



Downtown Arlington Business Association

Special Board Meeting Agenda & Minutes

Date: February 16, 2015

Time: 9:00 am – 10:00 am

Location: Britt Sport Cards

Agenda Items:

1. **Contentious Meeting Examination**
2. **DABA Website Updates/Enhancements**
 - Overall Strategy for Website
 - Forms
 - Pages
 - Secure Credit Card Payment
 - Advertising
 - Web Analytics Web Traffic
3. **Member Brochure Update/Member Brochure Distribution (Jeff Phebus)**
4. **Strategic Planning Session**
5. **Discuss Meeting Attendance**
6. **Stilly Valley Baseball League**
7. **Location Change**
8. **Budget 2015**
9. **Grant Reimbursement 2014**
10. **Grant Proposal 2015 Update**
11. **Hiring Photographer**

Minutes:

Meeting convened at 9:07 am.

Board Members Present: Mike Britt, Jeff Phebus, Zeph Ragland, Mary Andersen, Dana Fowler.

Absent: Brian Bovee.

1. Contentious Meeting Examination

Mike gave several definitions for the word contentious and asked board members if they felt that any of these things have been present in recent meetings. Several members agreed that there have been several meetings that have been contentious and therefore counterproductive. It also creates hard feelings among all attendees and is unfair to both Board members and business representatives. Dana Fowler stated that it is also for DABA to explain and receive input on critical activities. Because of the delays with excessive dissent, many critical functions are minimally addressed or not addressed at all which is seriously impacting DABA effectiveness.

Zeph Ragland stated that he would like to see for formalized proceedings during meetings. The issue is more broad and the meeting should also be managed from a time perspective and we often run over our allotted hour and don't address business issues that are important.

Mary Andersen agreed and stated that Mike and other board members should feel able to cut off discussions and offer to continue them after the meeting is over with us.

Dana asked if we need to vote on this and create a policy? Mike stated that we don't currently have any developed policies and that he believes this one would be a great start. Jeff Phebus would like to see each new member on-boarded and given this information.

After much consideration, Mike stated that he would institute a new informal policy to govern meetings. Notice of this new policy will be announced at the March member meeting. The policy will address how the meeting is managed from a behavioral and time aspects.

Here is an outline of the policy:

- 1) Any member causing contention will receive a warning. If they do not wish to honor this request, they will be asked to leave the meeting immediately.
- 2) Whoever is speaking has the floor, and all other members will be asked to refrain from interrupting them until they have finished speaking – i.e. giving their report or making their announcement, etc.
- 3) The agenda will be given time guidelines for each item on the agenda.
- 4) Board members will ask that discussions be continued post meeting if deemed counter-productive.
- 5) A sign with meeting conduction guidelines will be posted near the sign-in sheet at each meeting.
- 6) The agenda with time limits for each agenda item will be projected on the wall at every meeting if possible.

Speaking Time Limits:

Floor – 30 seconds

Committee Reports – 2-3 minutes maximum.

No formal action taken. All members agreed to the establishment of this informal policy.

Code of Ethics:

A point was raised by Zeph Ragland that the Board should consider the creation of a Code of Ethics policy for DABA as an organization. Dana Fowler Agreed that this would help communicate to all

those involved with DABA what expectations we have with regard to conduct both external and internal. Dana suggested that we take a vote.

Action Taken:

- **Zeph Ragland motioned to establish a Code of Ethics for DABA.**
- **Jeff Phebus seconded.**
- **A vote in favor was taken.**
- **Motion carried.**

2. DABA Website Updates/Enhancements

Dana Fowler gave brief run down on desired enhancements to the DABA website and what this will take. Essentially, we would like to make it easier for members and all other external parties involved with events, sponsorship, etc. to sign up and pay for them via the website. It would save the Board members and committee chairs a lot of administrative work doing it via paper/mail. After speaking with Greentent technical support, it looks as though all of these things can be done somewhat easily but the full cost could not be estimated by them until we knew for sure how we wanted these things to work. For example, if we do load all DABA forms on the website as an html form, then we would need to purchase an SSL security certificate to protect private/confidential information. Dana stated the costs were not that significant – DABA can purchase a standard certificate for \$69.99 per year if we purchase a 2 year package. A deluxe certificate, which protects us up to \$250,000, is slightly more at \$79.99 per year/2 year package.

Mike asked if we really need to make these changes as what we are doing now seems to work okay. Dana replied that there would be benefit to external and internal customers as well as Board Members and Committee chairs. However, one of the most critical aspects of any website, which DABA has not really made any plans around, is the use of the website as a powerful marketing tool to increase attendance of events and membership.

Jeff Phebus wondered what traffic looked like. Mary Andersen stated we used to have a google analytics tool that would generate these types of reports for us, but the login doesn't appear to be working. Jeff says we need to find out what kind of traffic we have – if not significant – then not worth investing. Mary will get this information. Didn't know if Greentent had this information.

Zeph Ragland agrees with Dana that we should look at this in two spheres – internal and external customers. Which is more important? We need to create more, better services for new members and not focus on getting more new members.

Mike doesn't want to create administrative nightmares as we don't have an administrator. Dana stated that we can contract with Greentent to administer the backend of the website. Mary clarified that we still have to keep the web updated in events, blogs, reports, etc. And if just one person does all this, it's too much.

Zeph would like to have all website changes be provisional based on cost.

Mike wants us to focus on getting members to meetings. Mike would like to have a PT administrator. This would help us a lot. Ultimately this is the Board's decision. The members don't really realize how much we've grown and how much work that takes. Not just website stuff, there's also record keeping, policy creation, etc.

Zeph says before we can decide on hiring admin we need to know what our strategic vision is regarding our website. We don't know what it is we would want them to do.

Additionally, Dana doesn't want to rely only on traffic stats because we don't know what the potential is as we've never used the website to push higher attendance at events or specifically try to attract new membership. The website could be leveraged to do both of these things, however historical traffic analysis would not tell us whether it's effective in this particular endeavor.

Mary agrees. She thinks we should set up some functionality and then track traffic to see if working. She will set up Google Analytics account and send code to Greentent to insert on the backend.

It was decided to leave the website as is for now until the Board Strategic Planning Session in which we will have more concrete information about costs, traffic, etc.

3. Member Brochure Update/Member Brochure Distribution, Jeff Phebus

Jeff stated that the brochure is almost final. Jeff has some edits to be made. Jeff will go to Penway tomorrow. Then get new prototype and send out via email for review. Once everything is signed off we can have brochures within 5 days. Dana will send out file via mass email for review on Wednesday or Thursday? We will give them 48 hours to review. So by next Monday we can go to print.

4. Strategic Planning Session:

Set Date, Time, Location – Mike Britt stated we can do this anytime. It would be good to discuss and create an outlooks of where DABA could/should be in 3 or 4 years. Mike believes that we need to get our current activities under control before we plan.

Dana disagrees. Strategic planning should come first so we can make good resource investment decisions. We need to make strategic decisions that dictate all investments during 2015. Need to decide what big goals we can pursue like increasing 20% foot traffic over the next three years.

Mike stated the need to be cautious about what we set up if even the foundational things aren't established like Mission, Vision, etc. Mike recommends looking at next 3 years. We need to set up next group of board members. However, we also need to focus on getting all current activities and processes honed.

It was agreed to try and get this meeting done by end of March or early April. It is likely this meeting will require a full day to accomplish all we need to accomplish. Mike will send out an email to all Board members with potential dates. Jeff requires at least two weeks advanced notice.

5. Discuss Meeting Attendance – This item was not discussed.

6. Stilly Valley Baseball League

Mike Britt stated that DABA should do a maximum of 4 sets of banners. Mike will send out an email message to all DABA members and see who else would like to participate in this opportunity. They will have 48 hours to respond. A secondary due date for payment will be established. Businesses will also get their names listed on the Stilly website as an additional benefit. Payments from individual businesses need to be up front. DABA would then be liable for \$2,000.00.

Dana Fowler wonders about ROI on banners posted in Little League fields. She is concerned about cost without knowing how much patronage this will actually create. The size of the crowds are pretty small. Mike feels baseball banner advertising is effective. He has a banner at the AquaSox field and he does get traffic from people who saw the banner. Dana would rather put \$2k in website instead of Little League.

Dana said businesses should be asking patrons where they found out about downtown businesses and theirs in particular. Then track the ROI before advertising more. Dana would like to limit number of banners purchased to 2 or 3.

Mary Andersen wondered if should dedicate one set of banners to our two main events – the Car Show and Street Fair. We could roll in the banner costs - \$500.00 per event into their respective advertising budgets. Dana and Mike both stated this was a really good idea. Mary said that the point of the shop local campaign was to just increase foot traffic in downtown in general and having banners for our events could support this.

Dana wants to have City involved in creation and cost of a hometown holidays event banner. Mike stated we should focus on sponsorship banner for DABA. Zeph Ragland would like to have 3 banners maximum. This would allow a total of 20 DABA businesses to participate and have one banner for the events as suggested by Mary.

Mike proposed the following approach: He will send out email to all DABA members. He will give participants 48 hours to sign up for banners. Once we know the full scope of interest, we will adjust them within the two business designated banners. We will have one banner for the events. Mary Andersen stated she would like to help with the layout for the events banner.

Action Taken:

- **Zeph Ragland motioned to establish a Code of Ethics for DABA.**
- **Dana Fowler seconded.**
- **A vote in favor was taken.**
- **Motion carried.**

7. Location Change

Mike Britt wanted to make sure all board members knew of meeting location change. He will send out this info in the next member meeting invite with directions.

8. Budget 2015

Mary Andersen will email the budget to all members as it stands today. One still unknown factor is whether or not we were approved for the amounts requested in our grant proposal to the City of Arlington for 2015 events. Mike Britt believed that we should get approved by next Tuesday, which is the next schedule City Council meeting.

9. Grant Reimbursement 2014

Mike Britt stated that we need to get in reimbursement information into the City administration folks quickly. Paul Ellis did give us permission to get additional 2014 costs covered/reimbursed.

10. Grant Proposal 2015 Update

Mike stated that he had unofficial confirmation that our grant proposal was approved by the City Council. We should have official confirmation soon as the City Council meeting was to be held later in this week.

11. Hiring Photographer

It was generally agreed that having a professional photographer would be of benefit. No action taken.