

Niagara Falls Tourist Home Association Board of Directors Meeting February 24, 2021

Meeting Minutes

In attendance: James Abbondanza, Cherrish Beals, Colin Ligamarri, Carroll Schultz Reetz

Meeting began 5 pm EST via What's App Video Conferencing

Previous meeting minutes approved by the board.

Treasurer's Report - James

- Given verbally - \$1,019.71 in M&T Account, \$294.08 in PayPal Account
- Actual form of report will need to be in writing for future meetings. Carroll will provide James with a format.

Media Plan – Carroll

The only suggestion is that either or both Colin or James get on the Vince Anello show to not only talk about their campaigns for council but address the fact that the Association has made an attempt to work with the city and is ready and willing to do that but unfortunately, the Council has not responded.

Membership Drive – Cherrish

- Cherrish had called about 2/3 of the people on our master list that have gotten both their Permits and COC. She intends to call the remainder by the end of the weekend (2/26/21).
- All were receptive to joining other than those that were getting out of the business (about 5 that she spoke with).
- She will provide a list of who was called, who paid and who to review and put that list on google drive.
- Side note – Michael Lewis sold his buildings to Paladino.
- Cherrish will create a master spreadsheet with tabs for membership, businesses, and monies paid.
- Cherrish made a motion to cut-off members access to our Facebook page and from other Association resources that have not paid their dues by April 1st. Colin seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and it passed unanimously.

Guide and Advertising Campaign– Colin and James

- Colin to send list of businesses:
 - Contacted – interested and paid (4 to date)

- Contacted – interested and not paid (4 to date)
- Not contacted – 18
- Marketside Café was only one not interested due to already being busy and not needing the extra business.
- Cherrish will reach out to Dick and Jenny’s, The Country Store and the Shipping Center on GI to participate as well.
- Mr. B’s Manager was very into the idea but needs to talk to the owner.
- Discussion about creating a sense of urgency. As the guide will be on-line there is no cut-off date for publication, but we could increase the cost to \$75 after X date. Board did not make a decision on this matter.
- James set up an example for Colin to use when approaching businesses about the Guide.
- Timeline for Guide and milestones to be completed:
 - Design of the window decals
 - Design of the QR Code Magnets
 - Guides live on website.
- To reduce design costs of the decals and magnets there will be one versions of the window cling decals for both Hosts and Businesses that say NFTA Approved. Cherrish will approach Sue for a quote to design these and Colin will ask her father to do the same. Quotes are due back to the board by March 3rd. The board have a brief meeting at that time to discuss who to use and a time from for completion. James will further investigate costs for printing the decals and producing the magnets. Goal is to have them ordered by mid-March and ready for distribution end of March.
- Above discussion led to discussion about tying in our Logo with the Niagara Gazettes special publications and expanding upon that idea with Destination Niagara and Falls Street. James will be reaching out to Falls Street and James to the Gazette. The object is to get our brand out in the community as much as possible by cross branding their events and subscribers’ businesses.

Legislative – Council - Carroll

There was some discussion about the rumor mill as to what the council is or isn’t doing about the STR ordinance. There was rumor that council members were working on things behind the scenes without NFTA input and repudiation of that from Colin who spoke with Bill Kennedy.

It was decided that without actual evidence of the former, we would not “poke the bear” but be prepared to act if we heard differently from a reliable source.

Communications – Carroll

- Newsletter is to be produced every other month. The next newsletter will be going out by March 7th.
- Articles due to Carroll by March 1st.
 - Cherrish will prepare a membership drive article/reminder – a shorter version to be posted on FB.
 - Colin will prepare an article on the “Where the Locals Go” Guide.

- James will prepare a President's Report focusing on his and Colin's run for Council and how that will/will not impact the Association.
- Carroll will prepare a "Host Spotlight" after a selection is made. Selected Host must be a member in good standing (i.e., paid dues). Cherrish would like a few more days to get more people to pay. Possible nominees are Kathy Dubois, Kent ?, Denny and Joanne Thurman and Doreen Cafarella. Only Kent has paid.
- Carroll will prepare a Legislative Report and a Host Best Practices Section.
- The newsletter will be distributed via email and FB with a link to our website where it will be available as well.

General Membership meeting

- After some discussion about the how and when to hold a General Membership Meeting, a motion was made by Carroll to have a General Membership Meeting/Cookout on May 16th, place and time TBD. James seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.
- The General Membership Meeting will be announced in the newsletter and on FB.

Association By-laws – Carroll

- Carroll has been working on a draft of By-Laws for the Association. She will ask Bob Pascoal if he would review and comment on the draft. The draft will be available no later than March 1st for the Board to review. Changes to the draft will be made during the month of March. The final draft will be made available to general members after April 1st for review prior to the general membership voting on them at the General Membership meeting or by email ballot.
- The by-laws will be addressing questions that came up about who is a member, regular vs. associate members, dues related to each type of members and how members are approved or not approved (the criteria) and all other matters related to governance of the association.
- There will be an article in the newsletter about this process.

Friends Thread

There was some discussion about the What's App thread and how its original intention was for working on fighting the administration's efforts of last summer. The thread is now a place for friendly banter and ways to keep a core group more in the know. This has led to some feeling that it is "cliquey" which we all agreed is true. Also, it was discussed that there seems to be an expectation that board business will be discussed in that thread by others not on the board. After much discussion, James was selected to write a friendly note on the thread that addresses that the board has been meeting and IS actively engaged on the Association's behalf, but it realizes it could do a better job at communication and what we are doing to address that. In addition, we have a vacancy on the board, Secretary, and that anyone in that thread who is interested and would like to have a "vote" should apply for it. The opening of Secretary will also be posted in the newsletter.

Meeting adjourned: 7:15 pm EST

