

**Montana Innkeepers Association
General Membership Meeting
Billings, MT – October 28, 2009**

Call to Order

President Lara Lubinski called the meeting to order at 9:00 am. Approximately 55 members were in attendance.

Approval of 2007 Minutes

Minutes of the October 29, 2008 meeting had previously been published and distributed to the membership.

- ◆ **Motion:** It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 29, 2008 meeting. Motion approved.

Financial Reports (Attached)

Stuart Doggett reviewed the income and expense line items to date (attached). He noted that additional convention revenue will be recorded at the end of the month with the reconciliation of the bank statement. Total assets of the association on October 16, 2009 were \$157,809.59 compared to \$157,383.28 one year previous.

- **Motion:** It was moved and seconded to accept the financial reports as presented. Motion approved.

Committee Reports

- **Convention / Education Committee Report**

Maria Pochervina provided an overview of the convention planning and thanked the committee and Stuart Doggett and Gail Brockbank.

- **Membership Report**

Paula Ruark reported that there are currently 178 paid members and 26 properties still owing for the current year. Properties have received three invoices and will receive one more before being removed from the database and website.

Pocherverina encouraged members to review the benefits page of the website. She noted that the committee is pursuing an agreement for reduced rates with Verizon and seeking additional information on a buying group for the membership.

- **Sales & Marketing Council**

Mary Kay Minor stated that the Council had met three times in the past year, including a retreat in June at Fairmont. The retreat included about 50% of the Council's membership. Membership is holding steady. The Council continues the mentoring program and is focusing on education for the sales staff. Several members have obtained their CHSP designation during the past year

Officers elected for the coming two years are Alicia Jones (Wingate – Missoula) for secretary / treasurer; Denise Boggs-Burke (TownHouse – Great Falls) for vice president and Mary Kay Minor (Best Western GranTree Inn – Bozeman) as president.

- **AH&LA – Fred Sterhan and Kellie Moser**

Fred Sterhan, MIKA's delegate to AH&LA, stated that AHLA will hold its national meeting the week of November 7 in New York which includes a huge industry trade show. AHLA offers two conventions per year including the Legislative Action Summit in Spring. Sterhan encouraged others to be involved.

AHLA continues to work on the Free Choice Act which essentially limits the employees ability to have a private ballot when voting for union representation.

Kellie Moser, AHLA representative, provided an overview of the purpose and benefits of AHLA and ways to work together. AHLA is celebrating 100 years as an organization in 2010.

Convention Proposals

On site presentations were given by Butte War Bonnet, Best Western KwaTaqNuk of Polson, Hilton Garden Inn of Missoula, and Red Lion Colonial Hotel of Helena. The proposal from Holiday Inn Downtown at the Park in Missoula had been submitted in writing. By ballot the membership selected the Best Western KwaTaqNuk of Polson as location for the 2010 conference.

Board Candidates

Sandra Johnson-Thares, chair of the nominating committee, presented the candidates for the Board of Directors. Each spoke briefly about their interest in serving on the Board or as an officer.

Motion: It was moved and seconded to elect Lucy Weeder as Chairperson and Sandra Johnson-Thares as Vice-Chair by unanimous vote. This is for term of two years. Motion approved.

Results of the election by ballot are as follows:

- Secretary / Treasurer – Paula Ruark. This is a two year term.
- Board of Directors – DeeAnn Cates, Kris Hauck, Fred Sterhan, Steve Wahrlich (each for a two year term)
- Allied Member – Betsy Pahut (one year term)
- Alternate Allied Member – Rick Cabrera (one year term)

Legislative Report

Fred Sterhan and Stuart Doggett reported on legislative issues. (Report attached). Stuart Doggett reported that the session was successful for the industry and highlighted various bills worked on by MIKA including:

- **HB 150, The Montana Recreation Safety Act:** MIKA supported this bill which states that in some recreational activities the user faces an “inherent risk.” This bill works to limit the liability of providers of those recreational activities.
- **HB 163, The Big Sky on the Big Screen Act:** MIKA again supported this bill and the continuation of The Big Sky on the Big Screen Act. The bill extends the tax credits currently provided to the film industry until December 31, 2014.
- **HB 331, Revise Licensing Fees for Health Inspections:** MIKA opposed this bill in its original form that would have allowed the licensing health inspection fees for restaurants, taverns, lodging properties and others to go up significantly and be set by “open ended administrative rules.” Fortunately, the bill was amended to cap the fees and remove the “administrative rule” provision. As amended the health inspection fees for lodging facilities will be \$40, \$80 or \$160 depending on the number of rooms at your property. In addition, the amendments stipulate future efforts to increase licensing fees must go through a cooperative task force before being changed. Without pressure from MIKA and other trade associations this bill would have passed with much higher fees. The bill passed as amended by the industry and became effective May 11.
- **HB 438, Green Lodging Facility Designation:** MIKA opposed this bill to create a new program within the Montana Promotion Division to designate voluntary green lodging facilities. Our opposition to the bill was based on the concern that the program should not be placed in the Promotion Division and if allowed to pass it could reduce funding currently going to promote our state. MIKA expressed support for the concept of the program, but felt it should be placed in another state agency. The bill was killed in committee.
- **SB 190, Bed tax for heritage sites, historic preservation, and travel Montana:** MIKA opposed this bill that attempted to increase the lodging facility use tax by 1% and use the increased tax for heritage and historic preservation grants. The bill was killed in committee.

- **SB 457, Revise scenic byways laws:** MIKA supported this bill to create a scenic-byways pilot project. The bill will allow local government to submit certain Montana scenic-byways for acceptance to the program. The bill has passed the legislature.

Steharn noted that a MIKA Advocacy Fund will be formed to attack or support issues that would significantly impact the industry.

Sterhan encouraged members to run for Legislature.

Resolutions

Resolutions of the 2009 Annual MIKA Convention and Trade show were prepared by Paula Ruark, Larry Lambert and Paula Ruark. Dustan Williams read the 2009 resolutions.

Raffle

Recipient of the convention raffle basket was Racene Friede. Proceeds of \$1055 will be given to the Montana Rescue Mission for its Hands and Feet Program. It will be matched by other Billings businesses to provide scarves, mittens and socks for children in need.

Meeting Adjourned