

Blackstone Valley Tourism Council, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting
Blackstone Valley Tourism Council
175 Main Street, Pawtucket, RI
Wednesday, May 18, 2022 - 12 noon

Attendees:

Dave Richards, Chairman
Judy Fischbach, Treasurer (via Zoom)
Dr. Joyce Hindle Koutsogiane, Secretary
Michael Gwynn (via Zoom)
Louis Yip

Absent:

Barry Mechanic, Vice Chairman
Kathy Roberts
Lee Esckilsen
Mark Brodeur

Also Attending:

Dr. Robert Billington, President, BVTC
Natalie Carter, Director of Operations, BVTC
Joan Loos, BVTC Staff

1. Call to Order. There being a quorum present, Chairman Dave Richards called the meeting to order at 12:15 p.m.
2. Approval of Notes from March 9, 2022. Louis Yip moved to accept the notes from the March 9, 2022 Board of Directors meeting. Mike Gwynn seconded the motion and the notes of the March 9, 2022 Board meeting were unanimously approved as presented.
3. Treasurer's Report. Judy Fischbach presented the Treasurer's Report beginning with the Balance Sheet as of March 31, 2022, compared to March 31, 2021. Judy explained the effect that the SVOG grant has on the Balance Sheet, as expenses associated with the grant have not been applied yet, so the Income section is temporarily overstated. She also noted the effect of the East Providence tax on the Balance Sheet. Judy also reviewed the Income Statement for July 2021 to March 2022 compared to the Income Statement for July 2020 to March 2021. She noted the Lodging Tax income is higher than anticipated. She again noted that expenses for the SVOG grant have not yet been applied. Judy stated that all accounts are looking good compared to the budget. Joyce Koutsogiane moved to accept the Treasurer's Report as presented, Dave Richards seconded the motion and the Treasurer's Report was unanimously approved.
4. Presentation and Approval of the FY 2022/2023 BVTC Budget. Judy Fischbach also reviewed the proposed BVTC budget for FY 2022-2023. There was discussion of grants and the increase in the marketing budget. After discussion was completed and all questions were answered, Dave Richards moved to accept the proposed BVTC 2022-2023 budget, Joyce Hindle-Koutsogiane seconded and the BVTC FY 2022-2023 budget was approved as presented.

5. President's Report. Bob noted upcoming celebrations: Rivers Day 2022 occurs on June 5 from 12 noon to 4 pm with the grand opening of Central Falls Landing site. This is a free event for the community with Explorer trips, kayak and canoe excursions, dragon boat paddling, learning about the Samuel Slater canal boat, family activities and more. The second event, occurring on Tuesday, June 21 from 5 pm to 7 pm at Central Falls Landing, celebrates the Central Falls Landing opening and those who worked hard to revitalize the area, as well as tours of our new office and refreshments.

Bob announced that a Environmental Education Coordinator has been hired. Samantha Jackson, a recent graduate of the University of Rhode Island, will join the BVTC team soon.

A Smart Water commercial was scheduled to be filmed at the Visitor Center and Slater Mill this weekend. Because the appropriate permits could not be obtained by Slater Mill/the National Park in time, the filming was moved to Providence.

The President's Report was unanimously approved.

6. Consideration of Michelle Keach to Join the Board of Directors. Board member Kathy Roberts has asked Michelle Keach to take her place on the Board. Bob and Dave spoke with Michelle on the phone recently and felt that she would be a good addition to the Board. However, it was discussed that Kathy Roberts should remain on the Board and that Michelle Keach could fill one of the vacant positions on our Board. Joyce Hindle-Koutsogiane moved that Kathy Roberts remain as a Board member and Michelle Keach be accepted as a new Board member to fill one of the empty seats on the Board of Directors. Mike Gwynn seconded, and the motion was unanimously approved. Bob will notify Kathy and Michelle of the decision. It was also agreed that the Board do something to honor Kathy's contributions to the Board. Bob will work on that and will accept any suggestions from the Board members.
7. Other Business. Mike Gwynn invited all to "Rhode Island Day" with the WooSox at Polar Park on Saturday, July 9.

Joyce Hindle-Koutsogiane asked if the BVTC would be involved in the Cumberland 4th of July parade. Bob will look into having the Ghost Army Tank and/or the Dragon Boat be a part of the parade.

Dave Richards gave a referral of his Woonsocket Elks Club acquaintance as a Polar Express Santa. Dave will give him the contacts at BVTC for Polar Express.

8. Adjournment. There being no further business, Joyce Hindle-Koutsogiane moved to adjourn, Mike Gwynn seconded, and the motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned by Dave Richards at 12:50 p.m.