



## MINUTES

Date/Time: Thursday, April 15 (3:30pm)  
JW Marriott – Salon A

### MISSION

*Our mission is to provide Kent County hospitality related businesses an opportunity to meet professionally with a common interest to better serve our industry and community while furthering the overall tourism landscape of our region.*

### DISCUSSION ITEMS

Welcome & Introductions: Elizabeth Nabor, KCHA Vice President

Approval of March 2021 Minutes (Motion: Jane Lovett | Second: Katy Tigchelaar)

Approval of March 2021 Financial Report Balance: \$6,048 (Plus about \$1,000 in PayPal) (Motion: Jane Lovett | Second: Tricia Shangle)

Presentations

- **Ice Brigade – Randy Finch**  
*Leading local efforts to rejuvenate events in the fall – weddings and corporate – in the Grand Rapids area despite negative media attention to the contrary. Helping local businesses to help with fall bookings for larger events, given the increased number of vaccinations. Planning a “**Grand Re-Opening**” of the hospitality industry to get the narrative going as to how events (food, photography, etc.) will be held in a safe manner. Likely this event will be held in the spring – all day “walk-through” trade show type of event to showcase sanitization, temperature takers, ventilation, touchless registration and other safety protocol. [Randy@IceBrigade.com](mailto:Randy@IceBrigade.com) | 616-262-5968.*
- **Summit Point Roofing – Richard Luimes (Commercial Facilities)**  
*Reactive vs Proactive Roofing strategies for commercial facilities. Offering a free inspection program with a comprehensive report and condition assessment, repair plan and cost estimates for individual properties. Also helping property managers with regular inspection and maintenance to prevent more expensive issues in the future. Also looking at insurance claim situations. [rluimes@summitpointroofing.com](mailto:rluimes@summitpointroofing.com) | 616-215-6710.*
- **Grow1000 – Blythe Kazmierszak – Principal, Blythe Talent**  
*Partnered with the City of Grand Rapids after the protest and COVID of summer 2020 looking at developing a program for youth work experience placement. This year, a career assessment for youth to find out where their passions are to direct them toward future options. This is a 6-week summer program from mid-June through the end of the July. Cost: \$1,800 (under 18) or \$2,000 (over 18). Offering a diverse workforce for participants. Working with local non-profits to find opportunities for growth in their neighborhoods and ways to rebuild their careers - including from homeless shelters and putting people back to work and getting people back to a place of stability. [bk@blythetalent.com](mailto:bk@blythetalent.com) | (773) 294-2506.*

### Summer Internships (summer, ages 15-24)

*GRow1000 is a City of Grand Rapids youth employment program offering a 6-week, 120-hour internship from June 14th through July 23rd. The cost is \$1,800 for placements under 18 and \$2,000 for those over 18. <https://www.grandrapidsmi.gov/Government/Programs-and-Initiatives/GRow1000>*

## Monthly Reports

- **Experience Grand Rapids – Kelly Messerly, Marketing Content Manager**
  - Gearing up for Travel & Tourism Week May 2-8, including a rack card on summer events and activities for frontline staff to share with guests – including ArtPrize, Culture Pass and other programs including a QR code. The website, ExperienceGR.org, has all the safety protocol details for properties (masks, pools, safety measures, indoor / outdoor dining).
  - [MeetConfidently.com](https://www.meetconfidently.com) is a new website set up for meeting groups with regard to mandates.
  - Hotel deals with consecutive nights earns you a free Culture Pass.
  - General Travel Updates: <https://www.experiencegr.com/travel-updates/>
  - Outdoor Dining: <https://www.experiencegr.com/blog/post/outdoor-dining/>
- **Grand Rapids Diversity & Inclusion – Kelly Messerly, Marketing Content Manager**
  - Looking for someone from KCHA to serve on the Board to have voices represented on the committee.
  - Academy of Hospitality and Tourism program with Ottawa Hills High School continues: <https://www.grps.org/ottawahigh-academy-of-hospitality-tourism>
  - If there is an interest in hosting a job fair or if there is some other way to assist with staffing issues, reach out to Angela.
- **West Michigan Sports Commission – Katy Tigchelaar & Alyssa Updegrave**
  - Sports are starting up again. 7 events this weekend, but with lower numbers.
  - Looking for more rooms in early May for basketball.
  - Gala is tentatively rescheduled for September for Jack Nichlaus due to DeVos Place being used as a vaccination center.
  - Events for 2022 and 2023 are starting to pick up as well.
- **West Michigan Tourist Association – Karen Breckon (via email)**
  - *WMTA.org has been trending more than double the amount of web traffic. People are eager to travel again. I continue to see a lot of out of state plates throughout West Michigan which is very exciting!*
  - *The 2021 Lake Michigan Lighthouse Maps will be delivered tomorrow! If you'd like some for your property, please let me know.*
  - *New Carefree Travel guides are out. If your guests would be interested in fresh ideas of fun places to visit throughout our great state, this 2021 guide is a must.*
- **Women in Hospitality Leadership – Grand Rapids – Elizabeth Nabor**
  - *Emily @ MRLA to host a virtual event.*
  - *New FB is being created for the group to reflect the new name.*
- **Grand Valley State University**

*No Report*
- **Ferris State University – Kaky Wolfer**

*Looking forward to the end of the semester (with no spring break this year). Hiring is insane with so many job opportunities for students to get out in the workforce.*
- **Michigan Hospitality Educators Alliance – Kaky Wolfer**

*Hoping to host a fall in-person career fair on campus.*
- **Michigan Cares for Tourism – Jane Lovett**

*Dates for fall (Sept / Oct) will feature 10 destinations around the state as part of “30 Days of Giving”. Registration to open in mid-May during National Tourism Week. Smaller events (25-30 small groups). Mostly will be day trips (except for those in the Upper Peninsula). No group transportation.*
- **Putting for Pineapples Golf Outing – Dianna Stampfler**

*Registration opening online by the end of April.*

## Upcoming Meetings & Events

- Thursday, May 20 – KCHA Membership Meeting @ Peaches B&B (bring your own chair)
- Monday, June 14 – KCHA Golf Outing @ Sunnybrook Country Club
- Thursday, August 19 – KCHA Membership Meeting (Location TBD)
- Thursday, September 16 – KCHA Membership Meeting @ Residence Inn Downtown
- September 16-October 3 – ArtPrize 2021

## Round Table Discussion

- Randy Finch – shared details about silent disco and other amenities for events available through Ice Brigade.
- Rachel Kammer – noted increased crime at hotels – drugs, damage, credit card, raising incidental hold per night and suggested a way to share details among hotel members to help in curbing this activity.
- Jane Lovett – suggested having another mental health person on the agenda to address issues within the industry.

Adjournment (Rachel Kammer / Jane Lovett)

### **Kent County Hospitality Association**

PO Box 230092 — Grand Rapids, MI 49523-0092

**[www.KentCountyHospitality.org](http://www.KentCountyHospitality.org)**

**[www.facebook.com/groups/KentCountyHospitality](https://www.facebook.com/groups/KentCountyHospitality)**