



BOARD MEETING
MINUTES: March 18, 2006
The Atrium Hotel, Irvine, CA

Board and committee members present:

Vicky Cate
Tony Caruso
Lee Fones
Michael Fones
Matthew Gardner
Mary Golden
Peter Herrera
Tim Konig

Bill Meade
Jim Mumford
Paul Needleman
Carol Peterson Webber
Heddy Salerno
Laural Taylor

WELCOME

The meeting was called to order by PIA Chair Tony Caruso at 1:06 pm. Tony welcomed the participants. Tony reviewed the agenda and asked those present to start bringing reports to the meeting on their committee activities or areas of responsibility.

REVIEW OF MINUTES

Heddy Salerno moved to approve the minutes of the Feb. 4, 2006 meeting as amended and Carol Peterson Webber seconded.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Acting Treasurer Tony Caruso reported to the board on PIA's current financial information.

Tony reported that he had not yet convened the finance committee and that he is still wrestling with a report format that will be helpful to the board.

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Membership Chair Tim Konig read the membership report. We are at 52% of the 2006 membership goal (25% increase in membership dollars over 2005). Tony reviewed a list of non-renewed members from 1999 to 2005. Tim said that his membership committee would be making calls to these people. Tim also asked staff to send him the names of non-members who have registered for the education programs, along with those who have called to office to inquire about membership.

Jim Mumford suggested setting a membership goal of getting a member in every state. He thought that once our website search engine is working, an incentive for joining might be the angle that their company would be the only member listed in that state.

Jim also passed along a comment made by Will Phillips (REX Roundtables) that PIA is perceived as being too regional an organization. Peter Herrera suggested working to change this perception by releasing press releases that include promotion of our national programs (CalScape, awards, and education). These releases should include testimonials and quotes from landscapers.

The board discussed the idea of posting PIA banners or posters at various AT member locations. Tony asked that by the next meeting the board members bring their assessments of what type of PIA promotion (signs, posters, and banners) would be effective at the vendor locations in their areas. The following board members volunteered to make assessment visits to these AT locations;

Tony Caruso - Sunborne & SF Foliage.

Carol - Nurserymen's Exchange (after the June education program.)

Tim Konig - Scape Supply.

Lee Fones - Orange County AT vendors.

Paul Needleman – LA chapter AT vendors.

Vicky Cate – San Diego AT vendors.

Paul Needleman would like staff to price decals that could be applied to vehicles.

Recruitment Campaign: Tim and Matthew distributed a "Call from IFMA Volunteers" and suggested PIA does something similar. The board discussed sending this to new members a few weeks after they join, but not in conjunction with their welcome kit. Areas for volunteers would include CalScape introducers and greeters, CalScape décor, Membership committee, regional representatives, PIA Cares, ed program registration and editing the Structure Book

Membership Dues

The board discussed different approaches to modifying the dues including prorating (for example, half price if they joined at half year) and changing to an annual renewal system based on the month the company joined. Tim stated he believed that the solution to the few complaints we have received should be to respond on a case by case basis.

Search Engine Models

The committee reviewed with the models and asked staff to proceed with the models they recommended. The Buyers Guide will be upgraded first, followed by the Find an Interiorscapers and Find a Supplier pages.

NEWSLETTER REPORT

The board approved including a free subscription to PIA News with the CalScape registration.

EDUCATION REPORT

Chair Heddy Salerno reported on the seminars. 33 attended Watering Practices with Vicky Cate in Houston at Hines Pottery. 142 attended Plant Tech Tune Up with Heddy Salerno at CA locations. "What Every Employer Should Know" is the topic of the next program. It will

be presented by Julie Chendes, an HR specialist recommended by Tony Caruso, and held in LA area in May and in SF area in July.

Heddy and Tim are working on taking the association to England and the Chelsea Flower Show next year.

College Student Outreach - Student Career Days – Peter Herrera reported. Kay Wood will join Peter and Roel in the PIA booth. The booth banner has been fabricated and will be tested at this show. Peter will create a contact form for interested students to fill out and we will add their names to the PIA database.

CalPoly Pomona- Heddy reported that Roel had hosted CalPoly Pomona horticulture students on a tour of the Initial Santa Fe Springs facility.

Bangs Roundtable Proposal - Tony circulated the Larry Bangs' Business Owners Roundtable proposal. The board decided that Larry has a lot to offer and that the Roundtable objectives are in perfect alignment with the association but the board did not feel it was a workable concept at the moment.

Board Positions Review

Tony requested that board members complete the task of writing or editing their job description for the Structure Book within two weeks.

The board discussed the position vacancies and asked that these be added to the IFMA model "call for volunteers".

Board Coaching Proposal – The board reviewed the board coaching proposal from Larry Bangs. Heddy moved to approve the proposal, Bill Meade seconded and the board voted unanimous to approve the proposal. Peter Herrera asked that board members be asked to email agenda items for these coaching sessions. Peter asked that the question of dues management and dues calendar should be addressed. On the agenda for the first telecom is the membership campaign.

OTHER REPORTS & AREAS OF DISCUSSION

Awards Program report - Vicky Cate circulated the new logo for the award winners and reported that the judging sheets have been updated and the press releases announcing the program have gone out.

Vision Chair Report – Chair Matthew Gardner read a poem about the meaning of life.

Industry Association Liaisons – Vicky Cate reported on the MidAtlantic program, which reflected a strong emphasis on grower training and reported that there were not many interiorscapers or interiorscape growers at TPIE. The New Zealand trade show currently going on. IFMA is in San Diego in October. The board responded yes when Vicky asked the board if they want her to keep an eye on the BOMA, IFMA, and other allied industry associations' activities as they relate to the interiorscape industry.

PIA Cares – Tony read the PIA Cares update emailed by Deb Ringler. In it Deb asks for a higher profile at CalScape Expo that includes 5-7 minutes of Power Point presentation, plus some more direction from the board. The board suggested that something be added to the IFMA-style questionnaire: Do you have a special place that does non-profit community service that you would like to nominate for as a candidate for a PIA Cares installation? Deb and Marlene Javage are currently installing a vignette at the SF Flower Show for AHTA and have been assisted by Beth Steiglein of DPS.

Discuss Organization Accountability checklist – Tony reviewed this document and asked everyone present to commit to reading this document before the next meeting. Very doable items include; posting the IRS Form 990 on the web and conducting a financial audit.

Discuss request for endorsement – The board discussed Larry Bangs request for an endorsement and approved it. They also established a new process for this type of request - any time the association is asked for a referral, the request needs to go before the board for a vote.

Tony restated his request that board and committee members complete their description within two weeks (March 31).

Secretary Carol Peterson Webber read the list of board commitments made at this board meeting.

NEXT MEETING: Saturday, May 6, 2006 in Palm Springs, CA.

The meeting adjourned at 3:56 pm.

Submitted by: Mary A. Golden

Date: March 31, 2006