



MINUTES

Date/Time: Thursday, February 15 – 3:30pm

Location: Canopy Hotel

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: Lisa Calhoun, KCHA President

David Jibson-KCHA -Dianna Stampler-KCHA-Kathryn Woolfer-FSU-Paige Bodine-WMTA-Kaylie Pomper-WMTA-Mollee Pifer KCHA-Sarah Barry- HIGRDT-Todd Kissel- HiGRDT-Jeff Lawn-Sheraton-Ed Wilson- CIS East Beltline-Paul Cooper-ServPro-Tim Westrate- Lady Americana Midwest Mattress-Jennifer Sparrow-MRLA-Jaylyn Mccloy -EXGR-Qi'shaun Coyle-EXGR-Mary Manier-EXGR-Britny Avery-EXGR-Stephanie Montgomery-Holiday Inn GR Airport-Anna Colley-GRRMI/GRRPA-Kevin Mix-Thermalnetics-Kyle Holst-Canopy

Approval of January 2024 Annual Meeting minutes (Motion: Ed Wilson | Second: Kyle Holst)

Treasurer's Report & Membership Report – David Jibson, KCHA Treasurer (\$4,960 starting balance, \$5,200 ending balance. Still collecting membership invoices, if you haven't yet submitted yours, please do so ASAP. Anyone not renewed by April 1 will be removed from the website).

Tabled Action: Board of Directors Vote for Vice President & Treasurer (2024-2026) (As there were no nominations, the positions will remain the same for 2024-2026 with Kristi Jack serving as Vice President and David Jibson serving as Treasurer).

MONTHLY REPORTS

Experience Grand Rapids

- Attraction passes for 2024 have been sent to hoteliers to pass out to guests. Any issues with the digital pass connect with Jaylyn for anything with these passes and codes.
- RSVP for the annual Tourism Meeting on March 19 at Frederik Meijer Gardens, if you have not yet. The meeting will also include Happy Hour and then free admission to the Butterflies are Blooming exhibit.
- Experience Grand Rapids & Pure Michigan are working with Brand USA on a new free platform for group tour operators called "Tourism Exchange".

Grand Rapids Diversity & Inclusion

- Working on a learning management system to give frontline workers exposure to customer service training. The ideal platform is to give them modules, information about different cultural events or important dates to connect to guests with.
- Working on expanding their academy for hospitality and tourism. Looking into expansion into 5 schools this year. Took a trip to Miami to see how they operate those schools.
- Looking for teachers. Reach out to Jordoun for introductions. Looking for internships for high-school employees. If you want to host or go in and be a guest speaker please reach out!

- Timeline: NAF creates the curriculum, and a year of planning will start and wrap up in 2025 and launch with 2025-2026 academic year.
- Will the curriculum change for the current schools involved? What is the timeline for guest speakers?
 - The district chooses how to bring in their curriculum to the schools' current guidelines. 2x a month working on a different engagement with the current students whether it be a guest speaker or taking the kids on a field trip.
- How can KCHA get involved?
 - Offer to visit the classroom during the school year.
- Save the date for November 7 for Savor and Soar for the kids and different partnership options. KCHA will be getting involved and more information will be shared in the fall.

West Michigan Sports Commission

- Bids are out for the NCAA Championships. Announcements will be made in October.

West Michigan Tourist Association

- Wrapped up Care Free Travel Guide for the 2024 and it is getting printed right now.
- Lighthouse Map will be out in April.
- Working on a new website with simple view-more updates to come. Members should make sure to add events to the website, as this is where they draw content for social media.

Women in Hospitality Leadership-Grand Rapids

- The annual statewide conference will be November 20 in Grand Rapids. Working on bringing in HLA November 19. More info to come!

Grand Valley State University

- A Student networking event is planned for March 25. Sign up if you haven't done so already.

Ferris State University

- Just finished internship week which brought in a lot of great guest speakers and created networking opportunities.
- An alumna of the program is now running Gillcrest Farms, a new winery in Suttons Bay.

Grand Rapids Community College

- No report.

Michigan Restaurant & Lodging Association

- Capital Day is May 8 in Lansing.
- Hospitality Training is updated. The course is hybrid. Have really finalized the dates to give a heads up for the time commitment. Completely free and a \$500 bonus when you complete for the first 2,000 participants.
- Alliance: It was announced that there is \$50 million in Pure Michigan funding. Actually, only \$15 million is earmarked for Pure Michigan as the marketing arm of tourism through MEDC. The rest is going to a development partnership utilizing the "Pure Michigan" branding.
- Feb. 13, lawmakers introduced a 10-bill package (HB 5437-5446 Short Term Rental Reform) intended to regulate Michigan's short term rental market. Although the bills as passed would allow local taxes; none of the funds generated by short-term rental taxes will help promote tourism in MI which remains underfunded by the MI legislature and a top priority for the MRLA.

Michigan Cares for Tourism

- Mini clean-up project in April in Kalamazoo in partnership with the Pure Michigan Tourism Conference. The group will be working with the Kalamazoo Growlers and building wiffleball fields.
- The main volunteer event is Monday, May 20 on Belle Isle in Detroit (with a local charter school) as part of National Tourism Week. Working on transportation and hotel details.

- Registration for both are open at www.michigancaresfortourism.com

Upcoming Meetings & Events (See attached for 2024 KCHA Meeting Schedule)

- Tuesday, March 19 – Experience Grand Rapids Annual Meeting & Tourism Forum @ Frederik Meijer Gardens
- Thursday, March 21 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ West Michigan Sports Commission
- Monday, March 25 – GVSU Networking Extravaganza at Hager-Lubbers Exhibition Hall (DeVos 105E)
- Tuesday, April 9 to Thursday, April 11 – Pure Michigan Tourism Conference in Kalamazoo
- NO APRIL MEMBERSHIP MEETING
- Thursday, May 16 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ Amway Grand Plaza's Pickleball Courts
- Monday, May 20 – Michigan Cares for Tourism @ Belle Isle, Detroit
- Thursday, June 20 – Monthly Membership Meeting @ Watermark Country Club's CORK

Round Table Discussion

Adjournment

Kent County Hospitality Association
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www.KentCountyHospitality.org
www.facebook.com/groups/KentCountyHospitality