

**May 12, 2009**

**Present:**

Chairman, Jon Mason; Vice Chairman, Bonnie Booth; Rosemary Fasolo; Ilene Morgan; Stuart Parnes; and Debbi Dodson, Advisor, Talbot County Office of Tourism; Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn; and 2 members of the public. Member Helen Van Fleet was absent.

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Jon 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, 300 Mill Street, St. Michaels, Maryland.

**Presentation:**

Debbi Dodson introduced Andrea Vernot from the Maryland Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts. Ms. Vernot gave a presentation of the benefits of municipalities being designated as an Arts and Entertainment District and outlined the steps St. Michaels could take to be designated an A&E District and/or a Main Street Maryland and Heritage District. Ms. Vernot noted that the State of Maryland has 18 such districts however, there are none in Talbot County. Ms. Vernot said the designations could have tax benefits for the Town and resident artists.

**Permanent Banner Location:**

Ilene Morgan said she had spoken with Commissioner Joanne Clark regarding the Commissioners' concerns about the size and design of a permanent banner, and their preference for a design similar to that of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum. Member Stuart Parnes asked if the Tourism Board would be required to pay for the full cost of the sign. Mrs. Morgan said that Commissioner Clark indicated a willingness of the Commissioners to help and also noted that the Commissioners wanted to see specifics on guidelines regarding who would be responsible for the management of the sign. Mr. Mason indicated that he had a contact that may be able to assist in creating a design to present to the Commissioners. Mrs. Yohn advised that the Commissioners are currently approving requests for over-the-street signs. Vice Chairman Bonnie Booth proposed that the Tourism Board should review and clear sign requests and then send recommendations to the Commissioners. Both Mrs. Booth and Ms. Fasolo stated that they like the over-the-street banners. Mr. Parnes said the Commissioners should be made aware that the size of the sign is important, and that Choptank Electric no longer wants to be involved in the installation of over-the-street banners as they are concerned about potential liabilities. Mrs. Morgan suggested that the electrical company should consider insurance to cover liability.

**Discussion Topics:**

- **Rack Cards** - Chairman Mason and Mrs. Morgan briefly commented on the distribution of Rack Cards for the St. Michaels Business Association and their request for financial assistance in the distribution costs. Further discussion was tabled until the next meeting of the Tourism Board in June.
- **MML Convention** - The members briefly discussed their plans for the St. Michaels Booth at the MML Convention in Ocean City in June and tabled further discussion until the next meeting of the Tourism Board in June.
- **Year End Report** - Chairman Mason opened the discussion. Debbi Dodson said she would supply Mr. Mason with a copy of the marketing report that was presented to the

Commissioners last year, and handed out copies of a draft report for the current year for the Board's review.

- **Tourism Board Terms and Appointments** - The members discussed the imminent departure of Ilene Morgan from the Board and the possible departure of Member Helen Van Fleet upon the expiration of her term. Mrs. Morgan suggested that the charter for the board should be re-written to reflect that the Business Association seat was no longer an issue. It was noted that in addition to departures, a number of terms were expiring, and those members who wished to continue to serve should submit their intentions to the Commissioners for consideration. The members also agreed to solicit possible new members to fill Mrs. Morgan's place on the Board..

**Announcement of Next Meetings:**

The members agreed to have two meetings in June due to the number of topics and issues outstanding. The meetings were set for June 2, 2009 and June 15, 2009.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Chairman Mason left the meeting at 9:50 a.m. Mr. Parnes made a motion to approve minutes for the April 14, 2009 meeting of the Tourism Board. Mrs. Morgan seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor.

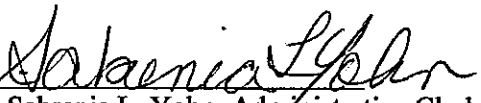
**Comments:**

Debbi Dodson gave highlights of the ribbon cutting for the Talbot County Bicycle Trails launch.

**Adjournment:**

Mrs. Morgan made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Booth, and passed on a vote of 4-0 in favor at 10:00 a.m.

Submitted by:

  
Sabrenia L. Yohn, Administrative Clerk

Date:

6/2/09