

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

May 31st, 2017

Call to Order

- ◆ President Churchward Davis called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Attendance

- ◆ Present: Churchward Davis, Mark Harris, Mary Tyer Kelly, Billy Keane, Doug Goudey, Eric Steuernagle, Sarah Fleury, Tracy Crawford, Cortney Dupont, Alix Cabral, Maureen McFarland Excused: Kristie Peck
Guests: Barbara Osborne, Franz Forster, Debbie Dwyer Staff: Sue O'Brien, Sandy Carroll

President's Report

- ◆ President Davis reviewed the Conflict of Interest, Confidentiality and Anti-Trust Avoidance policies, and thanked members of the Board who attended the WA MidYear meetings.

Corporate Review and Approval

- ◆ **Motion** to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded and approved unanimously.
- ◆ **Motion** to accept the treasurer's report as presented. Seconded and approved unanimously.
- ◆ **Review** of membership report as presented, no vote required.

Report of MAR Washington MidYear Conference

- ◆ **Overall Impressions:** Conference went well, meetings were informative, Berkshire contingent was cohesive. General feeling that its important to stay tight as a group (Board of REALTORS®), and that we need to 'identify which cannibal to pay to eat us last'. A lot of technological changes coming down the pike.
- ◆ **Legislative Issues:**
 - **Mortgage Interest Deduction & 1031 Exchange:** Middle income homeowners would be worse off under proposals that limit tax incentives for homeownership. Homeowners already pay 83% of all federal income taxes. The tax code has historically encouraged homeownership. We cannot afford another housing crash, and limiting tax incentives for homeownership would cause home values everywhere to plunge.
 - **National Flood Insurance Program:** Created to provide incentives for communities to rebuild to higher standards and steer development away from flood zones. In exchange, communities gain access to flood maps, mitigation assistance and subsidized insurance. The best way to keep NFIP rates reasonable is to reduce risk. Enabling consumers to meet federal requirements with a private plan offers an alternative to overpriced NFIP policies.
 - **Fannie Mae & Freddie Mac G-Fees:** Guarantee fees are charged by Freddie Mac & Fannie Mae to lenders for bundling, selling and guaranteeing payment of principal and interet on their Mortgage Backed Securities. Most of the fee covers projected losses from borrower defaults. The National Association is strongly opposed to the use of guarantee fees by the federal government for any non-housing purpose.

- **MLS Issues: CMLS, Upstream, AMP, Standards:** In 2016 there were 900 MLSs in the Country. In 2017 that number has decreased to 600, mostly based on mergers taking place due to core standard requirements. Of the 600, more than 200 MLSs have not met the requirement threshold from last year. The next threshold comes in December of 2017. Berkshires are compliant. CMLS has developed marketing materials for use by MLSs to provide to their members showing the value of the MLS. The materials can be branded by local MLSs. There was an announcement about a pivot in the rollout of Upstream in which the MLSs will be the point of entry. Previously Upstream was touted as the point of entry. The opinion is that this is less helpful to the brokerages who needed one data entry point and less of a threat to the MLS.

Old Business

- ◆ **Education Budget:** Staff provided the board with a revised education budget based on classes held off site. Classes will be held onsite when possible and taken off if attendance exceeds the maximum allowed in the Conference Room.
- ◆ **Platinum Affiliate Membership:** Staff provided details about opportunities promised to affiliates based on level of sponsorship. **Motion** to increase available platinum sponsorships to eight and to cap it at that number. Seconded and approved unanimously.
- ◆ **Building Lease Update:** We have received a verbal commitment from TD Bank to renew our lease for two years.
- ◆ **Other Old Business:** n/a

New Business

- ◆ **Endorsement of Anne Meczywor, MAR Vice President:** **Motion** to endorse Anne Meczywor in her bid for nomination as the 2018 MAR Vice President. Seconded and approved unanimously.
- ◆ **Responsibility as Leaders – Share Information, Ambassadors, Standards:** It is incumbent to take all information for meetings and info learned / discussed out to the membership and disseminate it.
- ◆ **Tyler Street and Train Grant Opportunities:** The Tyler St. initiative is called ‘Building a Better Block’. On June 8th there will be a meeting at the Board Office to discuss ideas. Perhaps a great candidate for the NAR Smart Growth Grant. Eddie Sporn and Senator Adam Hinds will be at the Legislative Luncheon on June 9th where discussion about the NYC to Berkshire train will be discussed. NAR has an infrastructure grant that may this initiative may qualify for but it requires a contingent of REALTORS® engaged in the process.

Reports

- ◆ **Government Affairs, Franz Forster:** The committee is pursuing the train initiative. There will be a short term rental tax listening tour from 2-4 at the Lenox Town Hall, please attend the Legislative Luncheon on June 9th.

- ♦ **REACT, Mary Jane Dunlop:** Battle of the Bartenders will be held on June 8th at the Olde Heritage Tavern in Lenox from 5:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. **Motion** to approve funds donation to the Central Habitat for Humanity's Building for Tomorrow educational fund. Seconded and approved unanimously.
- ♦ **Leadership Development:** Cortney Dupont reported that her group met briefly to discuss objectives. There will be a brief meeting following the Board of Director's meeting today. More to report on at the next meeting.

Adjourn at 11:15 a.m.



Submitted by: Sue O'Brien, Member Services Administrator

