

Vermont Brewer's Association: Annual Retreat

March 25-26, 2016

Attendees: Christopher Rockwood- Magic Hat, Steve Parkes- Drop In, Will Gilson- Idyletime, Matt Nadeau- Rock Art, JP Williams- Von Trapp, Sean Lawson- Lawson's Finest, Brian Cook- Kingdom, Allen Van Anda- Lost Nation, Matt Quinlan- Long Trail, Melissa Corbin- Executive Director, Jane Van Buren- Consultant.

Meeting opens at 10:07AM, Friday.

Friday was spent reviewing the results of the previous year's strategic planning meeting, going over membership survey results, and creating the ground work for a strategic plan for the next 3-5 years.

Highlights:

- Mission Statement is good
 - Created vision statement
 - Developed Values
 - Created goals and strategies to achieve those goals.
- *For greater detail see notes from the Strategic Planning Session.

Saturday: 9:30AM start

Review of previous meetings minutes. Sean L. motions to approve, JP W. seconds.

Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.

Vermont Beer Week:

- Currently being run by young marketing group looking to build their portfolio and make a name for themselves.
- Due to the desire to build and run our own VT beer week; better suited for the membership and at a time when the business draw will be helpful, we will not endorse the current plan as it stands.
- For our own, what would we name it: "VT brewers week", "Gregfest", "VT Beer week", etc...
 - o Will G. motions to file trademark for all incarnations, Allen Van A. Seconds.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.

Stowe Brewer's Festival:

- There are concerns amongst the group regarding the merit of supporting this festival.
 - o Not a great time of year.
 - o Focused on the drinker and drinking rather than brewers
 - o Conflicts with our goal of a second festival, in a slower time of year to support breweries around the state.

- Matt Q. motions to not endorse the festival, Will G. Seconds.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.

Marketing Committee:

- Highway Symbol has been debated by the committee, the membership, and the board multiple times
- End result is the frothy beer mug as it is easily recognizable, similar to the google symbol, and could be a precedent for national highway symbol for brewery.
 - Brian Motions to approve proposed symbol, Steve P. Seconds
 - Vote: 7 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstain.
 - Motion Passes.

RFP for marketing and website work:

- A draft of the Request for Proposals that the marketing committee prepared was shared. The timeline showed that the RFP would go live on 4/1/16, collecting bids for branding work on 5/1/16 and the website and passport application on 6/1/16. Work would happen throughout the summer with the hope that all three components of the work would be complete by mid-September. Aggressive timeline, but one that is doable with the right contractor(s).
- Melissa let the board know that this project would take up a large amount of her time throughout the summer and early fall. The board agreed this was a good use of the Association's resources.
- Matt Q. asked about the branding process. Melissa indicated that the marketing committee would vet proposals, put forth the top three to the board with a recommendation of their chosen vendor. Brand professionals will be chosen based on portfolio, price and references.
- PLEASE NOTE: Brand proposals may need to be vetted via email in order to keep with the current schedule. If this is not possible and an in-person decision is needed on June 7th, the schedule may slip back three weeks.
 - Chris R. motions to approve the RFP and timeline, Allen Van A. seconds.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.

Membership Requirements:

- We are receiving many new membership requests as well as a few changes of ownership.
- It would be beneficial to have all applications reviewed and voted on at once. To happen quarterly in-person at board meetings and not via email.
 - Sean L motions to adopt quarterly membership review, Matt N. seconds.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.
- Board should have right to refuse membership.
- To be part of the passport program you must have a physical space for people to visit (and sample/purchase beer), currently brewing beer in VT, and be a member of the association.
 - Chris R motions adopt these criteria, Allen Van A. seconds.

- Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.
- Note: We discussed participation in the VBF as a requirement; however, this was not accepted by the board. We can't deny the benefits of this program to the small operations who can't brew enough beer to attend the festival.
- Melissa to verify after May 1st, Covered Bridge's VT manufacturers notice. They will be removed from the Passport since they do not have a physical space for people to visit.

Governance:

- Governance committee has been formed and held meetings
- The board is in agreement that we need to clearly define positions, responsibilities, organizational structure, and communication channels.
- Would be ideal to create a manual for all board members so each is aware of what is expected of them and the membership knows what we are doing behind the scenes. Melissa can provide the committee with the documents that have already been created and don't need input from the board.
 - Matt N motions to delay creation of a full manual till 2017, Brian C. seconds.
 - Vote: unanimous in favor of motion.

New Business:

- Legislature is undertaking a comprehensive review of Title 7 (contains all laws regarding alcohol).
- They are looking for feedback and information with regard to what we would like to see changed, amended, added, or dropped.
 - Brian C. motions to hire a consultant to comb through Title 7 and present opportunities, Allen Van A. seconds.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.
- There are new concerns surrounding our current contract with the city of Burlington for the VBF.
- Currently we are liable for damages over our insurance policy. This is new and needs to be amended that we are not liable for anything above and beyond our insurance.
 - Allen Van A. motion to approve contract review without legal aide, JP W. seconds.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion
- Vermont Fresh Network: industry trivia night at Stone Coral.
- If we are to sponsor what are the benefits to the membership
 - Allen Van A. motions to pass info along to membership, but refrain from official endorsement. Matt N. second.
 - Vote: Unanimous in favor of motion.
 - All are welcome to attend, but no official support of position of VBA.

- We have previous agreed to shrink the board down to 7 members. With the amount of success we are having and progress being shown, there is an interest of some who's terms will expire to continue as a member of the board.
 - o Terms expiring in 2016: Allen, Brian, and Will
 - o Terms expiring in 2017: Matt N, JP, Steve, and Sean.
 - o Terms expiring in 2018: Matt Q. and Chris.
- In order to meet the 7 member board, only 1 seat from the 3 expiring terms will be filled. We will continue with the plan to shrink the board size and only vote to fill the one open seat.
 - o This may merit further discussion at upcoming board meetings.

Sean L motions to adjourn, motion is seconded. Unanimous vote in favor of motion.

Meeting adjourned 12:30.