

Sturbridge Tourist Association  
Meeting Minutes 6/23/14

In attendance: Brian Amedy (BA), Chair, Thomas Chamberland (TC), Joni Light (JL), Bronwyn Cooper (BC)

Guests: Alix McNitt, Chamber of Commerce, Rob Datz, Chamber Tourism Committee

18:39 Meeting called to order by BA

Minutes from 3/12/14: Motion to approve by BA, no 2nd needed and vote in favor of approval 1-0-3, 3 abstained.

The election of officers for 2015 was held:

Brian Amedy, Chairman nominated by TC, 2nd by JL, vote 4-0

Tom Chamberland, Treasurer, nominated by JL, 2nd by BA, vote 4-0

Bronwyn Cooper, Secretary, nominated by JL, 2nd by TC, vote 4-0

The position of Vice-Chair to be left open until the group has additional members.

New Business:

2015 budget starts July 1, 2014 (Community Support Account has \$28,659.08)

First Proposal by Lynn Girard, Recreation Committee:

Concerts On The Common (need to start booking performers starting plans in Dec.)

Plan is to fund 5 concerts, July 3 being the most expensive, biggest draw

Asking for \$3,000

Others have sponsors such as Lions Club, Betterment Committee, some late

Anything left over will contribute to June 2015 concerts

Motion to pass at 19:05 by TC, 2nd by BC, vote in favor 4-0

Second Proposal by Tom Chamberland, Trails Group:

Grand Trunk Trail Map, 2,500 copies

Similar to successful Heins Farm Trails Brochure two years ago

Cross town rail trail initiative

Asking for \$665

Map generated by Town Planner using special software, printing costs, graphic design

If funded would need to print "Funded by Sturbridge Tourist Association."

Motion to pass at 19:21 by JL, 2nd by BA, vote in favor 3-0, 1 abstained.

Third Proposal by Alix McNitt, Chamber of Commerce:

First clarification: \$23,000/year, \$11,500/6 months available, Bylaw stating for Welcome Information Center of which currently there is only one. Motion at 19:26 made by BA, 2nd by TC, vote in favor 4-0 (recognition of only one at this time).

a) Marketing Campaign: Asking \$22,500 for Chamber of Commerce

Primarily in Albany and Hartford online, some radio, newspaper

Includes for Discover New England Package for international travelers and Discretionary for guides, coops, social media, fire sales

BA will abstain since he is involved with OSV

Discussed need for market research and extending to other communities besides Albany, Hartford and Boston, such as New York, Vermont and Western Massachusetts.

Motion to pass at 20:01 by TC, 2nd by BC, vote in favor 3-0, 1 abstained.

b) Harvest Festival, 25th Anniversary - two day October 18, 19

Goal of hiring 2-3 more expensive bands with larger followings and entertainment for kids

Asking \$7,500 from the Special Events Account/Category from a total of \$21,000

Motion to pass at 20:14 by JL, 2nd by TC, vote in favor 4-0.

c) Real Deal Christmas

Including OSV by Candlelight (BA will abstain) and Stageloft Theater's It's a Wonderful Life, new event involving retailers, hotels, restaurant package incentives for weekend stays, hence discussion of "Heads in Beds" effort

Asking for \$7,500

Further discussion whether open to all businesses not just Chamber businesses,  
Motion to pass at 20:25 by TC, 2nd by BC, vote in favor 3-0, 1 abstained.

d) Restaurant Week

Asking \$2,500

Advertising costs with consistent A-frame signs, 12 in total from last year

Discussion if original signage was purchased with STA funds, shelf and talk to Chris Garrity (accountant) and why not more successful with greater participation of more restaurants? Would be advantageous if lodgings could tell patrons which restaurants are participating so they can refer and enlarge their email databases/raffle cards.

BA suggest we table this proposal so it was not voted on in this meeting.

Other New Business

Commercial Tourist District Plan - \$22,000 had been approved for Main, Holland, Brookfield intersection near the old fire station land for better signage, landscaping, design, including sidewalks.

Motion to encumber money proposal to Betterment Account at 20:50 by TC, 2nd by BA, vote in favor 4-0, subject to review of detailed proposal from the Town Planner, Jean Bubon.

Old Business

Funds left: \$3,500 Marketing, \$6,335 Community Support, \$6,000 Special Events.

STA should meet 4X a year at a minimum, in past 2nd Wednesday of the month.

NEXT MEETING: August 13th (Wednesday) at 6:45

Motion to adjourn at 21:05 by TC, 2nd by JL, vote in favor 4-0.

Meeting adjourned.