



RED MOUNTAIN

AVA ALLIANCE

February 11th, 2021 Meeting Minutes

This meeting took place via Zoom; contact alicia@redmountainava.com for a recording of the meeting.

The meeting began at 8:00 a.m.

Attendance

Tim Hightower, President
Kathy Cortembos, Vice President
April Reddout, Secretary
Alicia Brown, Executive Director

Hannah Coulson, Board Member
Maggie Hedges, Board Member
Will Hoppes, Board Member
Even Johansen, Board Member
Mellissa Whittaker, Board Member
Amy Johnson, Member
Pat Gates, Sponsor
Kayt Mathers, Play Nice Public Relations

Presentation from Play Nice Public Relations

Tim introduced Kayt Mathers of Play Nice Public Relations, the Alliance's new PR agency. Kayt notified the board that her team is currently setting appointments with all Alliance members in 30 minutes interviews with the goal of getting to know the businesses and the AVA, and learn the stories our members are telling. Play Nice will use this information to find common threads to use throughout their eight-month contract with the Alliance. Alicia will send a reminder email to those that have not yet signed up for an interview time. Play Nice is hoping to have all interviews finished by the end of February.

In March, Play Nice will begin work on updating redmountainava.com with new copy and more images, adding resources to create a 24 hour hub of resources for media, trade, members, etc. to use.

Approval of January Meeting Minutes

The January Meeting Minutes were provided to board members prior to the meeting. Tim noted one small typo, changing “members” to “memberships” under *Partnership Development Updates*. Kathy motioned to approve the minutes with the correction made. Tim seconded the motion and it passed with unanimous consent. Maggie did not attend the January meeting and abstained from the vote.

January Financials

Alicia presented the January financial reports. Alicia reported that as of Jan 31, the Alliance had \$94,000 in the bank and approximately \$28,000 of member/sponsor income in Accounts Receivable (A/R.) Approximately \$13,500 in A/R have been received following Jan 31. Alicia also notified the board that the \$10,000 sponsorship payment from Moss Adams has been received and is no longer included in A/R; Alicia is still waiting to receive an invoice for \$10,000 for accounting fees from Moss Adams and the expense is not yet reported in the financials.

Maggie recommended setting up an electronic payment option on QuickBooks to accept ACH payments. Alicia will look into getting this set up; if it is not an easy process, Alicia will make sure to note this when looking for a new accountant mid-year.

Tim notified the board that PPP loans has been extended to include assistance for non-profits. Tim motioned to move forward with applying for a PPP loan. Maggie seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion on Wine Inventory

Alicia provided the board with an update on Alliance wines remaining in inventory and provided a list of potential influencers the Media & Trade Relations and Digital Strategy Committee created. The board recommended Alicia reach out to all members with wines remaining in the inventory to make sure they are ok with the bottles being sent to media. Kayt will work with her team to create a recommendation to present at the March board meeting.

County Zoning

The board discussed a request to update zoning on Red Mountain to allow for a permanent farm stand on property less than 20 acres. Although the board agreed that overall a project like this would be complementary to the other agricultural businesses on Red Mountain and it could be a positive addition to the AVA, board members questioned whether this should be an Alliance decision. The board would like more details on the request: are they asking for a variance request or are they wanting to change the whole statute? Alicia will work with Benton County, the Events & Infrastructure Committee and the Executive Committee to move forward.

Committee Updates

Executive: No new updates reported. The board recommended updating the name of the newsletter to something more catchy. Play Nice PR will look into ideas and will present a list of suggestions at the March meeting.

Events & Infrastructure: Maggie presented the wines selected to be featured during the Alliance's upcoming virtual series celebrating 20 years of Red Mountain with Owen Bargreen. All wineries that submitted Red Mountain AVA wines will have one wine featured during the series. The series will feature two weeks of Cabernet Sauvignon, a week focused on blends and a final week which will feature other varietals. Maggie noted the need to create a new name for the final week as well as instructions for members to help promote the event. The Digital Strategy Committee and Play Nice will meet on Friday, February 12th to create a toolkit that will help members promote the virtual series; they will also create a plan for advertising the event on social media.

Kathy reported that the construction of the new sign on Quintessence property is expected to begin in March or April. She is still waiting to hear back from Department of Transportation regarding signage on I-82 and is hoping to have a new update to report at the March meeting.

Partnership Development: Alicia reported that twenty-seven of the thirty 2020 members and eight 2020 sponsors have renewed for 2021. Additionally, Alicia has received confirmation from new members Force Majeure Vineyards, Quilceda Creek, Soos Creek Wine Cellars, and Tinte Cellars and new Friend of Red Mountain sponsor, Vintner's Direct. One 2020 member elected not to renew their membership for a total anticipated member income of \$40,345.75 (103% to goal) and sponsor income of \$9,500 (48% to goal.)

The Partnership Development committee also recommended moving forward with a sponsorship trade with Red Mountain Trails. The trade would provide Red Mountain Trails with a 2021 Friends of Red Mountain sponsorship (\$225-\$300 value.) In return, the Alliance would receive a total of four hours of wagon rides, split between two events (\$600 value.) Tim motioned to approve the trade with Red Mountain Trails. Kathy seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Media & Trade Relations: No new updates reported.

Digital Strategy: Mellissa notified the board that, in the first month of utilizing storylines created in the January meeting, the Digital Strategy Committee has surpassed their goal of 50 new followers on Instagram per month. Facebook followers have taken a small dip, which the committee anticipates will correct itself once the digital ad campaign has begun for the March virtual series.

Open Member Forum

Alicia reported that Thurtle Vineyard is currently for sale.

No other updates were reported.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 a.m.