

Vermont Brewer's Association Board of Director's Meeting Minutes June 7, 2016

Attendees – Sean Lawson, Matt Nadeau, Steve Parkes, Allen Van Anda, Brian Cook, Matt Quinlan, Will Gilson, Melissa Corbin

Meeting Start ~13:50

1. Review of last meeting minutes
 - a. Allen inquired about the contents of minutes specifically the comparisons of the Marketing Committee proposals
 - i. Sean clarified that it was covered in the 2016 Strategic Plan, not the meeting minutes and asked if it was necessary to cover in the minutes.
 - ii. Allen commented it was not necessary as long as it was covered elsewhere
 - b. Sean moved to approve the minutes as is which was unanimously approved
2. 13:50 – New Member Applications
 - a. It was noted there were some technical difficulties opening the pdf's provided resulting in incomplete review prior to the meeting. All information was provided for review during the meeting.
 - b. Allen asked if there was any concern with multiple applications originating from common ownership – the board did not find it to be a concern
 - c. There were seven new applications
 - i. Foam Brewers – unanimous approval
 - ii. House of Fermentology – unanimous approval
 - iii. River Roost – unanimous approval
 - iv. Saint J Brewery – there was some question as to whether they were actively brewing and serving their beers but it was clarified and approval was granted
 - v. Trout River – unanimous approval
 - vi. Brocklebank – approved
 - vii. Farnham – it was noted that the application was not complete as the manufacturer's license provided was expired. The decision was made to table the application until current documentation was provided. Sean volunteered to draft a position statement clarifying the reasons it was not approved.
3. 14:20 – Review of Marketing Committee recommendations
 - a. Melissa provided the setup and overview of the committee's work and their recommendations
 - i. The Marketing committee created a multi part RFP
 1. Website redesign
 2. Merging VBA and VBA brands
 3. Digital Passport
 - ii. Last two months and about 90 hours were spent vetting 26 proposals
 - b. Melissa conferenced in Carol Degener (veteran Marketing professional – Pepperidge Farms) who volunteered in the capacity of facilitator to walk the board through

- i. Melissa recommended we hire a consultant to review Title 7 and there was grant money available to fund it
 - ii. The VBA intends to survey membership to identify their priorities in Title 7 reform
 - 1. Sean will convene a meeting of the legislative committee to develop the survey within 30 days
 - iii. Sean informed the board that the likelihood of the VBA getting a “seat at the table” prior to the creation of a first draft was questionable
 - iv. Sean L would like to see an agenda of the requested changes by the VBA Annual Meeting prior to the next legislative session
 - v. Sean L provided some insight that the motivation behind the reform was to clean up the language and modernize it to reflect current practices
- 6. 15:23 – Festival Committee review and recommendations
 - a. The FC recommends a \$5.00 ticket price increase in 2017. It was decided to table the decision for now. There are still 1,750 tickets available for session 1 (2,400 capacity per session) as of June 7. There was brief discussion of identifying the Friday day session as an “industry session”
 - b. Sean L reported that Laura Streets has communicated that restricted access to real time festival bank account information is making her responsibilities more difficult and has therefore requested full access.
 - i. It was clarified that Laura is able to get a PDF of account activity and status any time she requests it.
 - ii. Steve Miller (VBA Treasurer) reports that real time access the festival account also grants full access to other VBA accounts which is not acceptable. Current access levels and thorough checkbook accounting records should be adequate.
 - iii. The Board supports Steve’s position
 - c. There is a festival budget variance that needs approval related to refrigerated trailers
 - i. Budget is \$1.5K vs. 2016 quote of \$8K for 2 x 26’ Ryder rentals with lift gates for 4 days
 - ii. Conditional approval was granted pending a final review by June 10
 - 1. Sean L and Brain C have some leads that may be more affordable
- 7. 15:39 Review of 2016 Strategic Plan
 - a. Melissa provided a copy for review and stated there were redline revisions for review that were added after a breakout session with Chris Rockwood, JP Williams, and Sean Lawson
 - i. It was stated that VBA Membership expectation is to have full access to the Strategic Plan that is approved
 - b. Review was completed at 16:27 with minimal changes suggested by the Board members
 - i. There was some verbiage modified to carve out some general board business to board sessions instead of residing on the Strategic Plan

- c. Melissa presented a Gaant chart illustrating the timing and scope of the plan to help identify any bottlenecks, and to help rationalize and prioritize plan elements
 - i. Sean L noted the plan is front loaded with potential bottle necks in Q3 2016 and out periods look light
 - 1. It was agreed that all items are priorities and should remain as scheduled
 - a. Some items have close start dates but are ongoing efforts and future reviews are likely to more fully populate out periods
 - ii. It was noted that completion of the rebranding and web work is aggressive with a September 15 deadline
 - d. There was a brief discussion of the infamous highway sign which, as it turns out, is DOA. It was revealed that the signs in question were the local signs, not the blue interstate information signs.
 - e. The Strategic Plan was unanimously approved at 16:38

There was a discussion of agenda items that had not yet to be covered and Sean L suggested the agendas may need to be pared down in the future. Steve P suggested we move new member approvals to email to save time but Sean reminded us that 7 new member applications during one period was likely an exception and we should defer the decision to change the approval process.

8. Discussion of new employee Position Description

- a. Agenda Goals
 - i. Brainstorm of what we want from this position and compensation
 - ii. Review of the timeline for this hire. Any adjustments needed?
 - iii. Employee benefits: Will we explore a retirement plan? When?
- b. It was left that this was the job of the hiring committee and this conversation can begin via email. Melissa noted she had a job description from California as a starting point.

9. Future Composition of Board

- a. A decision on whether of not to pare down the board size from nine to seven is required
- b. Sean L mentioned the Board needs to discuss succession planning and inquired who would have the time and dedication required to take over the President's seat when his term was finished
 - i. It should be a board veteran to ensure needed continuity
 - ii. Matt N cautioned that it was probably better to keep the Board size at nine to ensure more complete transfer of knowledge during transitional periods
- c. A motion was made to keep the Board size at nine which was approved
- d. Sean L noted the VBA needed a more formal election process in the future

10. New Business

- a. The annual meeting is scheduled for the first Monday in November
 - i. Trapp's new restaurant was proposed as a location

- b. Brian C brought up multiple recent solicitations he received from festival promoters for new events that were not necessarily consistent with the Brewer's Bill of Rights and wondered if it would be appropriate for the VBA to respond
 - i. It was unanimously agreed that the VBA would only respond to inquiries made to the Association and individual brewery solicitations were individual brewery business. It was the brewery's prerogative to participate or decline.
- c. Melissa shared that Pete Johnson of the BA was to be in the state and would be attending dinner at Idletyme on July 13 if there was any interest from Board members in joining.

17:10 – Meeting adjourned