

## MRBA Meeting Minutes Thursday January 5th, 2023: MRBA Office (!)

Attendees: Craig Cimmons, John Little, Paul Stanley, Wendy Scott, Brian Jerosse, Sarah Lunn, Lindsey Wight; Cynthia Scott, Marlena Valenta, and Ellen Fox joined via Zoom.

- 1) Greetings and happy new year! Jim M sent a lovely card and well-wishes.
- 2) Review of November meeting minutes: WS motioned to accept, CS seconded. All in favor, with noted corrections regarding the printer lease company..
- 3) Administrative business
  - Lease agreement with 2 Rivers: 1 year to start. This is the same agreement with UMATR (full cost is \$1,500; each org signs a lease for half of that amount monthly). Heat and utilities are covered, including internet. One year allows a chance to negotiate/reassess in the next cycle. Of note, regarding safety: with no landline, if there is a need to call 911 from this space, we'll need to tell them the address (2839 VT Route 105).  
Discussion included: COI policy - need to have something written that states that a Board resolution that these are fair, competitive rates.  
Insurance claim? If there is one, does a 3rd party get involved?  
Conversation about increased costs and the needs of the organization; how to balance. The office provides us an identity for the organization, legitimacy. It's also good to work together in a space, and we can meet students, partners, etc: good to have a space to facilitate that. A consistent meeting space is also a nice benefit! It's concerning to have to raise these funds, of course. It would be good to recruit a financial person to the Board. Suggestion that the Board focus on raising the funds for the rent (currently \$9,000/year).  
PS motions to accept/sign the lease agreement as written; BJ seconds; all in favor.
  - Office needs: Make a list of needed items and send a solicitation out to our community? "New space; help us furnish it!" Coffee maker, mugs, plates, cutlery, electric kettle, toaster oven, microwave, fridge, table & chairs, couch, serving utensils, cutting boards, sharp knife, clocks. Needs vs Want (itemize). Solicit local artisans for donations - could put up a plaque "this office was filled with donations from..."
- 4) Board membership for 2023 - Paul is re-upping; Cynthia is stepping down, sadly.  
  
Board recruitment is a priority for 2023; bylaws say 9 member minimum and we are down to 8. Especially someone with financial expertise. All Board members work on this. Crait will write a "Call To Action" for Board recruiting. Would also be nice to have young members - HS students? Bank employees? Some other discussion of community members to connect with.  
Board volunteer hours: please fill out the online form, or let Lindsey know if it doesn't work for you. Lindsey will resend the link.  
2022 In Review: Lindsey went over our income vs expenses from 2022; let her know if you'd like a copy of the summary.
- 5) 2022 Successes and Highlights - obviously the 25th! In an effort to respect tonight's time, we will hold further discussion of these for the next meeting.

6) 2023 plans and hopes/lot of grants

Simplified Programs and Projects update - Lindsey went over what we currently have going, what we have applied for, and what we expect to see shortly.

LCBP grants - received bank stabilization funds; next up is the Org Support: what should we include? Sympquest printer lease: \$150/month; 5 year lease (60 months) - includes toner, staples, service. Also: storage bins, laptop, dumpster rental, second monitors for the office, dumpster rental for the summer? (clean-ups).

LaRosa program ideas for 2023. WWTF sampling requested: 4 facilities (N Troy, Troy/Jay, Richford, Eburg) - inform permitting, but may not be easy to access above the outflow? 7 sites last year - continue? New? Include the bottom of the Trout.

Quebec visits/get-together - yes, let's talk more about this next meeting. Connections: Pierre LeDuc, FNLC/Rock River work.

7) MRBA Staff - annual reviews for staff; continued expansion - bring Sarah on as employee in September; governance procedures - more discussion during Feb meeting of all of these topics.

8) 2023 events: Office open house - how to advertise – we'll plan this out in our Feb meeting.

9) Other: John will be hosting a pizza party thank you for the construction crew on Jan 20 at the office.

10) Next meeting - Feb 2, 2023 at the office.

Meeting adjourned at 8:40pm