

## OWPA Board Meeting 9/7/23

Board Members present-: Joe Juniper, Joe Glista, Eric Cotton, Anita Davis, Charles Edwards

Absent: Dustin Heineman, Mark Zdobinski, Andy Codispoti, Ed Trebets

Staff present: Donniella Winchell and Chrissy Jeppe

Meeting called to order at 10:07am

Minutes were approved and excepted by Eric Cotton 2<sup>nd</sup> by Anita Davis

Financials report was given by Donnie. More money will be coming in from Deck the Wreath and Tannenbaum. The trails & other events are in good shape.

Eric Cotton suggested that the flyers for these events be sent out sooner to the wineries.

Donnie thinks we will be fine with the payroll budgets. Casual labor is higher than budget so will need to address that, also security costs for some events are very high.

December 5<sup>th</sup> at Geneva Lodge we will be having a retreat. If you would like to stay overnight. We will have a discounted room rate for you.

Financials were approved to file by Eric Cotton and 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joe Glista

Lobbyist: Brian Durdle called and apologized for not staying in better contact. They are going back to the legislature to work on the fire issue. The bill was passed in budget but vetoed by the governor.

There is about 700 million dollars available in a pool for grants/tourism. Donnie is working with Auburn career center to start the model in this workforce development program.

Liquor Control: The industry continues to complain about tardy and inconsistent. Many of the staff at liquor control are still new in their positions. Winery renewals are due for October. Deadline is September 15 to submit online. OWPA will remind members.

Staff is to consider developing some co-op purchasing options for a member's benefit. Ideas for cooping included, Website building, Industry sponsors, bottles, capsules, corks, posts, wire, brochure printing, bottle carriers and pesticides. Maybe OWPA could receive some kind of finders' fee and/or pass all the savings onto our members.

Scholarship: We have \$1800 in funds. We gave \$500 to Kurt and Audriana. The board agreed to make it renewable to them and maybe add 2 more new ones.

Mini trails are all done now, and more are coming. Some of the things that they can get on the trails are wine charms and cookie cutters. We are focusing on Fall themes right now. Three are planned for Conneaut Creek and two along the Canal Trail

Mark from Olde Schoolhouse is working on some ideas for an ORV trail special event.

We need to send out a members list to all the wineries.

Laken & Donnie are working on updating all the membership staff.

Lake & Ashtabula County received 1.5 million grants from their commissioners from ARPA funds for the Grand River Valley. Stephanie Seigel of the Ashtabula County bureau hosted Roger Brooks there for marketing. He provided Secret Shopper reviews of all GRV wineries and made recommendations for improvements. Donnie suggested that it would be a good idea to buy access to all his videos for \$800. We could host online meetings and invite others plus use his videos at the retreat.

Syracuse- Donnie has worked out a deal with Eastern Wine on a partnership. They are paying us \$20,000 to coordinate the program. From that we need to pay speakers' fees and travel. Mike Veseth is coming and not going to charge us. Also, a representative of FIVS [the international wine policy watchdog group, a researcher from Penn State and several others who have committed to date. October 6 is the deadline to have everything into EWE. EWE will handle registration, room fees, meal costs and audio-visual expenses for LTS in exchange for the sessions being open to all registrants.

LTS Illinois- Cindy Brooker of Grapevine magazine is possibly interested in being a sponsor and if there is enough room to hold a small trade show. We need to set a goal to make a \$20,000 to 25,000 profit for OWPA.

23 wineries participated in the legislative mailing, we will follow up with this and visit our members in the offices with the help of the Credo group. We can take gifts as long as they are under \$75.

Laken is planning at least another Discovery dinner for this year at Buccia. The logistics of permitting were shared by ODLC. Buccia will be the partner along with Hundley and Tarsitano.

Several wineries indicated they were in need of professional photographs. Staff were directed to make them available at Wine Conference in February.

The Lonz Foundation event on August 18 went well. Joe Glista attended. He mentioned that it was short due to the Ferry schedule. About 150 people attended. Small program an island resident told stories about the history etc. of the island. State Park board would like to restore the mansion.

Maybe we can get Rep. Latta's wife [who was our contact] to send out some short stories on our behalf of the industry. We need to follow up on this.

State Parks -OWPA was approached about a program to get Ohio Wines into the State Parks. We will recommend a red, White and blush. We need to set up a tasting and a meeting.

We are looking to hire a new bookkeeper, so someone is in the office more consistently. 20-25 hours per week. Membership follow-up and recruitment should cover most of the additional salary requirements.

There was a discussion about adding distilleries and cideries into our association. Conversation is needed on this.

Hall of Fame- We have a few names that have been recommended so far. Solicitation will begin in November.

Wine Buzz- There was a continuing discussion about the purchase of the magazine. A steering committee will be established. The financials were handed out so board members could review them.

Some things to think about with the purchase are- how many issues are logical to produce. Sue Myers will provide sales, editorial and contributor information. Donnie is to follow up on her asking price because there really aren't any hard assets. She will be asked to stay on in a consulting role through a transition.

Donnie is looking to see if A-tech or Auburn career center have any journalism classes available.

There is a blogger and podcaster named Ray Fister interested in exploring Ohio wineries. Joe Juniper is to provide contact information for Donnie to follow up.

Christie Eckstein's VIP program has 50 members. Many don't seem to have much knowledge about the industry. There were some complaints about some of the posts by the VIP's. Some are not the people we want to be influencers. Len Thompson's name was brought up as a possible - a possibility for an influencer but he is too industry-focused. We need some ways to recognize a winery's best customers. Staff will put together some ideas for the winter retreat.

VINO Shipper- many lawsuits are being reported about interstate shipment of wines and licensure and the situation is being monitored by OWPA.

Donnie was asked to talk to Ed Trebets about his role as a board member given his current teaching responsibilities.

Meeting adjourned at 12:07

Notes taken by Chrissy Jeppe