

## St. Michaels Tourism Board

## Public Meeting Minutes

July 1, 2009

### Present:

Chairman Jon Mason, Vice Chairman Bonnie Booth, Ilene Morgan, Stuart Parnes, Debbie Dodson, Advisor, Talbot County Office of Tourism, Rosemary Fasolo, Helen Van Fleet, Angela Eade-Spence, Administrative Clerk Sabrenia Yohn, and one member of the public – Mr. John Booth.

### Call to Order:

Chairman Jon Mason called to order the meeting of the St. Michaels Tourism Board at 8:35 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:

Chairman Mason called for a motion to approve minutes for the June 15, 2009 meeting of the Tourism Board. Member Helen Van Fleet made the motion to approve the minutes as presented. Member Bonnie Booth seconded the motion which passed on a vote of 6-0 in favor.

### Old Business:

- **Election of Tourism Board Members** - Sabrenia Yohn noted that during their legislative session on June 24, 2009, the Commissioners voted in favor of current members, Rosemary Fasolo and Helen Van Fleet continuing on the Board with new terms ending June, 2012. In addition, Angela Eade-Spence was appointed the St. Michaels Business Association representative on the Tourism Board with a term ending June 2012. Also, Jon Mason was reappointed as Chairman of the Tourism Board until June 2010.
- **Midnight Madness request for exemption from Noise Ordinance** - Mrs. Yohn noted that during their legislative session on June 24, 2009, the Commissioners approved the request of the Midnight Madness Committee pursuant to the Code of the Town of St. Michaels, Chapter 216 (Noise) § 216-6 (Exceptions) for out-of doors audio speakers in the Central Commercial Zone during the event which will be held on December 5, 2009. Chairman Mason said that this would leave one available request remaining for an exemption from the Noise Ordinance for the year which would probably be made by the Oyster Jam committee.
- **Billboard Advertising** - Chairman Mason opened a discussion of Billboard Advertising and asked Debbi Dodson for an update. Ms. Dodson said she had nothing new to report other than the fact that the costs given to the Tourism Board were half of the total cost of the billboard. Ms. Dodson also said the Talbot County Council had some issues with billboards and she would be meeting with them later this morning to discuss it. Chairman Mason said the Tourism Board was very eager to pursue the matter and offered to make a presentation to the Council if necessary.

- **Vacant Shops Update** - Chairman Mason called upon Member Ilene Morgan for an update on vacant shops in the town. Member Stuart Parnes stated that he had contacted a number of vacant shop owners regarding using the vacant window fronts to display upcoming events at the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum but was having difficulty getting a response. Member Parnes said he had material ready to fill the windows if he could make a contact. Member Morgan offered to assist in making contact with the property owners. The members discussed additional locations and suggestions for additional material that could be placed in the vacant windows, as well as the regulations governing the placement of For Sale and For Rent signs.
- **Passport Program Committee Update** - Chairman Mason called upon Member Ilene Morgan, who said the Passport Program had a committee of four people - Ilene Morgan, Joan Schneider of Point Breeze B&B, T.J. Pecorak of Miles Point, and Aida Liesure of DBS Jewelers. Member Morgan said the committee would be meeting on Thursday, July 2, 2009 to address the use of the expired cards, collecting and supplying cards in lock boxes, developing a list of accommodations/prizes, and finding ways to encourage participation. Member Rosemary Fasolo said if the expired passport cards could be delivered to her, she can cut off the expired date. The members discussed additional ways to promote the program and the participants. Chairman Mason said that he would get the information on the third giveaway winner.
- **Banner Proposal/Signage Update** - Member Stuart Parnes said the procedure the Board developed for over-the-road signage had been submitted to the Commissioners but he had not as yet received a reply. Mrs. Yohn said the banner requests were still going through the Commissioners for approval and noted that Debbie Renshaw, the Town's Code Enforcement Officer, had suggested holding off submitting the Board's proposal pending the outcome of the St. Michaels Business Association signage meeting scheduled for July 9, 2009. The matter could then be placed on the Commissioners schedule in August. The members also discussed the need to determine how to handle competing requests for banners on the same event weekend. Member Parnes said he would be attending the July 9<sup>th</sup> meeting to represent the Tourism Board.
- **Branding and Campaign Ads Update** - Member Rosemary Fasolo said all that remains is a vote on the branding samples provided to the Board during their June 15, 2009 meeting. These samples would serve as a template for advertising going forward. Member Fasolo also gave a history and background on the issue for the benefit of new board member Angela Eade-Spence. Chairman Mason then made the motion to adopt the new branding as presented. Member Bonnie Booth seconded it the motion which passed on a vote of 6-0 in favor, with Member Fasolo abstaining. The members also discussed finding a good photographer for some professional stock photographs and a number of members said they could make recommendations. Chairman Mason said if the Board hires the photographer, then the Board would own the photos. Member Parnes suggested creating and maintaining an archive of stock photos. Member Fasolo volunteered to be the repository for the archive and to share photos with Debbi Dodson.

#### **Advertising Update:**

Debbi Dodson opened the discussion, noting that at the last meeting, an advertising committee was formed to meet separately to lay out the advertising plan for the year and submit it to the Tourism Board for their approval. Committee members are Jon Mason, Bonnie Booth, Debbi Dodson and Ilene Morgan.

**Annual reports due to the Commissioners:**

Debbi Dodson opened the discussion on the Annual Report and the proposed draft Marketing Plan, copies of which were distributed during the meeting. Chairman Mason gave an overview of 2009 accomplishments of the Tourism Board and asked for additional bullet points from the other members. Member Fasolo suggested a list of events that the Board supported should be part of the report. The members went through the Marketing Plan and made suggestions for proposed changes to appear in the next draft. Mrs. Yohn noted that the Board's presentation of the Annual Report to the Commissioners could be added to their August 12, 2009 meeting agenda, and that the Commissioners would need a letter to extend the deadline. Mrs. Yohn offered to assist Chairman Mason in drafting a request to the Commissioners for the annual report and marketing plan

**Comments from the Members:**

Member Fasolo noted that only the St. Michaels Business Association is authorized to put information in the Visitor Center. Therefore, any such requests should be directed to them.

Mrs. Yohn gave the highlights of the MML Convention booth. Feedback was very positive for the Town from both potential new visitors and former visitors. A Commissioner from Middletown, Maryland won the getaway to St. Michaels package, which included a stay at the 5 Gables Inn & Spa, gift certificates to the Key Lime Café and The Town Dock Restaurant, two passes on the Patriot and two passes to the Maritime Museum.

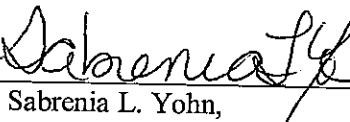
**Public Comment:** There were no comments from the public.

**Announcement of the Next Meeting** - Chairman Mason announced that the next meeting of the Tourism Board would be July 14, 2009 at 8:30 a.m.

**Adjournment:**

Member Rosemary Fasolo made the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Chairman Mason and passed on a vote of 6-0 in favor at approximately 10:15 a.m.

Submitted by:

  
Sabrenia L. Yohn,  
Administrative Clerk

Date:

7/14/09