.50.

Kevin MacConnell provides that there are 2 accounts to fund this request – revolving and community support. \$8,872 is available to fund the proposal.

Brian Amedy points out desk staff, telephone, and internet can be funded, however bylaw does not necessarily agree to items such as pest mgmt., repair, and security. Security should come out of restroom account possibly – for further review. Tom Creamer brings up that in general bylaws and general charter, wording is only definite when it states "shall" as opposed to "such as" - such as leaves it open for interpretation. Tom Creamer reiterates the need for being as frugal as possible in budgeting given the current state of the economy.

Kevin MacConnell debated that if the STA is going to fund the information center, the STA should have more control over the information centers operations. Kevin continued that since other towns are supported by the information center, the burden of funding should not fall to the Sturbridge Tourist Association.

There was discussion on repair of the fence around restrooms, as it was to be part of restroom funds, and is in need of maintenance and repair. Alix clarified that payroll taxes are built into FY13 budget (but were not in FY12). Brian Amedy and Tom Creamer discussed that any pay raises should not be supported by STA dollars.

Kevin MacConnell posed the question – if info center loses STA funding then what happens? Alix answers that would be up to her board, no clear answer to that, but it would be have a severely negative impact. Year-end financials and CPA indicated the current budget for info center was too low. Audience member brought up that approximately 20% (or 80 members) of the chamber of commerce relate to tourism, the majority of which are Sturbridge businesses.

An audience member questioned why the info center restrooms have not been repaired in a more timely manner, as is the STA's responsibility. Brian Amedy explained the pipes burst and there was a lack of communication regarding the problem.

Tom Creamer makes a motion to approve \$6,251.50, as requested, to be apportioned consistent with the proposal to fund the Information Center. Jen Lundwall 2nd 4-1 favor, with Kevin MacConnell not in favor.

Tom Creamer makes a motion to hear Lynn Girourard's request on behalf of the Sturbridge Recreation Department, regardless of her not being present at the meeting. Brian Amedy 2nd 6-0 favor.

Tom Creamer makes a motion for STA approve request submitted by Sturbridge rec committee for \$1,500 for the summer concert series. Jessica MacDonald 2nd, 6-0 in favor.

There was discussion on providing a trolley for the April 28 River race and Brimfield flea market. Kevin MacConnell will obtain pricing. Also mentioned was the prospect of the STA supplementing the cost of admission to OSV fireworks for Sturbridge residents. The idea of the STA working with trail committee to help fund signage, brochures, etc... Another idea brought forth is the opportunity of the STA to fund parts of the Master Plan as applicable (betterment of gateway, the commercial tourist revitalization design cost could be supplemented by the STA, etc...). Possibly STA sponsor the tornado relay (or some portion) in June.

Brian Amedy reiterates to the committee to review definitions for budget meeting.

Old Business:
none

Next meeting scheduled for April 5, 2012 at 6:30pm in Conference room 1. Jen Lundwall makes motion to adjourn, Tom Creamer 2nd, vote 6-0.

Sincerely,

Jessica MacDonald