

Michigan Bed & Breakfast Association
Board of Directors Meeting
September 21, 2021
1:00 p.m. Via Zoom

MINUTES

Directors Present: Al Heminger, Brian King, Marci Palajac, and Patricia Widmayer
Director Absent: Noelene Wilson
Advisory Member Present: Gail Gotter
Staff Present: Linda Singer and Sandy White

Having determined that a quorum of Board members was present, President Patricia called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m. on September 21, 2021.

1. Approval of Draft Agenda

The draft agenda was approved by acclimation.

2. Approval of Minutes

Approval of Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of August 17, 2021

MOTION: It was moved by Patricia, supported by Marci that the Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting of August 17, 2021 be approved as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

3. Acceptance of Financial Reports for the Month Ending August 31, 2021

MOTION: It was moved by Patricia, supported by Al that Financial Reports for the month ending August 31, 2021 be accepted as presented. **MOTION CARRIED.**

Budget Reporting Issues

Following discussion, it was determined most feasible to hold the reconciliation of sales commissions against SBA loan funds until year's end, then allocate expenses incurred against available income in the escrowed gift certificate fund.

4. Administrative Director's Report

A. Membership Report

1) New Members Realized and Likely in the Near Future

As chair of the Membership Committee, Brian reported three new-member B&Bs now reviewed and on board: Port Austin, Cochrane House and 234 Winder Street. Hillsdale and Raymond House B&Bs have submitted applications and are awaiting review. Properties that have verbally committed include The Inn at 97 Winder and Greenleaf Mansion, set to meet with a sales rep yet this month; and Stag's Leap Farm, currently an aspiring innkeeper member, requesting a review in late October.

Marci reported a new property in Charlevoix called Sunflower B&B. Linda will add it to the prospective-member list. Brian reported a possible new B&B in New Buffalo called The Neighborhood. Patricia offered to stop by to check it out on an upcoming trip to Chicago.

2) Member Resignations

Linda reported the resignations of Hart House, Hart, closed and for sale; Innisfaire, Suttons Bay, never reopened after Covid and now permanently closed; Ginkgo Tree Inn, Mt. Pleasant, just sold as a B&B with the new owner now a prospective member; and Hexagon House, Pentwater, whose new owner claims profit margins too small to support membership cost.

B. Results of Increased Assessments/New Dues Payment Method Reminder

Linda reported no response whatsoever from members. Noting the first reminder sent via email had a 68-percent open rate and with additional reminders planned for multiple electronic publications yet this year, Sandy questioned the necessity of a mailing via USPS. The Board confirmed it wants an actual mailing sent to ensure that “all bases are covered.”

C. Explanation of “MBBA Operations” File in Dropbox

Linda explained a Dropbox file she recently shared with the Board contains step-by-step instructions detailing gift certificate operations from receipt of an order through its redemption and reimbursement. It includes working files containing the current gift certificate template and documentation extending from the first certificate sold. Both are the working documents used day to day, relocated to Drobox for 24/7 accessibility by the Board and anyone with whom it chooses to share. She said her next project for the file is a detailed guide to handling room-night assessments. Sandy has added extensive website data. As more “how to” information is added, the Board will be so notified.

D. ADA and Service Dogs: Getting the Word Out

Patricia requested that more be done to get the word out about the ADA’s service dog requirements. Sandy noted there is conflicting opinion on whether the purported five-room exemption for small B&Bs is valid. Linda will attempt to determine which opinion is fact.

E. Facebook Job Board

The Board agreed to permanently take development of a Facebook job board off the table.

5. **Marketing Directors Report**

A. Marketing Budget Game Plan

Sandy introduced a plan for spending the remainder of her 2021 budget in a way that will give members the biggest return on their investment. It includes boosted Facebook posts at MBBA’s expense when a member inn transfers to new owners as well as for new members; two \$250 gift certificate giveaways including one to boost consumer eNewsletter subscribers in October and a second as a conference door prize; and paid promotions of gift certificate sales for retirements and throughout the holidays. The plan was approved verbally.

B. Aspiring Innkeeper “Binder”

Sandy reported she will resume work on the binder after the 2021 virtual conference.

6. Old Business

A. Membership Committee Report

Chair Brian said that unless the Board sees any conflict of interest, he will assume the role of Southwest Region Membership Sales Representative as early as October. The Board agreed.

B. 2021 Conference – Status Report

1) Conference Schedule and Topics

Chair Noelene reported the committee has approved the conference schedule and topics and is in the process of confirming speakers and participants. The annual meeting and announcement of newly-elected board directors is on the schedule for Monday, November 8 at 2:00 p.m.

2) Status of Watch Parties

Sandy reported six confirmed Watch Party hosts. Linda expressed concern that some who attend the parties may not be vaccinated against Covid-19, and encouraged that the vaccination status of attendees, if not a requirement, be disclosed to attendees.

3) Vendor Sponsorships Confirmed and Pending

Linda said she has made or is in the process of making contact with each of MBBA's preferred member vendors, who are exclusively offered a sponsorship opportunity. To date, Fremont Insurance Company has given its verbal okay as has Linda Benson, interim innkeeper, Just Sitting Inn. Each sponsor must commit to providing a "door" prize with a minimum value of \$50. Each sponsor will be introduced by the moderator, who will read a two-minute prepared promotion provided by the sponsor while its corporate logo and other photos provided by the sponsor are displayed. At the end of the sponsored segment, the sponsor's door prize will be awarded to a randomly-drawn, conference-registered inn that must have a representative present to win.

4) Status of Promotions and Schedule

The announcement that registration is open was sent by email to members yesterday, preceded by 'teasers' created in the style of text messages. The conference theme, "Better Than Before," will continue to be celebrated by images inspired by the song, "Don't Stop" as recorded by Fleetwood Mac. Lyrics that apply to the "Better Than Before" theme will be superimposed on each image. After this, promotions will continue frequently with introduction of topics and speakers, door prizes and vendors and reminders to reserve Watch Party rooms with participating hosts.

C. Adoption of the Nominating Committee's Recommended Slate of Director Candidates

MOTION: It was moved by Patricia, supported by Al to approve the Nominating Committee's recommendation that Brian King, owner/innkeeper of Looking Glass Beachfront Inn, Grand Haven (SW Region); that Jan Smith, owner/innkeeper, Maple Cove B&B and The August House, Leonard (SE Region) be placed on the ballot for election by members to first three-year terms on the MBBA Board of Directors; and that incumbent director Noelene Wilson, owner/innkeeper, Sherwood Forest B&B, Douglas (SW Region) be placed on the ballot for election by members to a second three-year term on the MBBA Board of Directors. **MOTION CARRIED.**

The Board discussed the need to set guidelines for nominees in the future, which might include requirements that the nominee be an owner and have provided previous volunteer services to the association; and that when nominations are considered by the Nominating Committee, regional balance be a greater consideration.

D. Good and Welfare

1) Implications of MACVB Legislative Efforts

The Board agreed that at first blush, the proposed bill appears to be the result of an organization attempting to carve out its special interest, but that further information is needed before making any decision regarding support. Linda has additional information provided by the MACVB lobbyist and will send it to the Board via email immediately following the meeting.

2) Google Anti-Trust Issues

Patricia said there is nothing more to be done at this time except continue to monitor any activity.

3) Short Term Rentals – Status of Current Proposed Legislation

Patricia suggested continued monitoring of any action in the House of Representatives as the Legislature is now back in session.

E. Finalization of 2022-24 MBBA Strategic Plan

MOTION: It was moved by Patricia, supported by Marci that the 2022-24 MBBA Strategic Plan be approved as presented in its finished form as presented. MOTION CARRIED.

Patricia asked that the plan document be linked from the “About MBBA” page on the association’s website.

8. Next Board of Directors Meeting

The next meeting of the MBBA Board of Directors is via Zoom on Tuesday, October 19 at 1 p.m.

9. Adjournment

There being no further business before the Board, Patricia adjourned the meeting at 3:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Gail Gotter

Secretary to the Board of Directors