

## SUMMARY OF FALL MEMBERSHIP MEETING (October 18, 2020)

Dear West Point Inn Association Members,

We want to thank all of you who attended the Fall Membership meeting via Zoom this past Sunday. We also want to thank Treasurer Mark Northcross for hosting the event and Secretary Wing Pepper for moderating. For those of you who weren't able to attend, this is a short summary of what was discussed. At the bottom are links to both audio and video recordings of the event. Finally, there is a link to a survey regarding the Inn's financial situation and possible remedies. We would really appreciate it if you could take a few minutes to respond. The Inn is facing severe hardship from the COVID pandemic and we want your input on how we should proceed to protect and preserve the Inn for the future.

After introductions, President Chris Marcuse announced the results of the Board of Directors election, Bylaw amendment and work party incentive decision. Dan Ciccarone, Robyn Sue Fisher and Alyssa Jorgensen were welcomed to the Board for the 2021-2023 term. Bonnie Jones and Johanna Sistek were thanked for their three years of service that will be ending in January. The Bylaw amendment, to clarify that directors can't be related to employees, passed. And the membership chose West Point Innbucks to be the new name for the work party incentive. There was also discussion about a meeting between the WPIA and MMWD regarding electric or E-bikes. The WPIA isn't taking a position on the bikes, we but did ask that the Inn be designated as a "slow zone," much like a school zone.

The topic then turned to COVID and its impact on the Inn. We have been closed since mid-March, leaving us with no source of income other than donations. However, we still have ongoing expenses currently about \$16,500 a month. The majority of that (about 58%) goes towards personnel costs while the second biggest expense is insurance (about 16%). The extended closure has had some bright spots. We were able to repaint the kitchen and perform several other minor repairs that were facilitated by not having to work around guests. Our healthy bank account has allowed us to weather the storm to this point, but it is running out.

Mark Northcross then ran a PowerPoint presentation going over the Association's finances. He detailed our expenses and how they are affecting our bottom line. Mark highlighted that, without a serious infusion of donations, the Inn will have to start winding down and possibly cease operations by the middle of 2021.

We then discussed possible fundraising plans. Several proposals have been made and discussed about how to raise funds. The audience provided many more suggestions, which will be taken up at future Board meetings. One of the prior ideas was incentives for donations. Some of these are rather large, like free Whole Inn Bookings for big

donations, down to mugs and hats for smaller giving. Gratitude was expressed to those who sent in money along with their Board ballots. Also discussed was trying to encourage members to convert to lifetime memberships. The problem with this is it would give us a major boost this cycle, but then the Association wouldn't have the steady income it receives from renewals each March. The audience provided good questions and suggestions, which were submitted via chat. A transcript is attached, but the answers are included on the recordings.

It was reported that some good news came from Marin County. Short-term rentals (under 30 days), which the Inn falls under, have been allowed to resume as of late September. A Reopening Committee, consisting of Vice President Don Keeley and Board Members Nancy Fox and Alyssa Jorgensen, has been working for months on crafting a COVID-compliant policy. The Committee detailed the plan, including having separate cooking facilities in the kitchen and pantry. This will allow us to have two bookings at the Inn at the same time. The Committee hopes to be able to implement the plan and reopen to overnight stays by the end of October or beginning of November. SEE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOVE!

Chris then presented the Rusty Spike Award to Don Keeley and Board Member Jim Parton. The Rusty Spike goes to the member or members who provide great assistance to the President and the Inn. Chris expressed that he couldn't have gotten through this crazy COVID year without the help and advice of Don and Jim. Finally, the Wall of Fame Award was presented to Olene Sparks-Toby. Chris read the lengthy article that Marilyn Skaff once wrote about Olene for the newsletter. The article was long because Olene has given decades of service to the Inn. Her accomplishments have encompassed work on the newsletter, fundraising, liaison to Mount Tam organizations and serving on the Board that included terms as Vice President and President. All three recipients were thanked for their many contributions to the Inn and the Association. Their physical awards will be crafted and presented once the world returns to "normal" and trophy shops are open again. The meeting was then adjourned but, unfortunately, we weren't able to enjoy a delicious lunch with spectacular views from the Inn. Everyone was thanked for attending.

Thank you,

West Point Inn Association Board of Directors

Survey Link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2M5BC68>

Audio Link: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BhSx2Xi8MJCz\\_wNx5Hk-h4cWUDOjzYVx/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1BhSx2Xi8MJCz_wNx5Hk-h4cWUDOjzYVx/view?usp=sharing) (Meeting starts around 3:55 on the recording.)

Video Link:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16OSq8nTrqjzRE9K4Guo27VHCX0dPEqKk/view?usp=sharing> (Meeting starts around 3:55 on the recording.)

**Verbatim Chat Notes from the 2020 WPIA Members Meeting  
Held Via Zoom on October 18, 2020**

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: Why not raise dues?

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: What about setting up monthly donations?

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: PayPal!

From Angela to Everyone: Why was the bleed rate in the excel cited as \$18500 but your other slide showed \$16500?

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: And it is easy to set up

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: Venmo is the way to go, so easy and everyone uses it

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: Facebook/Instagram set up just to raise money

From David to Everyone: Why don't we set up Multiple GoFundMe pages by various members?

From waynekoide to Everyone: Is there any place where we can save money by LOWERING our expenses? Obvious question not so obvious answer.

From Larry Henry to Everyone: How many members and what would the monthly surcharge per member until the Covid19 pandemic ends.

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: email newsletters only except to older members who don't do email.

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: I'm a little confused about whether the inn would need to terminate in June 2021 vs June 2022 if we didn't reopen

From iPad (3)fran to Everyone: where do we send our donation- can we do a go me fund.

From Maureen Parton to Everyone: Holiday gift giving is an opportunity to think about and those messages need to be crafted and considered now. People do like to support community iconic places.

From Jaymond to Everyone: How about more marketing for overnight stays? People are not traveling so local travel has increased. People are spending more local and have pent up demand.

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: charge the bikers who use the porch

From Donald to Everyone: Can we implement volunteer innkeepers?

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: My husband and I can move into the Inn.

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: MMWD would not let you go uninsured

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: no real other way to secure the inn - and cannot insure if empty

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: Young people don't use paypal

From Jaymond to Everyone: How about go paperless with the newsletter? Save on postage and printing?

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: MMWD would not let you go un-insured - self-insured is a good idea to explore - too much training to have volunteer inn keepers

From Maureen Parton to Everyone: Another fundraising opportunity is that some companies, especially local tech companies, have matching funds. Attracting those donations from members and the public is another avenue to remind people about. Sometimes we forget about the "low hanging" fruit. Have we explored this idea?

From David Coffey to Everyone: Seems like the innkeepers that are supplementing retirement income would agree to a pay cut and/or reduction of hours to help reduce the costs?

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: Yes to fundraising but don't forget both parties will likely give more Covid relief so we should be able to apply for more assistance

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: Maybe do an editor email with a link to that page

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: If you go under MMWD's self-insure, they will have a lot more POWER over you - and require more maintenance

From Maureen Parton to Everyone: Cyclists and hikers who happen by the Inn should see some signage on the front bulletin board about the Inn's needs. This should be part of the visual outreach, real time on the mountain. Lots of people need to know the Inn's grave situation. The love up there is palpable when people visit.

From James to Everyone: Sandra Ross, Our maintenance obligations are set by the lease - and are already very extensive.

From Donald to Everyone: maybe giving a better incentive for donations like name on plaque or picnic bench etc

From Maureen Parton to Everyone: Swag idea: How about "WPI branded" hiking poles for more hefty donations?

From angela: Fundraising idea: Instead of a lot of small initiatives: Hold a large prize raffle where the public can participate. It would require setting aside 1-2 days a month to be used for the raffle winner(s) BUT could establish an alternative income stream and promote safe "pod stays". The idea is to hold a monthly chance to win a WHOLE INN stay for 1-2 nights. In addition, all ticket holders are all automatically entered into a GRAND PRIZE. The Grand Prize would be w/some kind of concierge service, i.e. prepared meal(s), guided hikes, history talks, etc. to justify the higher cost of the raffle ticket. I recommend tickets for \$50 or more since the value of the monthly prize and GRAND PRIZE is \$1500-3000. GRAND PRIZE could be scheduled the same weekend as the Mountain Play and possibly involved cross promotion. To make the raffle tickets more substantial, we could also offer 2nd and 3rd prize options of inn discounts or merchandise. I recommend this be done with a communications plan to get press coverage on the inn, its history, current state of need. The raffle would be part of the call to action.

From Angela to Everyone: Who is the chair of the fundraising committee?

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: would be great if it was automatically recurring monthly even if it was just \$5-10/month.

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: Ooh that's what you can ask for for Christmas gifts from family members! Donations to WPI

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: Push life memberships - you turned down an Australian who applied some years ago.

From waynekoide to Everyone: If each of us on this Zoom Call were to contact one or two other WPI members and tell them about our current financial status - this might help.

From angela to Everyone: Did we add a stovetop in the pantry?

From Jean Jefferies: Does the WPIA have names/contact info for non-member guests who might consider making a donation; seems they too should be made aware of the financial needs. Article in the local IJ?

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: What will be the limit on the size of each group?

From Larry Henry to Everyone: how many WPI members are there?

From James to Everyone: Membership is capped at 600

From Donald to Everyone: what is being used as a stove in pantry?

From angela to Everyone: How are we determining a "household"?

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: Is the partial reopening limited to members?

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: Raffle off stays at the Inn etc

From Donald to Everyone: is there back up bedding for people who forget to bring it?

From Jennifer Cooper to Everyone: Are rentals starting Nov 1?

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: Have you mentioned the costs?

From David Coffey to Everyone: Ruth Rubin is suggesting getting the IJ to write something up in the Lifestyle section re: COVID, need for funds, reopening, etc.

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: Will it be the same rule where you can only reserve x# of months in advance? Is the price independent of how many people in your household

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: Can one household potentially use two cabins if they have more than 4 people? How would the price work for that? Will we be informed by email re launch date

From Maureen Parton to Everyone: For publicity purposes, many people in Southern Marin are not heavy IJ readers but they read the SF Chron. Be sure to pursue them, maybe with help from Carl Nolte.

From Sandra Ross to Everyone: What about the ADA cabin?

From Nicolas Zlatchin to Everyone: If there are two households, will one be in a cabin and one in the house?

From Rose Sullivan to Everyone: GREAT job everyone- Board and Committees! Sorry I have to jump but so glad to see everyone. I'll do my part for sure...

From Alyssa Jorgensen to Everyone: CONGRATULATIONS Don & Jim~ you've been wonderful to work with since March!

From waynekoide to Everyone: GREAT JOB GUYS!

From Maureen Parton to Everyone: Great meeting everyone! What a team!!! Thanks to Chris and the Board!