

## **VASHON MAURY ISLAND CHAMBER OF COMMERCE BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Date/Time:** May 13, 2009  
**Location:** Courthouse  
**Presiding:** President – Linda Bianchi  
**Attending:** President Linda Bianchi, Treasurer Barbara Stratton, Secretary Nancy Sipple, Executive Director Lee Ockinga, Kristen Baron, Shelley Davis, Pascal Py, Natalie Sheard, Melinda Sontgerath, Jim Warren, Priscilla Schleigh Kimmel  
**Absent/Excused:** Molly Reed, Stu Luhr, Patti McClements, Leda Langley, Patte Wagner  
**Visitors:** Gary Sipple, Bettie Edwards

**ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS:** Meeting was called to order at 8:35am.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** There were two corrections to the minutes. It was moved and seconded to approve minutes as corrected. All approved.

### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

**Town Beautification Committee:** Natalie reported that the first meeting of the committee went well. Attendees were all merchants but not all Chamber members. Discussion covered signage, flower baskets, flags and a town center informational kiosk.

The subject of town beautification prompted a discussion on the proposed site of the new contract liquor store in the center of town. Lee showed a copy of the Liquor Control Board's letter to our Chamber dated May 8, 2009, approving the establishment of the new liquor store. Discussion followed: does the Chamber have the right to an opinion about a particular business location? Because the reasons why we might approve or disapprove are so subjective, where do we draw the line?

Visitor Gary Sipple was invited to present his issues with the liquor store move to the Board. Surprised by the news, he was frustrated that the Chamber does not have a more formal method in place to notify the community about such changes. Discussion followed: does the Chamber have that responsibility? And what power does the Chamber have to make any difference? Linda recommended that we look at other chamber policies to learn what they do. Linda concluded that the power is in the Chamber's hands for extreme situations (pornography store, for example) but, generally, we do not take a public position on these issues.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Barbara reported that the office suffered a major computer virus attack that cost \$1200 to remedy. Beachcomber ads are running twice as high as last year. Reports show that 2009 is down \$2800 in gross revenue. There were no comments or questions.

### **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT:**

**Strawberry Festival:** Co-Chair Shelley reported that she needs a chair for the car show and that the committee is proposing a change in the car parade route. Preparation for Festival is going well. Vendor commitments are coming slowly; many are waiting until the last minute. Festival will be missing a few food booths due to Bit of Seattle conflict this year.

**Santa's Cottage:** Visitor Bettie Edwards wants more promotion of our unique Santa's Cottage to "spread the magic" throughout the year. She proposes that it be open at the Saturday Market and during Festival on Saturday from 1:00-4:00. The cottage needs repair. She request funds for candy canes when the cottage is open. Bettie will prepare a bid for repair and candy to present at next month's meeting.

**Spring Fling:** The Board discussed misunderstandings and controversy over this year's Spring Fling. Bettie urged that we correct problems and continue to sponsor the event. Better management/communication is needed. In the interest of time, decisions were tabled until next month.

**BOARD COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Melinda Sontgerath's No-Name Committee:** The committee has been named "Vital Vashon". It has signed on with a PR company, Blonde Ambition, for guidance with target marketing and branding to advance off-Island public relations and business promotion. Step #1: a focus group comprised of Chamber Board, general Chamber and community members met with this company for 8 hours last week and will meet again on June 19, 2009. There is no charge for these initial exercises. Then, for a fee, Blonde Ambition will draw up a plan of action after assessing these day-long workshops. The Chamber will own this report and can implement none/some/all of it depending on business community input/support.

**LAST MINUTE ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

There will be a 15 minute information period at the start of all general membership meetings.

The next general membership mixer will be at Gusto Girls Restaurant on Wednesday, May 20, 2009, from 6:00-7:00pm.

**ADJOURN:** The meeting was adjourned at 10:04.

**NEXT BOARD MEETING:** June 10, 2009, at 8:30 am.

*Nancy Sipple, Secretary, Vashon Maury Island Chamber of Commerce*