

**St. Michaels Tourism Board**

**Public Meeting Minutes**

**February 10, 2009**

**Present:** Chairman, Jon Mason; Vice Chairman, Bonnie Booth; Ilene Morgan; Helen Van Fleet; Stuart Parnes; Debbie Dodson, Advisor, Talbot County Office of Tourism; Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn; and one member of the public. Robert Richardson and Rosemary Fasolo were absent.

**Call to Order** – Mr. Mason called the meeting of the St. Michaels Tourism Board to order at 8:35 a.m. in the meeting room of the Edgar M. Bosley, Jr. Municipal Building.

**Approval of Minutes** – Mr. Mason called for a motion to approve minutes for the January 12 and January 26, 2009 meetings. Mrs. Booth made the motion, which was seconded by Mrs. Morgan, and which passed on a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**Proposed Remaining Advertising Campaign from Advertising Sub-committee** - Debbie Dodson provided an update on remaining advertising from the Advertising subcommittee, and a handout to members. Mrs. Dodson noted that no advertising was planned for Bay Day. Radio advertising was planned for the Food and Wine Festival, with contributions of \$1,000 each from the Business Association and the Food and Wine Festival. Ms. Dodson noted that members could see from the handout that the Washington Times ad was quite successful, and noted that additional ads would be running in the Washington Times - two in March and two in April.

Mrs. Booth highlighted advertising for "St. Michaels Goes to the Dogs" and said she did not favor print advertising for this event as the Talbot County Humane Society does advertising for this event, but that she was not opposed to radio advertising. Mrs. Morgan agreed. Mr. Parnes said that the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum could contribute \$1000 towards advertising. After some discussion, the members agreed to put the Museum's contribution toward radio advertising for Bay Day with additional radio ads.

Mrs. Dodson said the members needed to decide on future Washington Times advertising today. Mrs. Booth suggested Mrs. Fasolo making the decision on ad content. Mrs. Morgan agreed. It was decided to leave this matter up to Member Fasolo and Debbie Dodson.

Mr. Mason said that unique URLs had been purchased to track advertising. Mr. Parnes made a motion to approve the advertising scheduled, which was seconded by Mrs. Booth, and which passed on a vote of 5-0 in favor.

**St. Michaels Art League – Advertising Welcome** - Mr. Mason opened a discussion of advertising for the St. Michaels Art League's "Paint the Town Day" in June. He noted that co-op ads in the Star Democrat are planned. Mr. Mason said he would talk to Commissioner Clark about possibly changing the date of this event for next year so as to create a break between events to bring people back on another weekend.

**Maryland Municipal League (MML) Convention** - Mrs. Yohn provided background information on St. Michaels' participation in the Maryland Municipal League's "Main Street" program at their annual convention in Ocean City at the end of June. Participation would require manning a booth at the convention to promote the Town. Debbie Dodson, Helen Van Fleet and

Jon Mason volunteered to man the booth for a 1/2 day. Mrs. Booth said her Five Gables Inn will give a weekend getaway as a prize. Mrs. Yohn said additional prizes from restaurants and retailers would be welcome. Mrs. Booth suggested that the Tourism Board create a backdrop for the booth and Mr. Parnes volunteered to assemble a booth. Mr. Mason recognized Mr. John Booth, who suggested a possible giveaway gift could be a ruler with Town of St. Michaels in the center, and then other businesses advertised at each end like the Five Gables Inn on one end, and the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum on the other.

**Old Business:**

- Passport Page Content – Mr. Mason opened the discussion on the content for the Passport Page. He noted that he was writing the content on the first passport winner (Perry Cabin) and the second winner (Five Gables Inn). Mr. Parnes asked for a foil seal that he could give to Rosemary Fasolo.
- URL Usage - Mr. Mason said he would verify with Rosemary Fasolo that the URL usage is being tracked.
- Event Funding Form - Mr. Parnes presented a draft Funding Form. Mrs. Booth suggested removing the dollar request on the form. Mr. Mason said he would prepare a cover letter to accompany the form.
- Trailhead Parking Area (Banner) - Mrs. Yohn said she would confirm with the members a date when the Commissioners are expected to discuss this issue.

**New Business and Public Comment:**

- St. Michaels Business Association Letter – Mr. Mason read the SMBA Letter as written by Carol Parlett requesting funds from the Tourism Board for the distribution of the Visitors Guide. Mr. Mason provided Mrs. Parlett with a copy of the Tourism Board Charter and noted that Tourism Board funds are directed to advertising. Mr. Parnes suggested that if the Tourism Board was going to support the Visitor's Guide, that it should have an opportunity to review the design and ensure that the flyers are branded appropriately. The members agreed there were a number of open questions regarding this issue and decided to have a meeting with Mrs. Parlett to discuss it further.
- Public Works - The members agreed they needed to communicate with the Town's Public Works Department via the Commissioners regarding placing signs on the parking kiosks indicating that the kiosks are not working. Mr. Morgan said she would write a letter to the Commissioners.
- Stories of the Chesapeake – Mr. Mason noted that the Town of St. Michaels was not a partner in this initiative and that the Town would be eligible for funds if it participated. It was also noted that prior Town Commissions had declined to participate. Mr. Parnes said he would like to make a presentation to the Commissioners regarding funding available to entities designated as being in a "Heritage Area." Under the program, small grants would be available that could help museums like the Maritime Museum. Mr. Parnes said he would put something together to put before the Commissioners.
- Frederick Douglass Highway Dedication Project – Mrs. Booth presented an overview of Frederick Douglass' accomplishments. Debbie Dodson said she would prepare a press release that would include background details.

**Public Comment** - Mr. John Booth noted that, with regard to the Stories of The Chesapeake project, he recalled that there had been something in the proposed agreement between the town and the organization that concerned the Commissioners and which had caused them to decline to participate. He suggested asking the Town to research its records for the details.

**Next Meeting Date** - The board members agreed that their next meeting would be March 10, 2009.

**Adjournment** – Mr. Parnes made the motion to adjourn, which was seconded by Mrs. Booth, and which passed on a vote of 5-0, with none opposed at 10:15 a.m.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Sabrenia L. Yohn,  
Administrative Clerk