

St. Michaels Tourism Board

Public Meeting Minutes

January 26, 2009

Present – Chairman, Jon Mason, Vice Chairman, Bonnie Booth, Rosemary Fasolo, Ilene Morgan, Helen Van Fleet, Rosemary Fasolo, Stuart Parnes, Debbie Dodson, Advisor, Talbot County Office of Tourism, Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn, Kevin Snelling from the St. Michaels Art League and Mr. John Booth. Robert Richardson was absent.

Call to Order – Mr. Jon Mason called the meeting of the St. Michaels Tourism Board to order at 8:35 a.m. in the meeting room of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, Navy Point, St. Michaels.

St. Michaels Art League Report – Mr. Mason introduced Kevin Snelling, representing the Art League, who made a presentation on "Paint the Town Day." Mr. Snelling said this year's event would be on June 20, 2009 and corresponds with the Antique and Classic Boat Show at the Museum on that weekend. Mr. Snelling said the League hoped to recruit town merchants for donated prizes. He noted there was a \$5.00 registration fee to participate and that he hoped to have approximately 40 artists participating. Mr. Snelling said there would be 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes plus Judge's awards at \$100.00 each, and advertising would include postcards (\$50.00), posters (\$100.00) and banners (\$450.00). Mr. Snelling said the budget did not include radio advertising. Mrs. Morgan raised the possibility of business sponsorships. Mr. Snelling said he wants the artists for this event to be visible on the main street. Mrs. Fasolo explained radio advertising was possible through the Tourism Board's radio contract.

Following Mr. Snelling's presentation, Mr. Parnes asked about separating the Boat Show even and the "Paint the Town" event, if not this year, then possibly in the future. The members discussed where and how to advertise. Mrs. Booth said she would call Commissioner Clark to find out whether "Paint the Town Day" could be moved to another weekend and if so, Mrs. Fasolo would then contact Mr. Snelling will check to see if the Art League can change the weekend. If they could be separate events either now or in the future, the Tourism Board could then potentially fund advertising.

Winter Advertising Campaign – Mr. Mason opened the discussion on advertising and costs. Mrs. Morgan asked Debbie Dodson to confirm cost of Star Democrat advertising, and it was noted that the Tourism Board had paid for 10 new URLs. The members also discussed advertising costs for running romantic weekend ads in February in the Washington Times and Baltimore Examiner. Debbie Dodson gave a summary of advertising that has been done to date, including total costs. The members discussed possible advertising opportunities with Amtrack, Southwest Airlines, and the Washington Flyer. Mrs. Morgan suggested targeting boaters. Mrs. Fasolo suggested targeting Yacht Clubs on the Chesapeake.

As there are advertizing funds available that need to be used, Ms. Dodson recommended the advertising subcommittee to meet and determine advertising to be done for the remainder of the fiscal year which ends June 30, 2009. A meeting was scheduled for Monday, February, 2 2009 at 9:00 a.m. at the 5 Gables Inn. Mr. Parnes said he would like to see a chart showing what Talbot Co. is advertising and when, and showing the same information for St. Michaels. Ms. Dodson said she would put together a "chart", which would also track the URLs. Mrs. Fasolo asked if Mr. Mason could ask Mr. Richardson to contact Internet Connections to see if they could track

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the URLs and also to follow-up with Mr. Richardson about winter panorama photos that she may be able to use in advertising.

Other Advertising:

MACo Visit – Mr. Mason said The Maryland Association of Counties' (MACo) visit to the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum on January 8, 2009 went well. The group included approximately 400 people.

Form for Event Funding Sample – Mr. Mason opened a discussion of the event form. Mr. Parnes said he has the sample form, but requested that Mr. Mason do the cover letter to include the Tourism Board's mission statement and overview of what their duties. Mr. Mason agreed to write the cover letter.

There was a discussion regarding upcoming events and Mr. Parnes noted that the Museum had added an event called Bay Day for the weekend before the Food & Wine Festival. Mrs. Booth noted that money should be reserved to cover costs for the Dog Walk, Bay Day, Food & Wine, Classic Boats and "Paint the Town Day".

Trailhead Parking Area – Mr. Mason opened a discussion of a permanent banner location at the north end of town. Mr. Parnes said he has draft language in a handout form. Mrs. Fasolo noted that there is no existing legislation to cover a permanent banner location and that the information from the Town and the State is conflicting. Mr. Parnes said the Museum staff could help construct language, and that he would revise what he had and send it to Cheril Thomas to submit to the Commissioners. Mrs. Fasolo agreed to help with the drafting.

Passport Page Content –

- Mr. Mason noted that Mr. Richardson was working on confirming the cost estimate for updating the page.
- Mr. Mason said that the passport program's second drawing had taken place with the winners receiving a two-night stay at the 5 Gables Inn and Spa in addition to other prizes, and that the third drawing should take place in March.
- Mr. Mason said that he owes the group page content verbiage.
- During a discussion by the members, it was noted that the cost of card holders for the passport cards was prohibitive, so participants were urged to simply put the cards on establishment and store counters.
- Mrs. Fasolo said she would work on the "logo" for consideration at the next meeting.

New Business/Public Comment - Mr. John Booth suggested that the Tourism Board write the Commissioners to put Ted Doyle back on the Commission, noting that Mr. Doyle had a financial background and helped establish the Tourism Board. After discussion, it was agreed that the Board would not send collective note from the group but rather members should send them individually if they were so inclined to do so.

Next Meeting – Mrs. Booth noted that the next meeting of the Tourism Board would be on February 10, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. in the Town Office.

Adjournment - Mr. Parnes made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:10 a.m., which was seconded by Mrs. Booth. The motion passed on a vote of 7-0 in favor, none opposed.

Submitted by: _____ Date _____
Sabrenia L. Yohn, Administrative Clerk