

**Visitor Studies Association
Business Meeting
Saturday, July 29, 2006 – Grand Rapids
MINUTES**

Call to Order

President Alan Friedman called the 19th annual business meeting to order.

Announcements

Alan remarked that the nature of the Visitor Studies Association is member-based and member-driven, and he urged members to become involved in VSA to affect positive change in the association.

Alan then acknowledged the special efforts of two individuals. He named Daryl Fischer as the “Heroine of the Conference” for her tremendous work with the Grand Rapids host committee. Alan also recognized Randy Roberts not only for her countless hours of work on the conference, but also for bringing to VSA her talent and ability to help advance the organization as VSA’s first Association Manager.

Conference Planning Recognition and Invitation to Ottawa in 2007

Nikki Andersen thanked all those who were especially key to the success of the conference in Grand Rapids. Nikki then announced that VSA is committed to Houston, Texas, for the 2008 Visitor Studies Conference. Nikki was then joined by Jennifer Elliot from Ottawa; Jennifer invited all to “come and discover Ottawa” in 2007.

Nikki announced that the Ottawa conference will be bi-lingual and VSA is seeking translation services. She also said that the call for papers will be coming soon. Matt Sikora and Jessica Sickler are the 2007 Program Chairs. In that they are seeking to make the 2007 conference as inclusive as possible, members who would like to be involved with program planning are urged to contact Matt or Jessica.

Alan reminded us that all VSA work is done through committees and members should contact committee chairs to become involved.

Approval of Minutes from 2005 Business Meeting

AT Stephens moved to accept the minutes of the 2005 Business Meeting; Ellen McCallie seconded; the motion carried.

Treasurers Report

Kirsten Ellenbogen reported that the Board of Directors would be discussing the preliminary 2007 budget at the Board meeting immediately following the Business Meeting. Kirsten said that the budget contains some extraordinary expense including translation expense for the 2007 conference as well as legal advice concerning the VSA office move to Ohio. VSA is seeking in-kind donations or other assistance for these services but may have to dip into the contingency fund. Kirsten is continuing to work with committees to shape the 2007 budget.

Association Manager Report

Randy Roberts acknowledged the work of Daryl Fischer and Sue Sturtevant as well as the Grand Rapids Host Committee in planning and implementing the 2006 conference. Randy reported that her focus has been on accomplishing the office move as well as planning for the conference. Reflecting on the past year, Randy sees VSA as in a period of tremendous growth. Randy hopes to continue to work to shape the future of VSA, and invites members to become active in doing the same.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee

Alan Friedman reported that the Executive Committee (EC) meets with a full agenda each month, and with much communication between meetings. He sees the EC as the “Rapid Response Team” for VSA. Because of this, the EC must sometimes act on behalf of VSA in order to meet pressing deadlines, and one example of this is in proposal development and submission. Alan reported that VSA is increasingly being asked to become part of proposals – as are many individual VSA members and Board Members – which sometimes necessitates confidential communications. Alan helps the EC navigate this, remaining sensitive to grantors, partnering organizations, and VSA members, while keeping the best interest of VSA in mind.

Vice President for Operations

Daryl Fischer reminded us that VSA is a member organization both in terms of service to members and in members serving the association, calling it “life-long service.” To better communicate with members, VSA is working to improve the e-newsletter in terms of content and distribution. A show of hands revealed that many members had not received the June e-news; Daryl and Randy will continue to work to solve the technical issues of e-news distribution.

Resource Development Committee

As the new chair of the Resource Development Committee, Mac West reminded us that every volunteer organization needs support from members and good friends and invited anyone interested in working on “getting money” to contact him.

Board Development Committee

Cecilia Garibay explained that the Board Development (BD) Committee has two functions: to get folks on the VSA Board of Directors by creating a slate, and the subsequent “care and feeding” of Board Members to facilitate their service to VSA. Cecilia also reported that a copy of Beverly Serrell’s report on VSA governance will be made available to members, and said one finding is that the written governance procedures are unclear. In response, the BD is re-writing them – not to change procedures – but to make them clearer so that members can be more comfortable becoming part of the process. With that, Cecilia announced that the BD needs help in getting Board nominations and invited everyone to contact the BD if they, themselves, are interested in serving on the Board, or if they know of anyone else who would be a good candidate. Members may also contact the BD for information about all of the VSA committees.

Membership Committee

As the Chair of the new Membership Committee (MC), Judy Koke reported that they have garnered ten committee members in just one week! The MC is seeking input regarding making VSA more valuable to members, and part of their work is strategizing how to implement new ideas. Please contact the MC with ideas and suggestions.

Vice President for Programs

John Fraser introduced David Anderson for a report from the Publications Committee.

Publications Committee

David Anderson thanked Kim Burtnyk for her work on the 2006 conference abstracts, and also acknowledged Pino Monaco for his work on the e-newsletter. David also thanked Roy Ballentine and Jan Packer as editors of “Visitor Studies Today,” and they are looking forward to the next evolution of the

Visitor Studies journal as negotiations continue with Taylor and Francis. David encouraged everyone to consider getting subscriptions of the new journal for their institutions.

Professional Development Committee

John reported on the work of the Professional Development Committee by first thanking Larry Bell and Barbara Butler for their work on the NSF planning grant. John said that this professional development planning project is moving forward and the membership will be hearing more detail about it soon. John also reported that “rethinking” continues on conference workshops and that the committee is seeking input. Lastly John reported that there is discussion for adding vice-chairs to committees in order to help with leading committee efforts.

Conference Committee

Nikki Andersen thanked everyone who helped review abstracts and proposals for the 2006 conference, with special thanks to Kevin Crowley and Karen Knutson as Chairs of the Program Committee. Nikki also extended thanks to the entire Conference Committee for their foresight in planning future conferences.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM EDT.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rita Deedrick, Secretary