



Meeting Minutes

Call to order

A meeting of MATPRA Board of Directors commenced at 10 a.m. on June 21, 2024, during the organization's quarterly meeting, which was held in Hagerstown, Md.

Attendees

- Board attendees included Chair Morgan Christopher, Chair-Elect Claire Aubel, Secretary Eric Knopsnyder, Treasurer Jake Wynn.
- Full list of MATPRA attendees is available on Google Drive.

Approval of minutes

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mary Grace Kauffman and seconded by Ali Morris. The motion passed unanimously.

Reports

- Treasurer's report – by Jake Wynn
 - Jake explained that changes include handling of Media Marketplace finances, which previously had been taken care of by the host destination.
 - Joel Cliff asked about running a deficit. Morgan said this is a transitional year and that the deficit is a product of Marketplace expenses now being included in the budget.
 - MATPRA will now plan Marketplace two years in advance to help develop sponsorship opportunities.
 - MATPRA is pursuing more opportunities to monetize, and new cash streams will help the organization moving forward.
 - A motion to approve was made by Joel and seconded by Chris Temple. The motion passed unanimously
- Marketing/Social Media Committee – by liaison Eric Knopsnyder
 - Committee to undergo changes in leadership; editorials should restart soon
- Membership Committee – by Lisa Haggerty
 - The committee plans to interview members about benefits of MATPRA membership
 - There has not been any movement in quest to add more West Virginia members, which prompted a discussion about a future change to MATPRA bylaws to removed West Virginia and Washington, D.C., and potentially add interested states (New York and/or New Jersey)
 - Suggestions were made that the committee ask media contacts who they have worked with in West Virginia and that a one-sheet of MATPRA benefits be created, along with

information such as the number of DMOs represented, how many stories have been generated from it along with a QR code to video.

- Website – by Ali Morris
 - Launch of the redesigned site should happen in mid- to late-July
 - Functionality will be very similar to the current site
 - The second wave of updates will allow visitor guides to live on the website
 - Morgan asked that social media analytics and website analytic reports be provided each year from January to November

Unfinished business

- Marketplace 2024 report, as delivered by Kathryn Lucas of Visit Virginia’s Blue Ridge
 - Last day to register as a DMO is July 15
 - July 22 is last day to register under hotel block
 - Media date has passed; 53 media members have registered with more invitations to go
 - Landing page on VBR website will launch July 10
 - Coffee chat
 - June 22 at 10 a.m., overview of what Marketplace is, what to bring, etc.
 - July 24, 10 a.m., details about destination, what to pack, parking situation at hotel, etc.
- Sponsor update
 - Handout available
 - Deadline for sponsorships is Aug. 1
- One-pagers due by July 15 (as PDF)
- More descriptions to come on FAM tours
- Hotel rate is available for Monday, Aug. 26
- DMOs get one room guaranteed at hotel conference center. Another nearby hotel (Hampton Inn) is available for overflow.
- Amtrak is walkable to hotel
- Sustainability
 - Bring a reusable water bottle
 - Bring your own lanyard

New business

- Board changes
 - Cat Jenkins has been elected to board position as secretary
 - Morgan Christopher moves to past chair
 - Claire Aubel moves to chair
 - Eric Knopsnyder moves to chair-elect
- Changes to board descriptions

- A professional development group, which will include previous past chairs, will be formed to keep up with industry trends.
- The past chair will pursue grant opportunities to help with funding MATPRA. Information will then be brought to the board to see if it's something MATPRA would like to pursue.
- RFP for 2025 & 2026 Marketplaces
 - Morgan said MATPRA will begin seeking RFPs for two years in advance, which will allow host sites more time to pursue sponsorships.
- Bylaws/Procedures updates
 - Morgan said the board has begun updating bylaws and procedures and will send proposed changes in July.
 - A vote on proposed changes will be held at the annual meeting in August.
- FY25 Budget overview – by Jake Wynn, Treasurer and Heidi Schlag, managing director
 - Proposed budget will be sent to membership in mid-July.
 - It will be a balanced budget.
 - A reorganization, along with the use of QuickBooks and Wild Apricot should make it easier
 - Revenue-generating ideas include:
 - Vendors at Marketplace, which has been quickly embraced by interested vendors
 - Sponsorship opportunities in newsletters
 - Annual sponsorships of MATPRA
 - Monetization will help keep dues from rising
- Motion to separate Marketing and Social Media Committees is made by Morgan and seconded by Mary Grace Kauffman. Motion passes unanimously.
- Aaron Jumper agrees to serve as interim chair for Social Media Committee
- Morgan suggests inviting reporters to Quarterly meetings.
 - Morgan said it helps to justify attendance
 - Suggestion draws some support, as it could increase the visibility and value for MATPRA members and journalists, and some dissent, with questions about who would pay for media members meals and concerns about how their presence would change the dynamic of the Thursday night dinner.
 - Morgan suggests that on registration form, a checkbox could be added to ask “would you be willing to host a media member?”
- Winter Quarterly meeting
 - Morgan suggests that a one-hour winter quarterly meeting be made virtual, but not count toward the required attendance for Marketplace
 - Discussion about four in-person meetings, perhaps in different seasons or in different geographic locations, drew support and dissent.
 - Aaron Jumper asked if the Marketplace requirement of attendance at one meeting could be circumvented by paying an extra fee. Claire said that MATPRA wants an active and involved membership.
 - An informal vote found 15 members in favor of three in-person meetings versus 8 supporting four in-person meetings per year.

Announcements

- Morgan announced that Madden Media will host a professional development webinar on AI that will be open to everyone on staff at member organizations.

Work Session

- Members shared challenges they are experiencing and sought feedback from their DMO colleagues

Professional Development

- Freelance writers Anna Champagne and Laura Powell shared their opinions on the state of the industry in 2024.
 - DMOs should highlight interesting local characters and businesses on press trips
 - Make obtaining images easy and seamless.
 - Avoid the phrases “hidden gem” and “something for anyone” at all costs
 - Media kits should draw to specific attractions
 - Links to stories already published can be a negative, because it’s already been covered, but can also show trends

Eric L Knopsnyder

Secretary

Aug. 27, 2024

Date of approval