



DIGBY AREA TOURISM ASSOCIATION

BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday January 9, 2008
6:45 p.m.
Municipal Office, Seabrook

Present:

Hal Theriault, Chair
Robert Hersey, Secretary
René LeBlanc, Treasurer
Vance Simpson
Tom Goodwin
Jeanne Nesbitt
Angela Lombard
Joy O'Neill (ADEDA)
Wanda Van Tassel
Becky Doucet
Jean Brittain
Dianne Theriault
Carolyn Smith, staff

Regrets:

Linda Graham, Vice-Chair
Heather Jenkins
Ray Tudor
Roger Outhouse

Call to Order:

Having quorum, the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m.

The Chair extended best wishes for the New Year to all.

Approval of the Agenda:

Motion: To accept the agenda distributed.
Moved by: Jean Brittain
Seconded by: Angela Lombard
Carried.

Approval of the November 7, 2007 Minutes:

Motion: To accept the minutes of the November 7, 2007 meeting as distributed.

Moved by: René LeBlanc

Seconded by: Wanda VanTassel

Carried.

Business Arising from the Minutes:

The letter to Destination Southwest Nova stressing the need for a client-centred approach to the new regional structure has not yet been written. Hal will take care of this.

Approval of the November 28, 2007 Minutes (Extraordinary Meeting of Members):

Motion: To accept the minutes of the November 28, 2007 meeting as distributed.

Moved by: Jeanne Nesbitt

Seconded by: Angela Lombard

Carried.

Business Arising from the November 28, 2007 Minutes:

Updates regarding the Annual General Meeting will be given later on this agenda.

Concern was expressed that the declaration of agenda changes resulted in members having no opportunity to approve, amend or defeat agenda as proposed or as amended.

The Board needs to ensure that this does not ever reoccur.

The Chair extended his apologies for any breach of protocol and for what was, in total, a very difficult meeting. There was, he assured the Board, no intentional wrongdoing. After consultation among Executive Committee Members, and in an effort to deal with an overwhelmingly complicated process, it appears that some parliamentary procedures were inadvertently overlooked in discarding the AGM agenda and proceeding with an Extraordinary Meeting of Members.

There was much confusion over the retirement of non-returning Directors.

Correction to minutes should be made in paragraph two, the word “extraordinary” should be removed and the minutes titles “Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Members”.

Financial Report:

René LeBlanc, Treasurer, reported that since the last Board meeting DATA has realized no revenue, and that there seems to be nothing on the horizon until after March 31, 2008.

Major expenses continue to be related to office administration, wages, supplies, etc. René estimates these to average about \$3,000 per month. Therefore, we can anticipate approximately \$9,000 in expenses between now and the year-end.

An anticipated bank balance of \$10,000 is expected to be carried over.

***Motion:** That the financial report as presented by the Treasurer be accepted.*

Moved by: René LeBlanc

Seconded by: Dianne Theriault

Carried.

Budget

On behalf of the Executive Committee, René recommended that a DATA budget be developed. Currently, the organization does not have a month-month map of its financed. It is also imperative that we be able to isolate project costs from operational costs.

Most of DATA's activities outside of daily operations will be project based, and therefore should have separate budgets. A major complication, unfortunately, is that project funding rarely covers administrative costs, so DATA needs to offset salary and offices expenses through the undertaking of projects. We must also be certain to add project administration costs to all project funding applications in order to try to recoup our operational expenditures. Each and every project should have its own line in the financial reports. Currently our financial reports do not have separate project schedules.

René will meet with Jean and Carolyn to draft a budget.

René asks for Board support and permission to proceed with development of an operating budget for the new fiscal year. As the organization evolves, this reporting system will naturally become more detailed.

Revisions to the Fundy Discovery Trail Funding Submissions

Louise Watson, of the Department of Economic Development, expressed fear that DATA would be unable to complete all our planned tasks by the March 31st deadline.

Lisa MacIsaac, Hal and Louise are to meet in Kentville within the next week or so.

Louise requests a letter from ACOA stating their interest in funding the overall project over a period of three to five years.

It was asked whether we could incorporate any fundraising costs into these submissions, knowing that it costs money to make money. This is certainly an issue we need to address, and worth discussing with Louise.

Department of Economic Development will fund the graphic design portion of the application to the extent of at least \$12,000. This would cover the content and appearance of signs ready to be installed in the spring.

In consideration of tight time frame, we shall remove the following from our revised application:

- Revised business plan for Discovery Centre (deferring until April)
- Large Hwy 101 sign
- Brochure

At this point we will concentrate on the brand, design, message and content to maximum of 70% provincial funding. At a request of \$57,000 from the two provincial departments, that means the maximum project cost would be \$81,429 with DATA responsible for raising \$24,429. DATA's share includes fundraising, in-kind, ADEDA, Town and Municipal funds.

DATA's cash flow situation is also a concern for Louise Watson, as they will remit payment only upon presentation of paid invoices.

***Motion:** That DATA begin the work necessary to secure Department of Tourism and Department of Economic Development Funding to reach \$57,000 funding level as 70% of this project.*

Moved by: Jean Brittain

Seconded by: René LeBlanc

Carried.

Bylaws:

Hal expressed gratitude to the Ad-Hoc Bylaws Committee who has done a great deal of work in preparing a new set of draft Bylaws. The Executive Committee has reviewed them and a few amendments included in the package presented this evening.

It is requested that individual Board Members scrutinize these proposed Bylaws closely and submit any feedback, with your recommended solutions to René LeBlanc no later than Monday January 14. The Bylaws will be brought back to the Board for final approval at an additional meeting on Wednesday January 16, 2008.

René commended Dianne, Heather and Rob, who together spent the better part of day with him working on these Bylaws. He expressed his thanks for their efforts.

René also requests that any feedback be accompanied with concrete suggestions. He asks for careful consideration of the notion of geographical representation within the Board structure, and that Board Members be mindful of the distinction between Bylaw and policy issues.

Question arose regarding Council representation on the DATA Board, in terms of whether it should be specifically articulated in the Bylaws rather than presumed to fall under funding partners. The Town and Municipality have been key in developing this organization and this relationship is critical to maintain.

Should Councillors be voting or Ex-Officio members?

Geographical lines/catchment area should be defined, perhaps as a policy.

Jean feels strongly that she should be a full-fledged Member of DATA, even if at her personal expense for the membership fee.

The decision was made to create item 6.1.f in the Bylaws naming Councillors as Board Members.

Section 9.5 will add in the absence of the Vice-Chair, the Treasurer shall Chair the meeting.

With the desire being to deal with the Bylaws efficiently in order to hold the AGM in February, a Board approved draft must reach members at least 30 days prior to that meeting.

***Motion:** That DATA Board Members respond in writing (by email) to René LeBlanc by 5:00 p.m. Monday January 14. If there are no responses these Bylaws shall be considered approved by the Board.*

Moved by: René LeBlanc

Seconded by: Dianne Theriault

Carried.

January 16th Meeting, IF necessary:

Depending on the outcome of Bylaws feedback, there may not be the need for a meeting on the 16th.

Hal asked if Directors still wish to have a retreat day. It may be necessary to have an extended meeting time anyway, as a result of negotiations with the provincial government.

Item tabled until February meeting.

Policies

Some policy ideas are included in the Board handouts.

AGM with Showcase:

Showcase is scheduled for February 23.

For those who objected to holding a Showcase this year, the Board thought seriously over the matter and concludes that there is an important distinction to make between our local trade event and a major commercial event. The audiences and the anticipated results are very unique.

It is suggested that we hold the AGM during the morning of Showcase and feature the Bay of Fundy as Nova Scotia's new "Star Generator". Perhaps the Department of Tourism could present ... Hal will investigate.

Proposed agenda:

a.m. : AGM

lunch:

p.m.: Bay of Fundy session
workshop or two
networking

Showcase is virtually revenue neutral, however this is an opportunity for sponsorship and membership.

***Motion:** That DATA form a Showcase 2008 Committee to be combined with the AGM in order to showcase the Bay of Fundy as a star generator.*

Moved by: Dianne Theriault

Seconded by: Wand Van Tassel

Carried.

Showcase Committee:

Rob Hersey
Wanda Van Tassel
Dianne Theriault
René LeBlanc
Hal Theriault
Carolyn Smith

Membership Plan:

As requested, Carolyn prepared a draft plan to increase membership.

Question posed as to need to promote “benefit” to members, perhaps a philosophical “leap of faith” is enough. DATA is developing the industry. Trying to articulate benefits makes the “sales pitch” very difficult.

- Having a strong membership is the benefit itself.
- Perhaps offer a tangible benefit such as a 10% discount at all member facilities.
- Need to move forward with the monthly interview piece in the Courier.
- Issue of benefits deferred to Membership Committee for something more concrete.
- Need to determine whether we take a passive approach, an aggressive approach which would be cumbersome, or a non-approach to recruiting members

New Business:

- **Fisherman’s Wharf, Digby**

Public meeting was held with the new Digby Wharf management group, and it is suggested that DATA should be involved in future meetings.

Dianne Theriault volunteered to represent DATA at these meetings.

- **Destination Southwest Nova**

Hal is withdrawing from the Board of DSWNS for personal reasons and due to the main time constraints facing him.

We would like to have a representative on that Board. The meetings are held in various locations throughout the area.

Hal will find out what the DSWNS protocol is for Board appointments/replacement.

- **Fundraising**

We need to consider ways for us to undertake some significant fundraising initiatives. It would be ideal to have 2 or 3 major events each year.

- **Ride the Lobster**

Unicycle rally will be bypassing Digby, but will be stopping in Weymouth.

- **Brief Showcase and Membership meetings to follow this meeting.**

Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn.

Moved by: René LeBlanc

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday February 6, 2008

6:45 p.m..

Municipal Office