



Minutes: VTA Meeting #01 2009

Wednesday, 23rd April 2pm, La Vela

▲ = Action ▲ = Motion

Present: Doug McNally, Baker Hardin, Janine Le Strange, Kurt Carlson, Emma Shepherdson, Lucy Fa'anunu, Gordon Allison, 'Epeli Lavaki, Selu Faulkofuka

Apologies: Bruno Toke

1. Welcome

- Janine opened the meeting and welcomed new members and returning members to the Executive Committee for 2009

2. Minutes

- Minutes from last Executive Committee meeting accepted, Emma to email out to members.



- Proposed: Baker, Seconded: Doug

- Minutes from the AGM accepted as a committee with minor changes



- Proposed: Lucy, Seconded: 'Epeli

3. Matters Arising:

- Constitution:

- Lusio Lausi'i from Ministry Labour, Commerce, Industries in Tongatapu contacted Malia from MLCI in Vava'u to say the constitution was accepted and certificate would be sent to VTA once the Minister returns from overseas (due end of May)



- Committee to follow up again in May

- Baker noted that in the new constitution the TVB Representative is not included in the committee as an ex-officio. This may have to be an amendment in the future.

- Taskforces:
- This year the committee will work using ‘taskforces’ to get individual tasks completed. Two Executive Committee members will be nominated and will involve general members as they see fit. The taskforce will report back on their issues at each committee meeting
- It was agreed that taskforces were a good way to help share the workload of committee and to achieve better success rate in completing tasks.

- The VTA/Moorings moorings (on land at Melinda dock)
- Janine and Baker gave an overview of the history of the moorings for benefit of new committee members.
- ▲ - Correspondence was received today from Shane Walker (The Moorings) which was tabled.
- The Moorings have offered to deploy moorings in May and to manage the payment system of moorings.
- Lucy asked whether VTA, as implementing agency of the donated funds, had an original proposal, timeframe or outline of tasks to be undertaken. There is no record of this being done.
- The committee agreed that the management plan/statement of work should have been drawn up by VTA at that time as it was our responsibility. This may be a stumbling block for future grants to VTA and should be a ‘lesson learnt’ for VTA. In the future VTA will act with more professionalism and accountability.
- The task at hand now is to work with The Moorings in getting moorings laid.
- ▲ - **Motion** to establish taskforce that will liaise with The Moorings (Shane, Martin, Terry), Marnus to get moorings deployed, and establish a framework to finish the task. **Proposed:** Baker, **Seconded:** Doug
- Lucy and Kurt were nominated for taskforce
- ▲ - Emma to respond to Shane Walker’s email and inform him of the meeting outcomes and thanking him for his offer to deploy moorings in May.

- VTA Moorings
- Emma has received verbal proposals from Dive Vava’u and Riki Tiki Tours and will bring written proposals to next week’s meeting.
- ▲ - The taskforce established for VTA moorings will employ a dive company to undertake the inspection at that time.

- Airport Brochure Stand

- Stand has been paid for for the next year, and as decided by vote at the AGM, VTA will continue for the upcoming year and better promote the stand. The Airport stand will be reviewed after a year and discontinued if it continues to cost VTA money.

- Brochure stand needs to be better promoted and marketed – the cost is low and placement is good for advertising.

-  - Emma to send out promotional email detailing the benefits of the Brochure stand to all members.

- Tourism Tonga Association

- Motion passed at AGM for VTA to become a member of Tourism Tonga

-  - Baker to follow up and apply on VTA behalf

-  - Emma to write to Sue Gardiner (TT) to inform TT of the new VTA committee and VTA contacts

- Membership Fee

- Review for next year.

- The committee agreed that the main problem is the lack of members, not the membership fee. People need to know the benefits and value in becoming a member. We especially need more Tongan members, including individual operators like taxi drivers and handicraft sellers. Examples would include taxi drivers who are VTA members get first preference for work from VTA cafes etc.

-  - Taskforce established with Lucy, 'Eveli and Selu to get more people, especially Tongans, involved in VTA.

-  - Lucy to translate brochure of VTA benefits, Selu and 'Eveli to help in distribution

- Newsletter

- Baker suggested the idea that VTA begin a quarterly newsletter for members. This would be a more informal version of the minutes and will keep members better informed of our activities

-  - Baker will get some ideas together and discuss next week.

4. Correspondence

- Waste Management Ltd

- Still need to reply to Waste Management Ltd from outstanding correspondence from previous committee

-  - Emma will re-send email to all committee members and a taskforce set up next week.

- Ferries and Marina

- An issue of defunct ferries in Neiafu harbour was raised at the AGM. However, the ferries have since been removed so the committee agreed there was no need for a letter regarding them
- Committee members raised concerns about the harbour and small boats marina in general – currently there is a lot of rubbish down there, the waterfront bar is an eyesore and it is generally not a nice environment.
- VTA will write a letter to Marine & Ports asking for a status report on the marina area

5. New Committee

- Janine tabled a letter to the bank regarding changing of signatories
- Emma will follow up with Lole to get the VTA box from him

- Recommendations from 2008 Committee

- A list of recommendations from the last committee was tabled for the new committee:

- TCC Yellow Pages

- Emma will draft a letter for next week to TCC raising VTA's concern that no Vava'u businesses were given the opportunity to advertise in this year's yellow pages

- **Proposed:** Kurt; **Seconded** 'Epeli

- Fisheries Draft

- A 38-page draft has been circulated by Ministry of Fisheries that states MoF are responsible for all marine life including whales. It reports on all fishing and marine activities and therefore affects tourism including whalewatching, diving and fishing.
- VTA could comment on the draft if it felt there were any major concerns or support. Janine informed the committee that the Fishing Club and Whale Watch Association are already preparing responses.
- Janine to forward Draft to Emma who will circulate it for discussion at next week's meeting.

- Vavau.to

- Greg Just has offered to host minutes online (vavau.to), accessible to members with a password.
- Although members already receive minutes electronically this offer comes free and will make VTA more transparent and professional.



- **Motion** to host VTA minutes online at vavavu.to; **Proposed:** Lucy; **Seconded:** Gordon



- Emma to contact Greg Just to arrange

6. General Meeting

- It was raised that some members may have avoided the AGM so to avoid getting 'roped in' to tasks, therefore VTA should hold a General Meeting soon
- VTA needs to hold more General Meetings this year
- VTA to hold a GM in the coming weeks but first needs to get a general strategy for 2009 in place.

7. Strategy

- VTA needs a framework for their activities in 2009 – a plan of action
- This will help us stay on track and will also be a good selling point for members and prospective donors



- Use feedback gathered last year – Emma to email again to all members



- Lucy to send copy of Strategic Plan Framework to Emma if available electronically

- Strategy needs to also state where VTA draws the line in only supporting VTA members in their activities. In the past VTA has promoted non-VTA member businesses when hosting travel writers and wholesalers for the good of Vava'u as a whole. However, we need to have more benefits for VTA members if using VTA funds.

- Strategy will be the main item on next week's agenda.

8. Working with TVB

- Office in the TVB building will help with better relations and communication between Ministry of Tourism (MoT) and VTA.

- Gordon raised the issue that we do not work closely enough with MoT overall, if we improved communication we would be better looked after by the Ministry.



- **Motion** to set up a taskforce to improve cooperation between VTA and MoT and to focus on finding more funding and office space; **Proposed** Baker; **Seconded** Janine

- Gordon and 'Eveli were nominated for the taskforce.

9. Treasurer Role

- Treasurer to analyse disbursements in a more detailed manner for upcoming year
- Note in reports money that is earmarked for certain activities so that it gives a clearer picture of available money
- Cross Reference members 2008 with members 2009 to find those who are outstanding.

10. IFAW

- IFAW is closing down its Vava'u operation in June due to financial problems.
- VTA has been approached by IFAW and asked if they would take over IFAW's inventory along with TVB, including office space, computer, teaching tools etc
- VTA is also a partner, along with Whale Watching Association, in funds donated last year for the Princess Patron of the Whales. The funds (\$5,000) are to be used for education
- VTA will wait for full inventory from IFAW and discuss further.

Next meeting: Wednesday 29th April, 2pm, La Vela.

Meeting Closed: 4.05pm
