

St. Michaels Tourism Board

Public Meeting Minutes

March 9, 2010

Present:

Vice Chairman Bonnie Booth, members Rosemary Fasolo, Helen Van Fleet, Angela Eade-Spence, Langley Shook, Debbi Dodson, Advisor, Talbot County Office of Tourism, Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn, and one member of the public. Chairman Jon Mason was absent.

Call to Order:

Vice Chairman Booth called to order the meeting of the St. Michaels Tourism Board at 8:40 a.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building (Town Office), 300 Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland.

Approval of Minutes from February 17, 2010 meeting and Welcome:

The members discussed minor changes to the Tourism Board minutes from the February 17, 2010 meeting. Member Fasolo made a motion to accept the minutes with the changes discussed. Member Van Fleet seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 5-0 in favor.

The members welcomed Langley Shook from the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum (CBMM) as a new member of the Tourism Board who filled the remaining term of Stuart Parnes as the not-for-profit representative on the Board. Member Fasolo gave an overview of the Tourism Board, a history of the group, and the Board's budget. Mrs. Yohn gave an overview of the Commissioners' process for funding the Tourism Board.

Advertising Update/Report from the Marketing/Advertising Sub-committee:

Debbi Dodson gave an overview of recent advertising, noting that upcoming ads included snipes for spring events, including St. Michaels Goes to the Dogs and WineFest. Ms. Dodson said a writer from Recreation News was coming to St. Michaels March 24 and 25, 2010 to do an article with a focus on trails, the Winery, the Brewery, Shopping and Museums in the area.

Member Fasolo gave an overview of the various upcoming activities including events focused on honoring Frederick Douglass. Member Shook said CBMM would be holding a fundraising auction in the next couple of weeks, including tickets to a chamber music concert. CBMM would also be donating a cruise for up to 30 people on the "Mr. Jim." Mr. Shook said that Harriet Lowery and Karen Shook are also involved in coordinating events.

Ms. Dodson gave an update on Restaurant Week, scheduled for March 22 through March 27, 2010. Ms. Dodson said that Channel 2 (WMAR TV) will do a live show on March 19, 2010. Ms. Dodson noted that food samplings and wine tastings were being offered at The Oaks to kick off the event with 20 guest chefs on hand preparing the food. Ms. Dodson noted that restaurants in St. Michaels participating in the event included the Town Dock, Crab & Steak House, Sherwood Landing, 208 Talbot, Rupert's, Bistro St. Michaels, and Ava's and would be featuring lunch specials for \$20.10 and dinner specials for \$30.10. There would also be a showing of the film "Big Nights" on March 28, 2010 at \$75.00 per person which was a fundraiser for the Chesapeake Film Festival and a Chamber Music Festival on March 27, 2010. Ms. Dodson also provided an overview of magazine advertising for Restaurant Week. Member Booth outlined other upcoming events including a Jazz Fest and the Labor Day Weekend celebration.

Member Shook said that CBMM had met with Maryland Public Television regarding a new program featuring a number of Eastern Shore Counties and what they had to offer. The first episode will feature Talbot County and 5 or 6 venues, one of which will be St. Michaels. Member Shook said the Museum is looking for sponsors for the program as the total program cost was \$50,000.00, which included \$25,000 for start-up and \$25,000 for promotion. The program is slated to air during prime time on Maryland Public TV stations in the Fall of 2010. Member Shook outlined other CBMM advertising ideas and plans, including possibly sharing the Crab Claw's billboard on Route 50, advertising on the proposed St. Michaels town trolley, creating a CBMM visitor's center at the southern entrance to Town and providing food sales on the CBMM grounds.

Photography Request for Proposal (RFP) and Photographers:

Member Fasolo gave an overview of the challenges of obtaining photos for promotions. Member Shook offered the CBMM's photographer, David Harp and Member Fasolo said the St. Michaels Art League had photographers as well. Member Spence proposed having a competition with prizes for photographers and said she would talk to Jon Mason about it, however, Members Booth and Van Fleet agreed that the recognition of using someone's photography would be sufficient. Member Booth also suggested forming a committee to include herself and members Fasolo and Spence and perhaps John Marrah to gather photographs. Member Fasolo added that she would provide a list of photo suggestions for Member Shook to give to Mr. Harp.

Get Away Program:

Member Spence opened a discussion of the Get-away program. She noted that she and T. J. Pecorak were working on soliciting potential giveaways for the June and September programs. Member Spence said she was providing an accommodation package and Aida Leisure from DBS Jewelers was working on another idea for a possible "Green Book" which would include coupons and would be self-funded privately through the St. Michaels Business Association. There was general consensus among the members to continue with the Getaway Program as is, and only in St. Michaels for now. Debbi Dodson said she was working with the winner of the last program from Morristown, NJ to pick up their prize and possibly arrange for a photo and press release to run in a local paper.

Tourism Board Vacancy:

There was a brief discussion of the retail vacancy on the Tourism Board. It was noted that the vacancy has been posted on the Town and Post Office bulletin boards and on the Town's website. It had also been announced to the Business Association, and it was noted that the owner of the Oyster House might possibly be interested in serving.

Postcard Program:

Member Fasolo said she was at a standstill regarding the e-blast focusing on promoting WineFest and needed some guidance from the Board in order to proceed. Following some additional discussion, the Board agreed to use a stock photo that it already had. Member Booth made a motion to use the Tourism Board's photos and to develop a similar format for the postcard which would include WineFest, the Frederick Douglass event, and Celebrate St. Michaels. Member Fasolo said she would put together a format and send to the Tourism Board for approval within 24 hours. Member Spence seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor. Member Booth said she would e-mail Jon Mason and ask him to notify the WineFest coordinators about the e-blast and the Board's decisions to maintain branding and the use of stock photographs in order to avoid any potential copyright issues.

Comments from the Public:

Member Shook excused himself and departed the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

Sabrenia Yohn provided information on the Ribbon Cutting ceremonies for Muskrat Park on May 1, 2010 and the St. Michaels Nature Trail on May 7, 2010.

John Booth of the Inn at 5 Gables suggested that the CBMM might want to set up a challenge or competition for potential sponsors to raise the funds needed in order to proceed with the Maryland Public Television program.

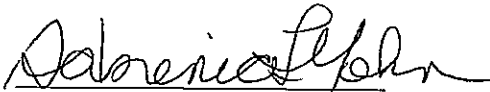
Announcement of Next Meeting:

Member Booth announced that the next meeting of the Board would be on April 13, 2010 at 8:30 a.m. at the Town Office, but that she would not be present for that meeting.

Adjournment:

Member Spence made the motion to adjourn. Member Booth seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor at 9:50 a.m.

Submitted by:


Sabrenia L. Yohn, Administrative Clerk

Date:

4/13/10