



# MINUTES

**Date/Time: Thursday, April 19 (3:30-5:00pm)**  
**Amway Grand Plaza Hotel – Tower Club Room, 25<sup>th</sup> Floor**

## **MISSION**

*Our mission is to provide Kent County hospitality related businesses an opportunity to meet professionally with a common interest to better serve our industry and community while furthering the overall tourism landscape of our region.*

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Welcome & Introductions: Jen Cutter – KCHA President:  
Introductions of guests in the room.

Approval of March 2018 Minutes

1. – Ross
2. – Ben

Approval of March 2018 Financial Report - ended month with in bank with 8,116.54 – paypal: \$625.05

1. – Karen
2. – Ross

Special Guests:

- **WGVU Capstone Project – Corporate Social Responsibility: Christian Stratton, Jake Helms & Tara Wallen**
  - CSR does not have a specific meaning. Usually community related
  - Environmental CSR:
    - o Sustainability practices
  - Social CSR:
    - o Relationship between business and society
    - o Improve and benefit society through donations of time and money
  - Economic CSR:
    - o Financial contributions.
  - Voluntariness Dimension
    - o Work release
    - o Recognize employees and reward them for participating in these events.
  - Employee retention:
    - o Hospitality leads in turnover
    - o 8<sup>th</sup> year in a row that they have rose.
    - o Stronger connections are formed between employees and to the organization which increases engagement and commitment.
      - You will attract better employees
      - Increase efficiency
      - Lower the turnover rate
      - Reduce costs associated with recruiting and training.
    - o The workforce is shifting towards a new generation that has different priorities
      - Employers are addressing
        - State of economy and healthcare
      - Not addressing

- Climate change
  - Food/famine
  - Income inequality
  - Corruption/crime
- 7% looking to leave job soon
- 38% intend to leave within 2 years
- 31% stay beyond 5 years
  - This is impacted by employee flexibility and being seen as a force for positive change.
- **Candice Smith Fleszar – Discovery Michigan –**
  - Wants to partner with local businesses (restaurants, hotels, etc.)
  - Based in GR but tours the whole state.
  - Focused on guest service
  - Types of Tours – Brewery/Distillery, Wine tours (GR, TC and Southwest MI), City Tours – including history and river front tours. They also do step ons - where they are already on a bus and the discovery tour staff “step on” and talk about their chosen topics, Others – Ghost, Heritage Hill, Art (Artprize), Cultural, Fishing.
  - Types of groups – corporate and SMERF as well as international, client thank you groups, etc.
  - How can we help you?
    - Tell guests about the service so they have a more enjoyable time.
    - Book more nights with SMERF groups by having them book a tour when they come in for the wedding, family reunion, etc.
    - Encourage the long term guests to stay on weekend and have families fly to them or have something for them to do during their stay which is a little different than the usual suggestions.
    - Refer to restaurants and attractions to build packages and opportunities for better tours.
  - Vacation Packages
  - Media Trip in partnership with EXGR – Mostly targeting other countries.
  - Variety to build own tour of your choosing.
    - Questions:
    - Lead Time – Depends on what is needed IE Vehicle need Etc.
    - Reach out to her via email if interested in partnering.

## Monthly Reports

- **Experience Pink** – trying to do larger impact events, email to come. Including renting out all of Wengers Bowling Alley as that event was popular.
- **Golf Outing** – 6/4. 2 presenting sponsors – AHC and EXGR. Sign up by 5/11! – Still looking for smaller sponsors.
- **Experience Grand Rapids** – Brewsader app has launched. New pure MI ad is out as of last week. The next focus is Chicago.
- **West Michigan Sports Commission** – Leads have been sent out recently so please ask. Football is TBD at the end of this week. Luncheon is coming up. NAIA rooming lists coming by the 30<sup>th</sup>. The scorecard tells you upcoming events. Art Van Sport Complex is now open and sponsorships are now available. There are volunteer spots available.
- **Certified Tourism Ambassador (CTA)** – Toast is on 4/24. There is a new red panda at the Zoo. See her for volunteer opportunities.
- **West Michigan Tourist Association** – Lighthouse maps are now available and can be delivered to your property upon request.
- **Women in Leadership** – Golf Event on – **5/21** starting at 10 AM - Swing for Success.
- **Michigan Cares for Tourism** – Fort Wilkins 3 day event this year. There are flower bed events coming up (adopt a bed). There are 9 left to sell. Emails coming out Saturday. Save your receipt – after you attend you get reimbursed for the \$50 after the event. Keweenaw Mountain Lodge is taking registration now. They only accept call ins.
- **Grand Valley State University** – N/A
- **Ferris State University** - The students loved the conference and they were able to bring 16 students.

## Upcoming Meetings & Events

- April 24 – Experience Grand Rapids “Toast of the Town” Luncheon
- April 27 – Women in Lodging
- May 2 – West Michigan Sports Commission Luncheon
- May 16 – CTA Class – Hampton Inn South (8am-Noon)

- May 17 – KCHA Monthly Membership Meeting @ Kids Food Basket
- May 22 – Enhanced CTA @ City Flats (9-10:30am) w/ Langdon Bartley: Sneak Peek of what's coming to GR
- May 21 – Women in Leadership "Swing for Success" golf lesson event with lunch and speaker! More information to come.
- June 4 – KCHA Golf Outing @ The Mines

Round Table Discussion

Adjournment

1. Ben
2. Lindsey

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**[www.KentCountyHospitality.org](http://www.KentCountyHospitality.org)**