

Meeting Minutes, September 8, 2020

1. Bryan Messick, MBA Board Chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.
 - a. In Attendance: Heather Arata, Ally Britton, Peter Bendistis, Frank Daly, Tim D'Ignazio, David Krull, Lisa Johnson, Bryan Messick, Susan Rhile, David Sibley, Zubair Khan, Catherine Timko
Absent: Warren Kuo, Michael Straw
2. A motion to approve The August Meeting Minutes was made by Frank Daly and seconded by David Krull; Approved unanimously.
3. Bryan Messick presented nomination of two new executive officers, David Krull, Vice Chair, David Sibley, Secretary. Motion to confirm appointments by Susan Rhile, seconded by Pete Bendistis - adopted unanimously.
4. Treasurer's Report:
 - a. Tim D'Ignazio presented the Treasurer's Report, including two P & L statements, one for August and another year-to-date. D'Ignazio reported that 18 refunds were sent to vendors and sponsors of the Food Festival, and that efforts are underway to address sponsorships for Dining Under the Stars (DUTS). Some restaurants and organizations are willing to let their deposits roll over to 2021. C. Timko provided an update of cash in the bank accounts as of 9/3/2020 which includes the DUTS funds.
 - b. There was a brief discussion about the budget process for 2021.
5. Committee Reports
 - a. Communication Committee: Dave Krull gave a report on the newly formed Technology and Communication Committee. While minutes are forthcoming, he shared that they are breaking out responsibilities for communication. This includes D. Krull and E. Blair overseeing social media and technology, S. Rhile working with the Media Arts Council, and C. Timko overseeing strategy.
 - b. Media Arts Council: Susan Rhile updated efforts underway to refresh the chalk art on the wall on Deal's Store fronting on Plum Street Mall. H. Arata and C. Timko are coordinating the effort with MAC. She summarized the Fright Fest Movie night scheduled for Sept 18th, 2020; restaurants in Media are being invited to offer take-out for attendees of the festival. D. Sibley will notify the restaurants about this opportunity
 - c. Retail Committee: Heather Arata provided an update on a promotion to drive traffic to downtown, which includes a weekly raffle for gift cards from businesses throughout the borough. They have compiled a list of all businesses and hope to include them in this "Shop Small" campaign. Any business that is interested can provide gift certificates if they respond. The concept is that anyone who buys something can get a raffle ticket, and there will be a weekly drawing. The number of weekly winners will depend on how many raffle tickets there are and how many businesses participate.

She and A. Britton advised that this requires strong social media effort to market the raffle and educate the market on why it is important to shop early for the upcoming holiday season. They will coordinate with D. Krull on this.

Borough Council has committed \$6,000 to underwrite the gift cards and \$2,000 for supporting marketing. C. Timko is coordinating with the Borough on the release of funds.

- d. Other Events: Zubair Kahn updated the board on other events and activities including
- Holiday Village, he is in discussions with FMFCU about potential funding this year, and exactly what this means. Previous years their contribution of \$800 covered the costs including several visits by Santa.
 - Jazzy November. Since the Jazz Festival as cancelled, he is working on a virtual program to play jazz on the sound system through downtown. This would have been the 17th Annual Jazz Festival
 - Restaurant Week - He is working on a plan for Restaurant Week, typically held the first one or two weeks in November. Work to be done by restaurants – go on line and file certification process. Oct. 5th Gov. Wolf Info sent to all restaurants – First week in November - maybe two.
 - Food Fest: Cancelled this year. 18 refund checks sent. Some restaurants have indicated willingness to roll over the fees for this to 2021.

e. Santa Parade: David Sibley provided an update. This is not an MBA event, but has been extremely popular. This year's event is being proposed as a rolling parade that will wind through the borough neighborhoods to allow proper distancing by viewers. A discussion ensued regarding the logistics and possible inclusion of Fire Trucks to lead the parade and control the flow. He shared that there are potential viewing areas, such as the Court House Lawn, that could accommodate social distance requirements. He is clarifying whether a Mass Gathering Permit is required. A map will be published once the final route is determined.

f.

6. New Business

- a. Bryan Messick reported that Warren Kuo has stepped down from the MBA Board after 27 years, because he cannot give the time the MBA needs. He is willing to stay involved. P. Bendistis made a motion to accept his resignation, ___ seconded this. it was adopted unanimously. Margaret Kuo expected to submit letter of interest

Messick also reported that Joseph Chupein submitted his resignation. F. Daly made a motion to accept his resignation, D. Krull seconded this. It passed unanimously. J. Chupein will provide potential names as Counsel to the Board. During this discussion, it was clarified that the board solicitor does not need to be a resident or have a practice in Media.

- b. Z. Khan presented that Larry Maroni, Media Proper, had submitted a proposal to manage the gift card portal on the VMPPA website. A discussion ensued about the logistics of this portal including metrics, activities, number of cards. H. Arata shared that L. Moroni handled all the back-room operations, including collecting and dispersing the cost of the gift card and notification to individual retailers. Continuing this may be helpful to retailers that are not set up to offer online sales especially during the holiday season. The conclusion was that this initiative is important for the local businesses and that price to manage this is fair.

A motion to accept the proposal was offered by T. D'Ignazio, seconded by F. Daly. Z. Khan was asked to clarify several issues about the proposal before it is executed including about the payment structure, and potential software technology required (and payment) to support the portal.

c Outdoor Dining: David Sibley provided an update including a discussion about the Mass Gathering Permit (MGP) initially submitted to extend through October 31, 2020, but that the Borough Council approved this only through September. Discussion addressed a number of issues:

- LCB logistics through October.
- Whether to extend through October or even the end of the year. If so, time is of the essence since the MBA did not submit the request at this month's Council Workshop. L. Johnson, Council Liaison, indicated that it still would be possible for Council to consider this.
- Saturday Rain Dates. A discussion about the need for the rain date included that this past Saturday was not terribly busy; it was suggested it may be due to Labor Day holiday. H. Arata shared that many of the businesses would like to see Saturday removed and that they had begun a poll of businesses on State Street to ascertain their preference. The board decided that H. Arata should continue to gauge preferences for continuing outside dining and that this should be done formally.
- Dedicated Curbside Pick/Up & Take Out parking signs. Discussion about how best to designate these parking spots. H. Arata indicated that some restaurants have easy access through their back doors but others do not. The board discussed options including getting pole signs, painting specific spots. B. Messick reported that funds for this were approved by the Council, C. Timko shared that the funds were for the painting of the spots and that the MBA would need Borough approval regardless of what option is selected and that the Pandemic Committee had previously approved locations for Curbside Pickup. Z. Khan suggested that the MBA secure approval from Jim Jefferies, Director of Code Enforcement.
- Mask Protest scheduled for Wednesday September 16, during Outside Dining. Discussion of how to handle this, potential to disrupt dining and options to control it. This included hiring police officers to be present, coordinating with the borough to ensure regular police patrol that evening, using cameras on State Street to photograph protestors who would later be identified and sent a fine. The MBA will notify all restaurants and businesses about the protest and offer them the option to close for safety reasons.

D. Sibley made a motion to authorize the MBA to spend up to \$1,000 for additional police security, second by D. Krull. The motion passed with T. D'Ignazio in opposition. He suggested the event be cancelled.

L. Johnson will bring this up to Mayor and Police chief as well.

7. L. Johnson - nothing to report from Council.

H. Arata brought up the concern of many local restaurants that 3rd party delivery services such as Grub Hub are charging fees up to 40% that are not sustainable. She asked the MBA to consider pursuing a cap on fees similar to what other cities are doing. C. Timko will provide best practices to L. Johnson. L. Johnson will investigate the potential for the Borough to draft such an ordinance.

C. Timko presented an opportunity for the MBA and area businesses to establish drop boxes for donations to support the Media Food Bank during outside dining. The board supported this providing the Food Bank collects the donations. C. Timko will coordinate with the Food Bank and with H. Arata to identify suitable locations.

C. Timko reported that there were three responses to the request on the Facebook Post for a student to assist the MBA with administrative and marketing tasks as a part of their community service requirements. The administrative issue is to focus on properly formatting website content. The board agreed that updating the MBA meeting minutes was acceptable providing the content is not changed.

The Board went into Executive Session at 8PM.

The Board meeting reconvened and was adjourned at 8:30PM.

Prepared by Catherine Timko – revised by David Sibley. 9/10/2020