



SABA BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, August 1, 2007 – 8:30am – Saugatuck City Hall

8:36 OPEN

Chaired By: Lisa Lungaro Co-President - Recording Secretary: Julie Abel

1) Opening Remarks – Lisa Lungaro

2) Introductions of Board & Guests.

Board Members Present: F. Weber (Michigan Lakeshore Real Estate), F. Rojek (Saugatuck Flowers), P. Lion (Rosemont Inn), A. Holmes (Century 21), L. Lungaro (Macatawa Bank), K. O'Donohue (#10 Center Street), J. Abel (JabberDesign), Fred Schmidt (SABA Administrator)

Board Members Absent: Scott Eilbes, Marilyn Starring

Members and Guests: Kirk Harrier (City of Saugatuck), Mike Tischleder (Amazwi), Jean Waden (Homebodies, Marsha Burd (Saugatuck Traders), Kim Mannion (Metropolitan Title)

Kirk Harrier reported on the special use permit the city approved for the SCA to put a large tent in the city parking lot because the SCA lot is too sloped to support one. The city has an agreement with schools to charge parking during the weekend. After 4pm the tent was erected and there was no more parking. The tent went up on Thursday so there were issues with parking through Sunday. This caused problems for the business community because of the reduction of parking downtown. Also, they drilled holes in asphalt. The city doesn't think this was a good idea – City Council will look for alternatives in future. A suggestion was doing something like a tent across the street. The parking lot will be full that night but the benefit cars will be close. Kirk will recommend this.

Mike Tischleder said 11 merchants had an event wherein shops that participated stayed open until 11pm. Amazwi didn't participate but it would have increased traffic somewhat. This was probably not an issue past 7pm. Kirk was contacted by businesses – this is good because he needs to hear from us so he can use this input for recommendations next year. SABA heard the same concerns. Kirk especially has a problem with drilling holes year after year in the lot and compromising it. And, closing the lot during the season for a weekend is not a good idea.

Lisa Lungaro asked about the status of the proposed Human Rights Ordinance in Saugatuck. Kirk explained that two drafts should be going to the City Council by next Thursday for review.

It will also go on the regular agenda for a vote. One draft is the one the Township recently passed and another is a draft that the Council has been working on. Both are at the attorney to be reviewed for charter violations, etc. They'll make necessary changes to make it legal and will have two to choose from. No meeting Monday. It's on the 2nd and 4th. Kirk predicts it'll be on the agenda for the first Council meeting depending on how the discussions go.

Kirk stressed again that he likes to get input from the businesses. You can contact elected officials but please contact Kirk, too, so he can make sure it's brought to the table. Kirk will make sure the Council has all the information so they can make the best judgment.

Frank Rojek asked about the issue of the city stopping the shuttle incentive because of the legality. Is anything else being done? Kirk said not yet. As city manager, he has to vet everything and analyze it – even if it's a perceived violation, they can't do it. This incentive could probably be done – the attorney needs to draft a resolution. The business license fund was set up as a DDA mechanism and it goes to the parking lot payment and Christmas lights so there's not a lot in it. Once the parking lot's paid then funds can be put towards something like that. If SABA can draft something and bring it to him – he'll make sure it gets before the Council and it's put in the budget.

Lisa Lungaro asked that if there's something that the City needs the businesses input on to please contact us and we'll survey our members and get back to him with the businesses opinion. Kirk said he would. Fred Weber noted that the issues being printed in the paper – which are mostly from one person - creates challenges for the city and is having an effect on this small town. We need to consider the challenges this is representing to our city. It also affects people coming to visit if this is all they're hearing. It could also affect businesses coming into town if there are too many issues or it appears too chaotic. Kirk explained that there have probably been more changes made in the City in the last year than in the last 20 years – change is good but sometimes it's difficult to accept it.

3) Approval of Secretary's Minutes. Motion by Frank Rojek to approve - Fred Weber seconded. Passed

4) Approval of Treasurer's Report. Kerry O'Donohue reported. We're three quarters through our fiscal year. \$25,000 balance in checking account. Fred Weber moved to approve treasurer's report. Frank Rojek seconded. Passed.

5) Comments by Members and Guests. None.

6) OLD BUSINESS

a) Membership - Two new members: Hidden Door – Gary Daniel's second business and Southern Cross Medical Group in Douglas. Everyone's paid up.

b) Brochure; Drug Store Wall; Community Map. Fred Schmidt reported that the weather's been great this season so the brochure's going like hotcakes. After Labor Day, he suggested engaging Sally Winthers (the person who designed the Community Walking Maps) on how to coordinate

the brochure with the map. Pat Lion noticed people are taking the maps rather than the brochure. They love the maps. Fred said that there's a lot of advertising in the brochure whereas the map is purely informational. Perhaps this is something to consider. Which has more value? Kim Mannion works the volunteer booth and said that they were out of the maps – she handed out the brochure this past Saturday. Mike Tischleder has noticed that people take both the map and brochure for different reasons. The maps are fantastic. Out of town guests who are traveling in the area and use it would like to see the general map be larger. Frank Rojek folds them twice and puts them in the brochure. Angela Holmes said the map and brochure are on the website in PDF form so she just sends the link to people who are coming so they can print them out before they arrive. Fred Schmidt received 50 calls this summer about a group coming – asking for him to send them stuff.

Fred Schmidt asked Mike Tischleder what he thought about marrying the map and brochure. Mike likes the map laid out as it is now because it's really helpful for people on foot to get from one place to another. He can show people where to go without unfolding it. He'd be hesitant to fold it. Although it takes up more space where stuff is distributed because it's not folded. He sees the brochure as something that people will sit down and look through to find businesses or get phone numbers or just figure out where to go. The map is an immediate use thing. Angela said Chicago has a tri-fold walking map. It could be the last page of the brochure in tri-fold so people could rip it off. Fred Schmidt said he'd like to get Sally Winther's engaged to talk about all our options. The fact that one's two-color and the other's four-color is also an issue. After the season, our membership should be surveyed.

Frank Rojek asked about the Drug Store Wall being painted. Lisa Lungaro explained that Marilyn Starring is going to write Pete the Painter giving him a deadline to complete the work.

c) Events Committee.

Music in the Park is going really well. Coral Gables, Mike Johnson, is amenable to having it indoors in inclement weather. We must know 2 hours in advance to cancel the band and not pay them. Having an indoor alternative works out great. Fred Weber noted that if we're going to have a rain or shine policy, then we should have other members lined up. Last time, Angela counted over 200 participants. The bartenders said otherwise there were maybe ten people normally. We should just publish that it's rain or shine like last time.

Sidewalk Sale. Marsha Burd reported. It's more work to coordinate it this year with the addition of Douglas. She created a new ad which is done and forwarded to papers. It's being advertised in the Sentinel, GR Press, South Haven paper, the Van radio station and our two local papers. We always talked about creating a banner. With the money from the Douglas merchants – we're able to create six banners that will hang at the entrance to town. The date can be changed so they won't be as expensive in coming years. The trolley will be running between the two towns. It's an added expense but this is also made up with the Douglas merchant's fees. Bill Smith from Parrot in the Square is handling collecting in Douglas. There's only one glitch – the City council and fire department approved our special permit but we have to be sure there's a 12 foot fire lane. Lisa Lungaro volunteered to help make sure there's a 12 foot radius down the center of the street. Scott took care of band. Macatawa Bank is donating tents. The Star of Saugatuck is

paying for the band. The press release will be sent to two papers announcing it. Bill Smith is coordinating with the restaurants for the Taste of Douglas. The event is only one day this year based on the survey of participants last year. Fred Schmidt asked if Douglas was being done under the auspices of SABA. Kerry O'Donohue said it was and that Saugatuck Harbor Insurance is aware of it. The non-profits received an email saying they can participate. Lisa Lungaro will check with Hospice. Pat Lion asked if anything was going in the Kalamazoo paper – there's something called Jottings? It's the Kalamazoo Gazette and Jottings. Jottings is the classified section. They won't get a display ad but Marsha Burd will contact them. Ellen at GR Press and her people did a great job putting together a new ad. Trolley is a great idea – Angela Holmes suggested that businesses might want to advertise in the trolley to help offset the cost. There was discussion over charging for the trolley or asking for a \$1 donation. It's only \$22/hour for about 6 hours. It was agreed it should be free. The Interurban will run between the High School and town. Frank Rojek said they book it automatically. They advertise it, too. Angela Holmes noted that we'll need to have the trolley stops clearly marked. There's a spot right in front of the information booth. We'll need to know where in Douglas, too. Douglas doesn't have a band this year but are doing the Taste of Douglas but it can always expand in future years.

If Marsha can get Lisa the flyer, she'll print it out for her. The Events Committee has a list of events that the block captains have been distributing – they can distribute this, too. Winterfest was the wrong date so they'll be re-printed. Fred Schmidt will email the locations of the trolley stop. Frank urged Marsha Burd not to limit sending the press release to just the two local papers. He will give her his media list. Marsha will use it. Kerry will get Marsha the SABA budget form. The Culver Street businesses have approval to put tables on the sidewalk for the event. Lisa and Angela can possibly have a Kids area to try and draw people down to where there is less traffic. Just a thought - maybe join forces with Hospice? This will be discussed.

Winterfest. Scott Eilbes is heading this up. We had the wrong dates. The correct dates are January 18 and 19. Mike Tischleder said there's a three day gallery stroll during the President's day holiday in February – "Winter Break." Winterfest may include ice sculptures, ice skating, etc. Scott's not here so we'll table it for now.

d) Volunteers for Information Booth. Kim said she's doing it as often as she can. The two shifts are 11am-1pm and 1pm-4pm on Saturday, Sunday and Holidays. It's fun!! You direct people, take pictures, etc. Kim said she'd get the master list and email it to Fred Schmidt. He'll create a calendar so people can sign up for open dates.

e) New Membership Fee Structure Discussion. The committee hasn't met – will meet after August. Pat Lion and Marilyn Starring are on that committee. Fred Schmidt would like to participate to represent the administration of it.

f) Bookkeeper Replacement. The email announcing the bookkeeper position had a July 30 deadline for applicants. Four people applied. Fred Weber moved to have Lisa, Angela and Kerry interview applicants and hire a new bookkeeper. Frank Rojek seconded.

g) Volunteers for SCA's Greenmarket Committee. Fred Weber, Angela and Frank will be on committee. It's in the SCA's hands to move it forward. Angela will share greenmarket manager

contact information with committee members and tell him who's on the committee and ask for info on next meeting

NEW BUSINESS

a) Restaurant menus and B&B's. Fred Schmidt updated – it's a great idea but trying to institute it in the middle of the season is making the response less than extraordinary. We've had three responses. The idea is to post PDFs of menus on our website so B&B's can print them off for their guests. It's recommended that Julie Abel set up a page under the Members tab for copies of menus. The restaurant name will link to the PDF. Once it's live, Fred will send another email saying it's a go. Pat Lion said her guests have been printing off this information already. Angela also offered to collect get some menus. There should be a clear notice on the page saying that menus are subject to change – and recommending that visitors call the restaurant to make sure they're accurate. Fred Schmidt noted that Clearbrook publishes a new one every day. Julie said that we can link directly to their menus on their website. Hours of operation is also a good addition to this page. This would be off season hours. The member section does not require a password. We received two emails supporting this idea.

b) Harbor Planning Committee. Marilyn Starring created a letter and read it last month. It's being sent addressing the three communities to respond back to us about the situation of the harbor plans. It stresses that we find it important and want it to move forward. We can put it online once we have a response.

c) Community Issues Forum. This is on the table until the last quarter of 2007. Angela and Lisa met with the Allegan County Chamber Business Association, Allegan County, Fennville and SABA to share ideas and support one another. They both felt good about what they'd accomplished. They will start to include all the cities in Allegan County in these meetings. Angela and Lisa (personally) volunteered to help the Goose Festival. Since the Goose Festival is a non-profit, Angela asked that they be included as a SABA member. The festival benefits Saugatuck/Douglas as well because there are limited things to do in Fennville so many of the people it draws end up coming here, too.

Lisa noted that we have to renew our State of Michigan non-profit status. The Waterfront Film Festival sent us a thank you note for our participating in the event and specifically for the Dinner and a Movie fundraiser. We also received a note from someone saying what a great community it is. Fred Schmidt wrote her back. Pat Lion announced that there is a great online article about Saugatuck/Douglas and the Rosemont Inn in the St. Louis Dispatch newspaper. Pat will email Fred the URL and he'll share with members. Rosemont's had 20 reservations in the last two days from that article.

Garden Club update – they've been in touch with SABA – all business owners are happy with the dead-heading and watering – we're paying the person to do it. The Garden Club is also happy with the person doing it. This praise will be passed on to the person when they pick up their check. The businesses have also been pitching in since we asked them to help keep the pots watered.

Fred Schmidt explained that at Marilyn's recommendation, we joined the WMTA. Fred gets an advisory every day with 3-5 email addresses. He's collecting them to add to our email mailing list – we can use these as the base of an email marketing campaign. He's collected 100-200 emails since we've become a member. We need to think about what you want we'll want to say. Julie will design the template for it – someone needs to coordinate the writing. It was suggested that this would be easy for Bill Galligan to write. Angela will head this up. We can start with a quarterly newsletter for now. This should be added to the September agenda. Fred Schmidt sends out the SCA e-newsletter to over 2500 email addresses.

Pat Lion mentioned that we need to urge the City and talk to Kirk about the quality of the sidewalks in Saugatuck. She's had guests fall because of cracks in sidewalks. People with disabilities are having trouble. There are people who won't come back because of it. It's especially bad in December. Frank said that the City has a 5 year plan to renew sidewalks in Saugatuck. Lisa asked Pat to see if there's a plan in place and bring it to the next meeting – we will pursue our options based on her findings. Fred Schmidt said that if there's a plan in place in PDF form we can always post it on our website or send it to members. Mike Tischleder is seconding that we follow that up – the issue is the cement shifting so a corner of one tilts up – there's one right in front of Amazwi.

Fred Weber noted that early planning is needed for Dinner and a Movie. It always sneaks up on us. We will add it to the agenda for September. Angela said it's difficult to get donations later in the year so we do need to start this planning early. Bill Galligan is still interested in working on this. Fred Schmidt urged us to do something we can afford to create an incentive for employees to use the Interurban. It's an important issue.

Frank noted that when the new membership fee committee meets, we should hold a closed meeting with the board so it's not a long thing protracted process. Lisa said that after the committee meets they'll have a full recommendation for the board. We can hold a workshop if we can't resolve it. We'll also need a board workshop this Fall to discuss 2008 marketing – like we did for 2007. That resulted in the map getting off the ground. Fred Schmidt urged us to take advantage of Kirk's participation to get map kiosk discussion going. We also need to talk to David Kowal, the Douglas City Manager to see what they think. Angela said DDA interested in being involved but we should engage each city manager first – Lisa will run with this.

Frank suggested sending a separate email about the conversation we had with Kirk today and then another one when we've talked with the Douglas City Manager. Better yet, we can put it in the in News & Announcements section of the website.

Frank wants to help facilitate a “How We Did This Summer” focus session. It can help us focus on what/who our market is. Lisa suggested that this can maybe be resolved when we start the marketing group this fall. Once it's started, we can involve the CVB. Fred Weber noted that we're the one state that's in recession and making national news. Not every town/city/county is in the same recession. The tourist business is local. Lisa we have to step back in the fall and the board is volunteer-based so if there are a few that work on the map - there should be another few who work on the other marketing. We need more people. There was some discussion about who our market is. Angela noted that the survey we do about how summer business has been is a

starting point. In January, we determined that we can only do so much and what we do we need to do well. A September agenda item is to discuss re-forming the Marketing Committee. Angela thinks we should do a survey before the September meeting. Pat stressed that setting up the survey correctly is very very important. Frank will spearhead a subcommittee after 14th of August to do this. Mike Tischleder reminded us that there's an old survey that exists that could be tweaked. Lisa has it and will bring it to the table. Pat asked for a copy. Feedback will be brought to the next meeting. Mike said there was a huge response rate the first time we did it and we gave a feedback meeting to give the results. Someone needs to edit it. The survey was done at the end of 2004 and feedback was given in 2005. Mike will help with Marketing Committee. He'll be gone the week of August 13.

d) Nominating Committee. Lisa said we need this committee. Officer elections are in October. Angela's term has another year but the other officers are one year terms. Should we solicit for people? Are current officers running? We need the committee to run it. Angela will be on it. Marilyn might help her – check with her. She's been talking to Mike Carey at Del Sol. Need: corresponding secretary, secretary and treasurer.

The Venetian Festival was really successful. 840 people were at the beer tent. There were 16 boats in the parade. SABA could raise some funds by cooking in the tent. There's a good opportunity there to provide burgers, brats and dogs. There was good quality food this year - just not the type of food that you'd normally find. This could substitute for our loss of chili cook off funds. Lisa is would try to get places to donate things for free like buns and water, etc. Pat noted that, from a lodging point of view, there weren't enough rooms for everyone. The school parking lot was full by noon on Saturday. Frank asked is there was a way for businesses to get information on vacancies when asked. There's still a phone in the information booth and an availability chart is posted on the CVB website. Fred Schmidt also gets a lot of calls about places to stay.

Lisa reported that she has sent thank you notes to Joyce Inch for being our bookkeeper and John Jerome for heading up Music in the Park. She also wants to thank the Interurban for helping us and the Information Booth volunteers for all their work.

8) Upcoming Dates to Remember.

- a) Music in the Park – Tonight – Smokestack Lightnin'
- b) Sidewalk Sale – Saugatuck and Douglas – Thursday, August 16
- c) Taste of Douglas, Thursday, August 16
- d) Taste of Saugatuck, August 26
- d) Next SABA Business Meeting, Wednesday, September 12 at 5:15pm at DOUGLAS CITY HALL

Winterfest January 18 and 19

10:23am ADJOURN